ABSTRACT

Rabindranath Tagore and Wole Soyinka, the first Indian and African Nobel Laureates represent the Indian and African literary and cultural renaissance respectively. As the two most radical and powerful voices from India and Nigeria, both Tagore and Soyinka possessed inextricably linked creative and personal life and played significant role in shaping the consciousness of the world particularly their respective nations. Their oeuvre, plays are a reflection of colonial and post-colonial Indian and Nigerian society which were in a state of constant flux and were infested with oppressive state machinery, inhumanity, materialism and socio-political turmoil.

The unflinching humanistic outlook of Tagore and Soyinka make them a powerful voice of humanity – the voice which is betrayed, mutilated and stifled. The unflinching concern of these writers for their respective nations is reflected in the portrayal of their heroes who are an embodiment of their creative and literary sensibilities. The hero in different shades and contours in the plays of Rabindranath Tagore and Wole Soyinka highlights the vision of two writers who are from diverse socio-political setting but are strongly connected through their strong concern for humanity at large.

The present comparative study presents a fresh insight into Indian and Nigerian literature. As opined by Descartes that all knowledge which is not obtained through the simple and pure intuition of an isolated thing is obtained by the comparison of two or more things among themselves. As great humanists and universalists, both Tagore and Soyinka possessed a positive and humanitarian outlook which ennobled and endeared them to people, cutting across all boundaries of race, religion and nationality. As a staunch believer in the unity of life, Tagore’s plays highlight his acute penetrative vision and proximity to Indian ethos along with his penchant for a new lease of fresh air to invigorate the society, thereby, reflecting the playwright’s inimitable status, as a cultural icon. Likewise Soyinka’s dramatic world rooted in Yoruba mythology simultaneously present his world view which aims at social and political renewal.