

The presentation of gender and sexuality can be seen in Wole Soyinka's *Lion and the Jewel* and John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*

In *Lion and the Jewel*, this theme comes into play when we see Baroka who had many wives. Polygamy shows how men can have authority and power over women by having multiple wives and making them subservient to them. Also Baroka seduced Sidi with his wise words which shows how educated and knowledgeable he is. In Illunjinle's society, women are not supposed to be as educated as men. Women are to be educated in domestic areas. In the beginning of the play we see Sidi coming onto the stage with a pail of water on her head which indicates preparation for house work. In this society women are expected to clean the house, take care of the children, and prepare food for the family while men are out at work. (Sidi is walking with pail on her head while Lakunle is at work).

In the village of 'Illunjinle' women play a subservient and domestic role. This is shown through the character Sadiku who is the wife of King of the village, Baroka. Women are expected to be obedient to the men of the village and to cater to them by all means. The way they dress, behave and speak are controlled by the men. Sadiku does this by maintaining the household and raising the children and catering to her husband's needs. For example when he was pretending to be sad from allegedly losing his manhood she massaged his feet. It was even her duty to fetch new wives for her husband. Sadiku can only speak when given permission. This was shown when she entered the King's bedroom and addressed him as 'My Lord' and only continued speaking after he said 'You have my leave to speak.'

Men in the village are seen authoritative and educated. King Baroka is a fit example. His intelligence is seen through his ability of successfully ruling a village thus far and in return this brings great authority to his name. His authority is also shown in the way he has great control over all his wives and the way in which they obey without hesitation. As seen in the scene where Baroka and 'favorite' laid in bed and she was plucking his armpit hairs desperate of his approval and when she hurt him he sent her away abruptly. His intelligence also is depicted when his cunning plan to capture Sidi is revealed.

The village of Illunjinle has a male dominated society, this displays gender inequality. Women are treated as servants who had to cater to all the needs of the men. The men were seen as educated and authoritative because of tradition. They referred to the bible as justification for how women are ranked under men, as God created woman from the man. The equality of the sexes was never considered to be of significance to their

ancestors and was naturally passed down from all generations before them to the present villagers. The subservient and domestic roles were played by females as they were considered to be the inferior beings although they did the most difficult work proving them to be stronger. The men would go out hunting, which is challenging but the women would have to clean the game and cook it. They would also have to collect and carry water to their homes, wash clothes, pound the yams and bend all day plating millet with their children strapped to their backs. Two characters that prove this point are Baroka and Sadiku. Baroka was the head of the village and Sadiku was his first wife. He was well educated with the knowledge of hunting, wrestling and other survival requirements. Baroka was allowed to have many wives and Sadiku would be the one going out to lure the women that he wanted to him. Sadiku had to perform any task that Baroka requested, including plucking his armpit hairs by hand before any of his other wives were present to do it for him. She would always be subservient to Baroka until he died. It was custom that the women had to be their husband's servants in the village. They referred to the bible as justification for how women are ranked under men, as God created woman from the man.

Also in 'The Duchess of malfi', the duchess is a young widow with children who decides she will remarry. This is profoundly troubling to the patriarchal order in which she lives, and specifically to her brothers - one of whom is a corrupt, fornicating cardinal, while the other is her demented twin who believes he is a wolf: Written in 1614, Webster's The Duchess of Malfi reflects this mapping of human experience through its investigation of gender. The play begins to reframe conceptions of gender and asks the audience to do the same. Webster creates images of the male and female body and begins to explore how they are conceptualized on stage. Through his portrayals of how the male and female body split, merge and define each other, Webster bares the discourses of the gendered body and in doing so begins to reframe its characterizations.

Webster begins to reframe such conceptions through the twinned relationship of the Duchess and Ferdinand. The play seems to react to the defining of gender through separate spheres of physiology by creating a double gendered body on stage. The dynamics of this relationship create a fluid gender identity in which the pair share an intrinsic connection not only physically as twins, but through representations of sexual experience and incestuous impulse. Webster initiates a sexual coupling when Ferdinand seems to experience his sister's sexual acts, the character

envisions her love making in detail as if it were his own. The audience are presented with a kind of 'shared body' which begins to flatten out gender differences considering the way that Ferdinand inserts himself into the Duchess's body and experience: