

UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA

FACULTY OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERARY STUDIES

TOPIC:

**ISSUES OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN ANY TWO MODERN
COMIC WORKS.**

**AN ASSIGNMENT
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE COURSE
MODERN COMEDY: MOLIERE TO SOYINKA
COURSE CODE [ELS 240)**

BY

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INTRODUCTION

Sexuality and gender as in the time of Shakespeare

Sexuality and gender are prominent themes in Shakespeare's plays. Sexuality and gender are used as either the tool of manipulation, a form of propaganda or sometimes both. There was a social construct of gender and sexuality norms just as there are today, there was hierarchy of sexes and each had their role in society. Men were masculine, they were not ruled by emotion, they were strong and hardworking.

Women belonged in the home, they were ruled by men and their emotion and therefore were thought to often make bad decision.

During the time when William Shakespeare was alive and writing, there was social norms about gender and sexuality that existed similarly as they do today. A major difference is that today there are feminist movements out to abolish gender inequality where as during Shakespeare time, women were fully aware of their role in society and generally shared the same view points as the men did.

The Issues of gender in Wole Soyinka's *Lion and the Jewel*

Soyinka, represented male characters as strong, powerful and metaphorically as a lion, a symbol of irresistible power. They are also portrayed as initiator, doer of something, and commander in chief, the king while their female counterparts (Sidi, Sodikou) are represented as goals and beneficiaries of men's actions and associated with processes of sensing and of emotion.

In the lion and the Jewel, women are really considered the second sex, essentially created for serving men and in the road, there is no female character at all.

On the other hand, Euba claims that when women appear in Soyinka's works, they appear in a dramatized womanhood because they are manifestations of the Yoruba goddesses Oga, Yemoja and Oshun, which represents beauty, love sensual power etc.

In his well acclaimed play, Soyinka portrays a post-colonial Africa in which modernity and tradition are in constant rivalry.

In so doing he creates characters who challenge themselves in an atmosphere punctuated with dances songs, with defenders of modernity in one camp (Lakunle) and those who are strongly rooted in traditions and customs on the other side (Baroka). But still, the way Soyinka has represented women makes them male-dominated creatures and creatures to whom things are done.

In the opening scene entitled morning the analysis has shown how each character like Lakunle and Sidi, has used material processes of tangible actions the express their representation of the world. It can be seen that men are presented as more active and dynamic than women. All men's actions are directed to women who are goals or beneficiaries.

In the same vein, Baroka and choices of processes in his exchange with Sidi, Sadikou and his other wives portray a man of authority and action most directed towards Sidi, Sadikou and other character.

Sexuality in Oscar Wilde's A Woman of no Importance

The study examines the main female characters Mrs. Arbuthnot and Worsley Mrs. Arbuthnot labeled as a fallen woman, has been scorned by society for having an affair and for having a child out of wedlock. The second character Worsley an American Puritan who is in an idea position to witness faults and weakness of the British Upper – class society. Considered as an immoral – condemning and criticizing the upper – class society thereby, this study discuss their dynamic changes during the play.

Two basic questions raised are; in what way does the two female characters differ from other female characters in the play? With the female role in Victorian era or is the text trying to tell something contradictory between the two characters?

This study discovers that Mrs. Arbuthnot and Worsley are the characters who change significantly. Distinct and oppose to other female characters Mrs. Arbuthnot and Worsely experience several unequal treatments from lord Illingworth and other characters. These oppress; make them braver and stronger Mrs. Arbuthnot the 'woman of no importance' revealed as a character with a powerful role; as the writer believes that the play is also an encouragement of sexual equality with feminism as a central point.