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**TOPIC :**

**THE PRESENTATION OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN  
ANY TWO COMIC WORK.**

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## THE PRESENTATION OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN ANY TWO MODERN COMIC WORKS.

### INTRODUCTION:

Human beings like other animals have desire for food, sex, shelter and so on.

Beyond these desires and needs, they still desire recognition. In other words, human beings want to be recognized, not just as human but as superior humans. Based on this need for recognition, the condition of being male or female becomes significant. Human by nature are ambivalent, and even in their ambivalence they still want to be recognized as human as human beings as well as superior beings. The desire for recognition is an inherent part of human nature. At times, women are not recognized as women; in other words, womanhood depicts weakness and relegation, transcendence, domination and power.

Therefore, from all indications, it is obvious that the radicals want to be recognized at all cost. Thereby, hindering development. Such required recognition comes with some degree of accomplishments. This struggle for recognition could be among peers, nations, opposite sex tribe and so on, as such, is one of the problems which sees the basic cause of oppression in biological difference. One is recognized as a woman since one is not a man. Being male or sex difference comes the basis of such social recognition.

This research focuses on the modern comic works of professor Wole Soyinka's ***The lion and The Jewel and The Trial of Brother Jero.***

In *The lion and The Jewel*, the main point in the play is the dilemma of choice between the rival worlds of traditional and modernism. Sidi, a simple, illiterate, young village beauty, who is just ripe for marriage. She has a likeable suitor in the person of twenty-three year old Lakunle, a school teacher in the village. But Lakunle is a dreamer who is more interested in showing his 'great learning' and firing his mind with imagination of great transformations.

Although Sidi has a warm almost romantic nature and is even relatively open minded. She disagrees with Lakunle's revolutionary ideas, but she expects him to perform the proper traditional rites, especially pay the 'bride-price'-a thing which is anathema to the forward-looking Lakunle, hence the following dialogue.

Sidi: I ,ve told you, and I say it again

I shall marry you today, next week  
Or any day you name.  
Aha, now you turn away.  
But I tell you, Lakunle I must have  
The full bride - price. Will you make me  
A laughing - stock? Well, do as you please.  
But Sidi will not make herself  
A cheap bowl for the village spit.

(page7)

Sidi is surprised that Lakunle is taking advantage of her primitiveness by proposing her and ignoring the custom of paying bride - price. Lakunle's attitude creates a situation in which a girl of seventeen rejects a man of twenty - three, a bachelor and a modern progressive, the most forward looking person in the village.

Sidi decides to marry an old man of sixty - two years old who has a great many wives and many sons and daughters much older than herself.

Chief Baroka wins Sidi by his great trick of pretending that at last he has become impotent after a long dissolute life. But even more important by the fact that he is able to convince Sidi, drawing very much on his age, that he can do what Lakunle cannot.

He can provide the warmth, the reliability and confidence which the dreamy Lakunle seems incapable of manifesting. Instead of worshipping Sidi as Lakunle does, Baroka takes her in a manly way; instead of kissing her, he seduces her and instead of promising future generations in some kind of fairy - land, Baroka offers something immediate and apparently concrete.

Soyinka presents the character of Sadiku, as one who doesn't keep secrets. Chief Baroka wants his wife to woo Sidi on his behalf, hence he discloses to her of his failed manhood knowing very well that she hardly keeps secrets. Sadiku uses the opportunity to reveal her husband's secret to Sidi, who decides to come and mock the devil and shame the Satan in the palace because she believes Sadiku. Bale - Baroka, who has a hawk's eye for beautiful women. He begins initially to desire Sidi who has gained prominence in the village because of her photograph on the cover of a Lagos Magazine. Eventually Baroka disvirgins Sidi through the help of

Baroka's senior wife – Sadiku, Baroka's grand seduction is successful and Lakunle is deprived of his dream – wife. Is a pity! Lakunle.

Besides, Baroka tries to show Sidi that he has plans more any other person in the village, as he is so much concerned with the welfare of the people, only that he would not display it in the exhibitionist manner of the progress mongering teacher. In the dark corner of his bed- room, he shows the gullible Sidi a machine which would he claims, would be used to make stamps which would carry Sidi's beautiful form of all parts of the world.

Then he continues:

(very gently)

I hope you will not think it too great

A burden, to carry the country's mail

All on your comeliness.

(walks away, an almost business – like tone)

Our beginning will

Of course be modest. We shall begin

By cutting stamps for our own village alone.

As the school – Master himself would say

Charity begins at home.

( page 51)

Baroka is , of course, not as good as he wants Sidi to believe. But he has real fears about today's 'reckless broom' which seems to be indiscriminately sweeping both the good and the evil features of the culture away. The impression that two of them share the same values, that is , a love of 'virgin plots lives' and 'rich decay'; a notion of happy, ideal community in which both young and old co-operate to improve society. Sidi becomes yet another victim of Baroka's amorous plunder. Sidi moves into the palace against the advice of the school teacher Lakunle , that anyone who dines with Baroka becomes his wife automatically the next day. Sidi goes to live a rich but virtually useless life in which she has to complete with many others for love and attention of a decaying old man.

Wole Soyinka presents the gender of the jewel of illujinle( Sidi) who has been seized by the lion(Baroka). But what is a lion expected to do

with a jewel other than to destroy it? Baroka cannot be expected to appreciate the qualities of Sidi the way Lakunle does. This is the thought Soyinka leaves with us at the end of this play, that is, the feeling that we have experienced a distressing waste.

#### THE TRIAL OF BROTHER JERO.

Soyinka presents Amope's gender as a soft, accessible character, who is likely to benefit from some corrective beating by the husband. But Brother Jero forbids this, saying that it is not the will of God. Not knowing that Brother Jero is not only trying to make peace in the family but he is trying to be on the side of the woman to exploit her. In the play, Brother Jero is presented as a well-built and good-looking man. Chume's wife falls in love with Brother Jero and when the husband, in the heat of his discovering of Jero's dealings with his wife, has to rush in on Jero branding a cuckold and shouting Adulterer! Woman thief!

Na today a go finish you! Jero flees and the members of parliament whom he is in process of converting, under normal circumstances, have seen him chased out by this would-be-killer, decide otherwise.

What is more noteworthy, however, is that Brother Jero inherited curses from the old prophet at the beginning of this play. The old prophet and mentor, in the heat of anger and frustration, utters curses on Brother Jero thus:

Ungrateful wretch! Is this how you repay  
The long years of training I have given you?  
To drive me, your old Tutor, of  
My piece of land.....may the  
Daughters of Eve bring ruin down on your head!

( page 46)

Sexuality wages serious war in the life of Brother Jero. He has to escape through the window of his own apartment in flight from the unrelenting Amope; he has had to pray very hard to resist the temptation of the young girl who goes to swim. When the temptation seems irresistible, Brother Jero indulges in an ejaculatory prayer as he prays thus:

Tear the image from my heart. Tear  
This love for the daughters of Eve.....

( page 56)

The masculine gender of Chume is present when Brother Jero wants to snatch his only wife away from him. His action shows that meekness does not imply weakness. As Soyinka describes him as shortist, lacks colour and can only crouch on a bicycle. He is equally interested in religion only as a safety device in a world in which he is a perpetual underdog. His wretchedness makes him adore the gifted or the successful. But that does not imply when he thinks he has discovered the unholy relationship between his wife and Brother Jero, he takes his machet and rush for his master hoping to dispose of him once and for all - an incident that confirms our impression of his crudity and dullness.