40 Years of Soyinka’s Drama in China

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The translation, introduction and research on Soyinka and his plays in China has lasted for 40 years. It could be roughly divided into three stages: From 1979 to 1986, Chinese only did some simple introduction to Soyinka’s life and creation. After Soyinka became a Nobel laureate, Chinese translators and critics began to pay more attention to his work and devoted a lot of research work. However, Since 2000, China has made great achievements in the introduction, translation and research of Soyinka and his dramas. The spread of Soyinka’s Plays in China experienced a process ranging from unfamiliarity, coldness and understanding difficulties to familiarity, attention and further exploration. For Chinese readers, Soyinka is a famous Nobel laureate, a post-colonial writer, and an African national writer. Chinese researchers generally believe that Soyinka’s plays are influenced by both African and European cultures, and have distinct religious features, national spirits, post-colonialism, and other basic characteristics.

Keywords: Wole Soyinka, dramas, China

Wole Soyinka (1934-) is a famous Nigerian playwright, poet, novelist, and critic. In 1954, when he was twenty years old, he entered the University of Leeds in the UK and specialized in drama literature. He received the Nobel Prize in Literature (1986), Benson Medal from Royal Society of Literature (1990), Anisfield-Wolf Book Award (2013), Lifetime Achievement, United States1, International Humanist Award (2014)2 and “Special Prize” of the Europe Theatre Prize (2017)3. Soyinka has great achievements in poetry, novels, drama and literary criticism, so his works have been welcomed and loved by a lot of readers all over the world.

The translation, introduction and research on Soyinka and his plays in China has lasted for 40 years. It could be roughly divided into three stages: From 1979 to 1986, Chinese only did some simple introduction to Soyinka’s life and creation. There were few translation and research about him or his works. After Soyinka won the Nobel Prize, Chinese translators and critics paid more attention to his work and devoted a lot of research work. However, the transmission in the 1990s was not great. Since 2000, China has made great achievements in the introduction, translation and research of Soyinka and his works. The spread of Soyinka’s Plays in China experienced a process ranging from unfamiliarity, coldness and understanding difficulties to familiarity, attention and further exploration. For Chinese readers, Soyinka is a Nobel laureate, Prometheus in Africa, a post-colonial writer, and

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an African national writer. *The Lion and the Jewel* (1959), *A Dance of the Forests* (1960), *The Strong Breed* (1964), *Kongi’s Harvest* (1964), *Madmen and Specialists* (1970) and *Death and the King’s Horseman* (1975) are the favorite and best works for Chinese. Chinese researchers generally believe that Soyinka’s plays are influenced by both African and European cultures, and have distinct religious features, national spirits, post-colonialism, and other basic characteristics.

I. Start to Introduce Soyinka to China Slowly (1979-1985)

After the reform and opening up, the translation and dissemination of foreign literature began to thaw and recover in China. A large number of drama by foreign writers, including Beckett, Brecht, O’Neill, Soyinka and other European and American contemporary dramatists, were introduced and translated into China. However, Chinese readers didn’t pay did not attract much attention on Soyinka and his theatrical works at that time. Before 1986, China had only 5 public publications referring to Soyinka, only 1 Chinese translation of Soyinka’s play, and only 1 periodical article on Soyinka’s works.

Diansheng Shao was the first scholar who introduced Soyinka and translated his theatrical works into China. In 1979, Shao wrote an article entitled *The Soyinka Biography* and published in the “Foreign Writers Biography” edited by Yinglun Zhang and others. This was the prelude for the introduction of Soyinka’s drama in China. The biography refers to some Soyinka’s famous plays, such as *The Swamp Dwellers* (1958), *A Dance of the Forests* (1960), *The Lion and the Jewel* (1959), *The Trials of Brother Jero* (1960), *The Strong Breed* (1964), and *Kongi’s Harvest* (1965). Diansheng Shao divided Soyinka’s plays into two periods: before 1960’s and after the 1960’s. He believed that Soyinka’s plays before 1960’s had showed more humorous and sarcastic dramatic talent and excellent verbal art, and those after the 1960’s showed some new features and ironic changes, such as pungent and low-spirited style and concealed and absurd expressions. Later, Shao translated 5 plays of Soyinka and also published many reviews about him in some famous and important newspapers and magazines of China, which made great contributions to the spread of Soyinka’s drama in China.

In 1981, a short excerpt titled by *The Current Situation of African Literature* which published in Research on Foreign Literature briefly introduced Soyinka and *A Dance of the Forests*. The author believed that Soyinka was the most successful writer in Africa and the best candidate for the Nobel Prize. This short excerpt was selected from the paper “Opposing to Today’s Dictator” written by Gale Moir, which was published on No 42 of the *Star* in 1980 in West Germany. Chinese readers saw the Western scholars’ high appraisal of this African writer Soyinka For the first time.

In 1982, the book *Foreign Literature 2*, which published by China Encyclopedia Publishing Co., Ltd., also published the introduction of Soyinka written by Diansheng Shao. This time, Shao not only briefly reviewed Soyinka’s *The Swamp Dwellers, The Lion and the Jewel, Madmen and Specialists, the Road, the Confucius, and Kongi’s Harvest*, but also highly praised his superb artistic skills of combining Western theatre and traditional African music, dance, and pantomime. In the same year, Lu Li and Xun Wang translated *The Road* into Chinese, which became the first Chinese translation of Soyinka’s play. In 1983, Changrong Gao put this translation of *The Road* into his book *Dramatic Drama in Africa*. Since then, Chinese readers began to know Soyinka’s works. The Chinese translation of *The Road* was more faithful to its original text and retains the structure of the original play because the translator focused on its action, orality, and personalization. They made its words poetic, implicit,
simple and straightforward, and many parts of the play were near literal translations, and this made the readers to experience the original style of Soyinka’s creation.

In 1985, Dezhen Tao compiled Soyinka’s works into his college textbook *A Brief History of Oriental Literature* for the first time in China. *Soyinka and The Road* was the fifth section of this textbook which highlighted *Death and the King’s Horseman* (1975), *Requiem for a Futurologist* (1983) and more than 10 scripts of Soyinka since the end of the 1950s.

In 1986, Taiwan’s *United Literature* published *the Works Chronology of Wole Soyinka* and an essay titled *Take root in Africa: Soyinka and his works* written by Changfang Chen. It provided a text index of Soyinka for Chinese researchers for the first time and particularly admired the strong African native feature of Soyinka’s plays. Later, *United Literature* successively published a series of review articles about Soyinka, and gradually became the main site of Soyinka Research in Taiwan.

There are three reasons why Soyinka’s drama spread slowly in China before 1986. First, Chinese introduction of foreign literature in the past 100 years has focused on Western countries. African language and literature has been afflicted in China for a long time. Second, Most Chinese have always preferred novels prefer to drama. In addition, Soyinka’s plays couldn’t get the attention of Chinese translators and media because they were too obscure and not easy to be understood.

II. Gradually Form the First Climax on the Spread of Soyinka’s Plays (1987-1999)

In 1986, Soyinka became the first African Nobel laureate in literature. Chinese people began to pay more attention on him and made a passionate introduction and vigorous translation of Soyinka’s works. 1987 to 1999 was the first climax of Soyinka’s spread and research in China. During these years, China had published one Chinese translation, 10 selected souvenirs and 16 special papers about Soyinka’s plays.

Based on available information from 1987 to 1999, China had conducted key translations and introductions to *The Road*, *The Lion and the Jewel* and other famous dramas of Soyinka. In 1987, Diansheng Shao’s Chinese translation of *The Trials of Brother Jero* was published on the magazine *Xinyuan*, *A Dance of the Forests* translated by Guoling Zhong and Zhongmin Zhang was published on the book *Foreign Literature*. In 1990, Soyinka’s first Chinese-translated drama collection titled *The Lion and the Jewel* was published by Qijiang Publishing Co., Ltd, which included 7 important plays of Soyinka during the 60s-70s, such as *The Lion and the Jewel* translated by Yongqi Zhou, *A Dance of the Forests* translated by Guoling Zhong and Zhongmin Zhang, and *The Swamp Dwellers, The Trials of Brother Jero, The Strong Breed, The Road and Madmen and Specialists* translated by Diansheng Shao. In 1992, the translations of *The Trials of Brother Jero* of Jiejiang Zhao and Feng Zhao were published in the 20th volume of *The World Literature Fine Arts Department*. In addition, Fang Zhang also translated the first act of *Madmen and Specialists* which was published on the book *Contemporary world masterpieces*. These Chinese translations were often published together with other writers’ works in series, collections, selections, and guides, and became the main texts of Soyinka’s plays for Chinese readers and researchers. Since the translators could paid more attention to colloquialism and took into account both literal translation and free translation, most of them were very close to the original of Soyinka’s plays in terms of ideological content and language style. Thus they were more readable and also satisfy the reading psychology of Chinese readers. However, due to too much customs and cultural backgrounds of Negro and too much religious
philosophical terminology of Europe and Africa, it was very difficult to translate Soyinka’s dramas into Chinese. Thus made the translations in different levels and quality.

Compared with others, Diansheng Shao should be an excellent translator because he could focus on the use of words and sentences when he translated Soyinka’s dramas. He could not only adapt Soyinka’s dramas into Chinese to stage performances according to the characteristics of the theatrical genres, but also be able to respond to Chinese cultural environment and theatre traditions. This made the quality of his translation higher than others. For example, most readers would like to choose his translation of The Road because it was even more concise and powerful than Li Yu and Wang Xun’s. His translation of The Trials of Brother Jero is also better than Jiejiang Zhao and Feng Zhao’s. Though the translation style of Shao’s and Zhong’s Madmen and Specialists are similar, but the former’s use of words is more refined and accurate.

In 1987, the research on Soyinka ushered in the first big harvest in China. Chinese scholars published 11 articles on Soyinka in some famous newspapers and magazines of China, such as Literature, People’s Daily and World Literature. Various types of foreign literary research magazines and important foreign literature publishing houses sponsored by universities and colleges became the main sites for the translation and research of Soyinka’s dramas. It was worth mentioning that there were 3 Master Thesis focusing on Soyinka’s drama which were the highlights research during this period. In 1989, Hongquan Shen published his master thesis titled Solitary Indignation and Absurdity: The Study of Soyinka Drama. He summarized the path of Soyinka’s dramatic creation, analyzed many plays in detail including the Swamp Dwellers, The Trials of Brother Jero, A Dance of the Forests, Kongi’s Harvest and The Road, and explored the thematic imagery, artistic style, and aesthetic features of Soyinka’s play in depth. His detailed text analysis could help Chinese readers understand the overall style of Soyinka’s dramatic creation very well. Zhiqing Zhong finished his master thesis, On the Main Image in Soyinka’s Drama in 1991. By analyzing the main imagery of Soyinka’s drama masterpiece, she boldly explored the aesthetic mechanism of his theatrical image from the perspective of sociology and cult urology. She also paid more attention to investigate the background of Soyinka’s dramatic imagery and probed the cultural and historical roots of his creative achievements. On the Cultural Composition of Jules Soyinka’s Creation was Yue Hua’s Master thesis which published in 1992. He mainly compared Soyinka’s plays with Western modernist dramas from the perspective of cult urology, the anti-rationalism and non-rationalism, and believed that Soyinka’s plays had some unique anti-rationalism, special concept of life and death circle, and distinctive African cultural orientation.

After 1993, the number of research papers on Soyinka published in Chinese domestic newspapers, magazines and university journals increased significantly. The focus of research has also shifted from previous introduction to origin and development of Soyinka’s dramatic creation. In this period, A Dance of the Forests and The Road were the most popular plays for Chinese people. They were not only often selected into a series of books, but also commented by most scholars. Prof. Yan Wang published 4 review articles on The Road. In his article titled by The Road and The Art of Soyinka, he discussed that Soyinka had reformed the form of drama on basic frame, symbol, and time, space reconstruction and discourse narrative. His other two articles, On the Continued Imagery in Soyinka’s Plays and On the Continuation of Images in Soyinka’s Plays, pointed out that Soyinka were good at dealing with the history and reality simultaneously by constructing a series of imagery, such as zombie, swamp, forest, strangeness, rugged roads, broken trucks and the Bible. Wang believed traditional
atmosphere and reality scenes in Soyinka’s plays could be superimposed on each other reflected in the same way. This showed that Soyinka gave his emotional experience and healthy upward rationality of worrying about the country and the people in the script.

In general, in the last 12 years of the last century, China has achieved certain results in the translation and publication of Soyinka’s plays. However, the scope of this communication was limited to a few early scripts of Soyinka, and the research horizon was not broad enough, either. Some researchers even sloppily commented and led to extreme conclusions for the lack of in-depth understanding of Soyinka’s dramatic texts and creative backgrounds.

III. Strongly Translate and Widely Spread Soyinka Drama Works (2000-2015)

Since 21 century, the deepening development of political and economic exchanges between China and African countries has objectively promoted the increasing mutual cultural exchanges. In 2004, Soyinka was arrested for participating in anti-government demonstrations, which attracted Chinese attention. Then China formed the second wave of Soyinka communication and research. In the same year, there were 26 kinds of books related to Soyinka published in China. When Soyinka visited China in 2012, 16 famous domestic newspapers in China vigorously reported about it and Soyinka had become the focus of Chinese attention once again.

At the beginning of this century, the translations and publication of Soyinka’s drama in China is still concentrated in his early works. These Chinese translations, such as The Road, The Trials of Brother Jero and A Dance of the Forests are still mainly selected by the books including “Fast Reading Foreign Literary Masterpieces”. Among them, The Road was most liked by Chinese editors and readers for its dramatic art of Western absolutism.

Yigang Cai translated Death and the King’s Horseman, which published by Taiwan Mass Culture Press In 2003 and Hebei Education Publishing House in 2004. It was the second Chinese version of Soyinka’s plays. Cai is a famous Taiwan scholar and translator whose translation has a high level in both wording and sentence construction and reflecting the overall style of the original drama, and can lead Chinese readers to deeply appreciate Soyinka’s artistic world. In 2015, Beijing Yanshan Publishing House reprinted Cai’s translation of Death and the King’s Horseman. This made up for the serious shortage of Soyinka’s text materials in China.

In recent years, the focus of Soyinka’s drama research in China began to shift from a simple introduction to in-depth textual interpretation and his ideological research. The good news was that there were five important dissertations on Soyinka plays in China. In 2000, Zhiming Song completed his doctoral dissertation Wole Soyinka: Post-colonial Culture and Writing, which filled the gaps in the macro research and overall research of Soyinka’s drama in China. Dr. Song used Edward Said’s theory of post-colonialism to conduct in-depth discussions on the post-colonial characteristics of Soyinka’s literary creation from four aspects included cultural return, cultural resistance, pan-African language, and textual research. His comments are more systematic and comprehensive, and his views are also more original and unique.

The remaining four papers are master’s theses, including Yu Jia’s A Dance of the Forests: A Study of Soyinka’s drama in the Post-colonial Context (2002), Wu Jialing’s Tradition, Change, and Deadlock: Death and the King’s Horseman of Wole Soyinka (2009), Tang Meng’s Philosophers and the Righteous: On the Christian Spirit of Wole Soyinka (2013) and Han Dan’s Discuss Death and the King’s Horseman from a post-colonial perspective.
(2013). From these papers we can see, the four scholars respectively conducted a comparatively profound analysis and fair evaluation of Soyinka’s drama from different perspectives. All this shows that Chinese people have gradually overcome the reading obstacles and began to love and deeply accept Soyinka’s dramatic works.

Death and the King’s Horseman became a new focus for Chinese scholars to study. Since 2000, China published a series of papers about it, including Jianjun Ma’s *Islamic Cultural Conflict in Death and the King’s Horseman*, Rongju He’s *Discuss Soyinka’s Tragic Spirit From Death and the King’s Horseman*, Wenhui Gao’s *Soyinka’s “The Fourth Stage” and “The Tragedy of the Ceremony”: Death and the King’s Horseman*, and Gurun Yan’s *Comparison of the Dramatic Conflict between Wole Soyinka and Taufiq Hakim’s Drama—with Death and Death and the King’s Horseman and King of the Skulls* and Huang Jian and Cui Jing’s *On the Cultural Interpretation of Death and the King’s Horseman from Yoruba’s Mythology*. These papers started to analyse the texts from a variety of perspectives, including culture, history, religion, philosophy, politics, etc., and deepened the style formation, cultural connotation, artistic features, theatrical theory construction, philosophical thoughts, and religious spirit of Soyinka’s drama creation. An emerging research team on Soyinka drama gradually formed in China.

On October 28, 2012, Soyinka accepted a joint invitation from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Renmin University of China to have a nine-day visit to China. During his stay in China, Soyinka gave a series of splendid speech at Renmin University of China, Peking University and Suzhou International Writing Center. He stressed that “Writers’ writing should reflect social reality and reflect on society. Poets and artists cannot escape from the large social and historical background. If they do not reflect social reality, it is an escapism”. Soyinka’s visit promoted the widespread publicity of Soyinka’s plays in China. On May 2-4, 2014, an International Academic Conference named “*African Languages and Literatures: Teaching and Research*” was held in Beijing. A large number of outstanding scholars of Chinese and foreign African languages and literature studies got together and conducted multi-perspective and multi-faceted interpretations of Soyinka and other African writers and their works on this conference.

**IV. Chinese Comment on Soyinka and His Drama**

Over the past 40 years, Chinese people have undergone many changes in the understanding of Soyinka and his works. For Chinese readers, Soyinka is a Nobel laureate, Prometheus in Africa, a post-colonial writer, and an African national writer. Chinese researchers generally believe that Soyinka’s plays are influenced by both African and European cultures, and have distinct religious features, national spirits, post-colonialism, and other basic characteristics. So far, China has published more than 60 kinds of Nobel Prize-related books including Soyinka’s introduction and works or speeches, such as *the Nobel Prize-winning Literature Library*, *the Nobel Prize Library*, and *the Nobel Prize for Literature, Selected Readings of the Latest Nobel Prize Winners*, etc. These books have a considerable amount of distribution and influence, and become the main force for the spread of Soyinka’s drama in China.

From 1987 to 1994, several periodicals such as “*Shanghai Opera*”, “*Artist Family*”, “*Overseas Digest*”, “*Art Tan*”, “*Youth Digest*” and “*Foreign Social Science*” have published more than a dozen articles on Nobel laureate Soyinka. These articles focused on Soyinka’s award-winning reasons, awards speeches and award-winning
speeches, as well as his award-winning theatrical works such as *The Road*, *A Dance of the Forests*, *Death and the King’s Horseman*.

On July 22-26, 1994, a symposium entitled “The laureates of the Oriental Nobel Prize in Literature” which hosted by the Oriental Literature Branch of the Chinese Society of Foreign Literature was held in Beidaihe. The scholars discussed the process of creation of six Nobel laureates including Rabindranath Tagore, Kawabata Yasunari, and Soyinka, and discussed the contribution and influence of them to world literature.

**Vivid Religious Features and National Spirit**

The main reason why Soyinka’s plays were accepted and loved by the people of the world was mainly because he successfully integrated the outstanding cultures of other ethnic groups in his belief in African traditions and his plays have unique artistic skills, language charm and ideological content. From 1979 to 2018, dozens of research papers were published in various domestic newspapers and magazines in China. They profoundly analyzed and elaborated on the language skills, theme imagery, absurdity, and tragedy spirit of Soyinka’s plays, and praised his unique religious features and ethnic arts.

A group of Chinese scholars published a series of articles on Soyinka’s plays. Hao Wang praised that Soyinka’s plays had a large number of words and unique expression techniques, and fully demonstrated his language genius from the witty dialogue and the ironic three-pointed sarcasm. Mei Zeng analyzed the irrational thinking of Soyinka’s plays, explored the beautiful musical language and mythical mythological content, and pointed out that Yoruba cultural spirit and salvation value was contained in Soyinka’s drama. Jian Huang and Hui Wang insisted that Soyinka explained the key vocabulary “transitional abyss, ritual tragedy, and the fourth stage” of his tragic theory with a unique literary language in his many plays. He also believed that the purpose of Soyinka’s creation is to publicize the tragic spirit of Yoruba culture and national consciousness and *The Road* is a social reality drama full of postmodern colors created by Soyinka’s use of absurd drama. Wang Yan believes that Soyinka has realized two-way transcendence between the two diachronic spatial relations between tradition and reality. The main connotation of his script is to grasp the essential attributes of the human heart and the philosophical connotation of the human destiny.

**The Fusion of Dual Cultures**

Lars Gillenston, Permanent Secretary of the Swedish School, said in 1986 for Soyinka’s award that in a versatile work, he is able to synthesize a very rich heritage. This heritage is from an old myth and a long tradition of Nigeria, as well as the literary heritage and traditions of European culture.

Discussing the cultural composition of Soyinka’s drama creation and comparing the influence of African and Western cultures on Soyinka’s dramatic creation is a common topic of Soyinka’s theatrical studies by Chinese and other scholars after 1990s. In China, academic papers in this area include master’s thesis by Zhong Zhiqing and Yuan Hua, and 12 journal articles published by scholars such as Sixin Xiao, Wang Yan, Huang Jian, Jianjun Ma, and Wu Hong. For example, Zhiqing Zhong believes that Soyinka’s theatrical image constitutes a three-dimensional art picture, which is continuous and connects the past, the present, and the future. This is the result of wonderful combination of European and African cultures of Soyinka’s plays. Through an analysis of *A Dance of the Forests* and *The Road*, Wang Yan clarified that Soyinka combined European humanistic spirit and artistic skills with the cultural concept of the indigenous peoples of West Africa and the drama tradition into his
dramas. Starting from the traditional religion of Yoruba, Huang Jian analyzed the image of the character Olunde in *Death and the King’s Horseman* and the differences between the funeral cultures in African and Western cultures, and pointed out that this play made the world better understand Africa through the depiction of the funeral culture.

Jianjun Ma and Wang Jin reinterpreted *Death and the King’s Horseman* from the perspective of Yoruba’s cultural differences between religion and Christianity, and revealed that the essence of the conflict between the two religions is that the Yoruba people maintain the national identity consciousness and the British colonialists to implement the Western cultural hegemony. Wu Hong started with the image “outlander” in the five drama works including *The Swamp Dwellers* and clarified that Soyinka first approached and then gradually deviated the mainstream culture of the West, initially suspected and later gradually affirmed and praised the Yoruba culture, and finally pinned his hopes on the world of African mythology filled with gods, rituals and witchcraft.

In recent years, Meng Chen published 5 articles to attempt to systematically and comprehensively examine the African culture and European culture that existed in Soyinka’s plays. Chen mainly analyzed the changes of Soyinka’s attitude towards African traditional culture in different periods. She also focused on Soyinka not only criticizing and inheriting African cultural traditions, but also actively drawing on Western literature and art, so that he created a new type of drama which is different from Western drama and can explain the traditional African cultural consciousness.

**Post-colonialism**

Since the 1970s, post-colonial theorists have paid particular attention to anti-colonial literature works created by former colonial countries. Soyinka was regarded as an outstanding representative of African postcolonial writers by Chinese scholars. Soyinka is a black-skinned African indigenous who grew up among the Yoruba ethnic group, and had witnessed the dark African culture and at the same time was influenced by British colonial culture. Yoruba and English are the languages he used from childhood to adulthood. He grew up under the influence of Christian culture and Yoruba folk literature. He blended Yoruba mythology with ancient Greek mythology and endeavored to inherit and excavate the essence of African traditional culture, establish a cultural system of myth holism, and fight against Eurocentrism, and become a post-colonial writer with a strong African national spirit.

The dissertations of Zhiming Song, Jia Yu, Dan Han, and Jian Huang are the main study of Soyinka’s plays using post-colonial theory in China. Using Said’s post-colonial theory, Song focused on the reconstruction of national culture and the introduction of mythological holism of Soyinka, and analyzed his ideological status and political practice against colonialism. He also explored the characteristics of post-colonialism such as the language of the decolonization language and the slave narrative and anti-discourse in of Soyinka’s creation. Jia Yu analyzed five plays such as *The Lion and the Jewel* and pointed out that Soyinka always adhered to the African national tradition as a source of creation. He praised that Soyinka extensively absorbed the nutrition of western classical literature and modernist art, and also could use local culture to dispel Western centralism and resist cultural colonization. Dan Han pointed out that *Death and the King’s Horseman* demonstrated that Soyinka had both support and opposition to the traditional culture of the king’s funerary burial, traditional customs, and foreign culture under western colonialism. However, his script is more inclined to defend the independence and
freedom of the nation and to hold a negative and exclusive attitude towards colonial foreign culture. In addition, 
Jian Huang believes that Soyinka’s post-colonial consciousness is mainly reflected in the rational vision of the 
history and status of Africa.

In short, Soyinka’s plays use fluent English to write about Yoruba people’s lives in West Africa and reflect 
the reality of Nigeria. They have traces of the folk legends and stories of Yoruba in Nigeria, and are also 
influenced by Bible allusions and Western modernism. In the context of post-colonialism, Soyinka is an author of 
the critical reality of the fusion of East and West and the synthesis of culture. He criticizes the backwardness and 
ignorance of Africa and also attempts to restore African cultural traditions.

**Conclusion**

In general, the author finds that Soyinka, as a famous writer and social activist in the contemporary world, 
is increasingly welcomed and appreciated by ordinary Chinese readers as well as the attention of the intellectual 
and academic circles. Soyinka's literary works have become an important research object of Chinese scholars. 
Since 1979, the Chinese have made some good achievements in the translation and research of Soyinka drama, 
but the depth, breadth and strength of the research need to be strengthened. In order to promote the 
dissemination and research of Soyinka’s drama, Chinese should intensify its translation and publication of all 
drama texts of Soyinka, cultivate and develop talents who are interested in drama studies, and strengthen their 
academic exchanges and cooperation with other national experts.

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