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

### **INTRODUCTION**

Gender refers to the widely shared set of expectations and norms linked to how women and men, and girls and boys, should behave. Unlike 'sex' which refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women, gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that are assigned to men and women in any given society. These expectations are not fixed but are continually being constructed and reinforced through social relationships and economic and political power dynamics.

According to our understanding, everyone is assigned a gender (either male or female) at birth. Society creates strict norms that are meant to be followed by the two genders. These norms are upheld by a system of punishment and privileges. The norms are not only policed, they are also internalised.

Researchers, like those in Nirantar, who have explored the relationship between gender and sexuality, argue that gender and sexuality cannot be thought of as distinct and separate

categories but as intimately related. The societies we live in construct the right and wrong way to behave as men and women and these are mapped onto 'right' and 'wrong' sexual practices, beliefs and behaviours:

### **THE LION AND THE JEWEL.**

It can be started that in the village of Illunjinle women play a subservient and domestic role as opposed to men who are expected to be the authoritative and educated figure. They figured out is a male dominated society. Here as female were not allowed to go to school whereas the male are assigned to go to school to get an education. In illunjinle, lakunle is the village teacher, who speaks to Sidi and how women are the child bearers, they are to pound yams, to fetch and carry and scrub; as he sees Sidi carrying a pale of water in the village. Also because it is a well dominated society, men can have as many wives as they like but women cannot have more than one husband at a time. So it was discrimination to Sidi, to marry lakunle, the village teacher who has not much to his name and still agrees to be with the bale. Women are expected to be obedient to the men of the village and to cater to them by all means. The ways 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 addresses 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.

## PRESENTATION OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN THE PLAY "THE MARRIAGE OF ANANSEWA

Efua Sutherland's '*The Marriage of Anansewa*' is a well-crafted drama with hints of folk-tale, littered with amusing scenes that will make you reflect on traditions and their loopholes. Considering its thematic unity, this book could have been titled 'The Bride Price' as it projects the whole politics of the bride token.

In this play we see how Ananse is using her daughter to make money for his selfish interest. Depriving her daughter of school with the fact that there is no need for her to be in school, that women's education ends in the kitchen.

Soaked up in the culture of consumerism, crafty Mr. *George K. Ananse*, uses emotional blackmail to initiate his daughter *Anansewa* into his plan of auctioning her by exploiting aspiring suitors. 20yrs old *Anansewa* has been out of school for lack of fees, she acknowledges that the burden of her need is on her father. Hence he identifies and capitalizes on her need for education to manipulate her. *Anansewa* is subtly pressured by her father to go behind the camera for a click. *Ananse* then goes on a tour, covering miles with different postured pictures

of *Anansewa* to market her. Reluctant but helpless *Anansewa* speaks:

'...Oh, my Father is selling me, he is selling me...I will not let you sell me like some parcel to a customer, I will select my lover myself, I will not take part in any photograph engagement'.

Secretarial education was the carrot *Ananse* dangled to *Anansewa*, symbolized in the overpriced typewriter he gives her. Yet beneath all these, *Ananse* aims to fulfil his ridiculous ambition, and *Anansewa's* marriage was a means to his successful ending. The metrics of success for *Ananse*, was him resting his bones on a bouncy *dunlopillo*, attending burials in fine clothes, making open donations in church inside the gleaming collection plate, and finally being buried in a coffin drawn in a private hearse, and not the municipal.

*Ananse* has good knowledge of the traditions and the loopholes therein, hence he exploited it. Until a suitor's bride price is accepted, and the *head-drink ceremony* is conducted, he cannot be given the privilege of a husband. Hence any appeasement suitors do is considered a gift with no emotional invoice; it is unaccounted for. He knows his daughter *Anansewa* can be married to only one man despite his enticing so many rich suitors, so he builds a net of competition for intending suitors to pay their way with gifts.

In an intricate way, *Ananse* exploited the laid down procedures for establishing a marriage, using it as a means of securing upkeep for himself. One is lured to read through the drama to

understand how he extricates his self from the pending conflicts of his greed. With the help of Christie his girlfriend, *Ananse* eventually fakes his daughter's death, using her resurrection as a selector of husband from the many chiefs he exploited.

*'The Marriage of Anansewa'* is another work of fiction that focuses on the marriage market framework, expressing marriage as a strong polarizer. *Ananse* showcases for us the politics and economics of the bride price, an extensive phenomenon that has continued to be executed in an organised way in many societies.

In social development, the concept of payment between families at wedding is sensational especially amongst activists who explore the practices and its impact. Be it is the groom price (dowry) paid to the groom's family or the bride price token paid to the bride's family, or the dower, all of these have over the years become an integral part of marriages. Steeped in the traditions of most

When Efua Sutherland published the *'Marriage of Anansewa'* in 1975, it may have reflected another form of violence or abuse; emotional abuse. But bride price oriented violence has indeed grown. Female infanticide and Bride burning now exists; many women are driven to suicide, discouraged to seek divorce, suffer marriage squeeze and most of them become victim of dowry death. Dowry harassment remains a visible phenomenon in India, despite its being outlawed since 1961; it's quite under-reported as the laws are not enforced. India's government

National Crime Bureau reports approximately 6,000 dowry deaths annually.