

**THE PRESENTATION OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY USING WOLE
SOYINKA'S "THE LION AND THE JEWEL" AND NICOLO
MACHIAVELLI'S "MADRAGOLA".**

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REG NO: 2015/197301

DEPT: ENGLISH AND LITERARY STUDIES

To begin with, a clear definition of the key words of this given topic will aid a better understanding of the discourse. Gender refers to the socially-constructed roles of and relationships between men and women. Gender concerns men and women, including conceptions of both femininity and masculinity. It is also, the socially constructed characteristics of women and men - such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men. Gender is determined by the conception of tasks, functions and roles attributed to women and men in society and in public and private life.

Sexuality is the quality of being sexual, or the way people experience and express themselves as sexual beings. This involves biological, erotic, physical , emotional , social , or spiritual feelings and behaviours. Sexuality also describes the whole way a person goes about expressing himself or herself as a sexual being.

In the Yoruba culture, and in fact, in African culture as a whole, it is expected of any man who feels he is eligible for marriage, to pay the bride price of the woman he wishes to marry. For that is the respect he gains from people whenever they view him as a married man- his ability to pay his wife's bride price. In Soyinka's "The Lion and the Jewel", Lakunle shies away from this gender responsibility the society expects him to play. He feels civilization cancels all that, calling it a barbaric act, he forgets that it is the societal responsibility of every man that feels he is fit to marry.

Also, women are often considered their husband's confidants. Baroka confides in his most senior wife Sadiku. Although just as he expected, Sadiku betrays him. But this is the societal expectation from every married woman, to be not just the wife by name but also, a confidant he can with ease and trust, relay any problem of his to at any given time.

More also, the society expects every young woman to wear things that covers up her body, to be decently dressed and not to expose her nakedness. Lakunle complains over Sidi's dressing that exposes a path of her breast. He promises to buy her English wears that can properly cover up her nakedness and she will be dressing like the English women and no longer like the village women.

Furthermore, in Nicolo Machiavelli's "Mandrill", Callimaco expresses his asexuality in an unmannered way. Disregarding the fact

that the woman involved is a married woman, virtuous and though married to an old but very rich Messer Nicia. Callimaco, an Italian nobleman, returns to Italy after years in France, because he is told there's a woman, Lucrezia, whose beauty puts all other women to shame. Captivated by the description of her beauty, Callimaco forfeits his lovely life in France and goes to Italy because he wants to have sex with Lucrezia.

Callimaco capitalizes on their problem of not having children and uses it to manipulate them. Using every instrument at his reach, his servant Ligurio, Sostrata Lucrezia's mother and the Friar, bribing his way all through. Ligurio tells Callimaco that Callimaco must actually win Lucrezia's affection if he wants her for more than just one night. Callimaco must explain his great passion that led to this complicated series of events and which finally led him to her bed, and tell her that their affair can continue. This advice he heeds and carries out when he finally finds his way into Lucrezia's bed and had sex with her regardless of the societal norms and values. All that matters to him is his sexuality and he must achieve it by all possible means, be it lawful or forceful. Surprisingly, Lucrezia enjoys having sex with Callimaco because of his great body and consents to continuing the affair. She experiences sex with another nubile person for that first time, and much prefers that than sex with her old husband. Messer Nicia invites

Callimaco, as the Doctor, to live in his house, and Lucrezia and Callimaco look forward to the old man's death.

Conclusively, through this works, the authors have been able to portray for sexuality, the extent at which people are willing to go and what they are willing to lose just to express their sexual desires regardless of what is involved and whom they wish to express and experience it with. And for gender, the averse effect of neglecting gender roles. Lakunle loses Sidi as a result of it and Baroka succeeds in sleeping with Sidi as a result of Sadiku's betrayal.