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**English and literary studies**

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**Topic: The presentation of gender and sexuality in any two modern comic works.**

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# THE PRESENTATION OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY

Gender inequality and sexuality is being represented in Moliere's Tartuffe and wole's Soyinka's lion and the jewel, men are seen are seen has being superior to women in this plays, sexual harassment and the law that women are not suppose to see through in the society or talk about the well being of the society.

Even though there is no actual sexual encounter in the play, the theme of sex looms large throughout. Lust is the primary vice that both Tartuffe and madame pernelle lambast(Tartuffe when he refuses to look at dourine's bosom, the latter in criticizing the household lack morality). However, a sexual desire also causes Tartuffe's downfall. In actuality, he is defined more by his soul, there is a glutton, a drunkard, a slouch and most of all, a libidinous creature who cannot control himself with Elmire. It is only this final vice that provide the family with ammunition with which to destroy him. The play seem to suggest that sexuality is a natural part of humanity, and one most dangerous when we pretend it does no exist and hide instead behind flowery empty rhetoric of abstinence and virtue.

As of the traditions of the seventeenth setting of Moliere's Tartuffe, in which the French aristocracy was in power, the society was a patriarchal one, as such, orgon is clearly the head of the family has much better sense that he with he with the exception of his mother, Madame pernelle who considers Tartuffe was written in the 17<sup>th</sup> century you might expect the female character to be soft-spoken, demure and generally pretty dull. But elmire and dorine – that's a whole different story. Each one defies convention with gastro; they do some things that would still be audacious even today. They are quick-quick, strong –willed, and a bit snarky. They are match for their male counterparts anytime, any day.

Moliere portrays unconventional female characters not because he has progressive motions, but because their actions make for better theater. Dorine and elmire represent a real alternative to traditional gender roles; they are the real protagonist in Tartuffe , the only characters who are able to take action. Any wrongful act you care mention maybe redeemed by purity of intention. So says Tartuffe when he says when he's trying to seduce elmire. Strangely enough, Moliere doesn't completely disagree with the statement. Sometimes, he suggested

the end, and even lies can be used to do good. Cleante, and the women plays the role of the voice of reason and true understanding of religion while Tartuffe is a manipulated gender/character only using religions of his gains.

Cleante, the women, and the Tartuffe represent the religious conflict that was happening during early century, women in this play are opposite gender playing the role of truth and false. Therefore we can view early 17th century society that was dominantly ruled with a patriarchal hierarchy in which males are consistently the head figure. Authority was held by members highest within the system and lowers members had to obey. However, despite the existence of a submissive system, a movement was taking place that fought against the oppression and celebrated logic and reason. The movement ultimately led to the period in Europe called the enlightenment era. It is apparent that "Tartuffe" also function as a social commentary on women and patriarchal hierarchy that deems them necessary for little purpose.

Mariane is portrayed as an obedient and submissive female who refrains from outwardly expressing her opinion. In this respect, mariane is the most conventional character of her time. She reflects what the society finds acceptable in women and displays what function women plays within a hierarchical system. This is most apparent within several scenes between her and argon. The scene where mariane expresses her disdain towards her father plans, this show the dilemma women faced at that age, their voices weren't heard or their opinion. During the time, it was expected of women to be submissive and obedient. In summation, mariane portrays the conventional women who are oppressed under the patriarchal system. They were expected to hold blind obedience towards men even though men decisions can lead to an unfavorable outcome.

In conclusion women within the 17<sup>th</sup> century were largely oppressed due to the nature of the society. As such women's roles were limited to function as a bon or contact between wealth and power. Furthermore, due to society largely ignoring women, they were forced to use indirect tactics to influence social decisions. Despite this, Moliere recognizes this as evidence for women's rights and uses the play to shun the oppressive system women lived under.

In wole Soyinka's *Lion and the Jewel* shows how gender issues are grounded in the play. The *Lion and the Jewel* is quite oppressive in its gender roles, in a rant from Lakunle about modernization in a fight with a traditionalist old woman, Sadike he says "within a year or two", I swear, this town shall see a transformation. Bride-price will be a thing forgotten and wives shall take their place by men." (Soyinka 36). This sounds nice and progressive, but look at the next page in the same rant and you find "we'll buy saucepans for all women...no man shall take more wives than one. That is why they are impotent too soon." (Soyinka 37). Lakunle apparently still wants women in the kitchen and doesn't want monogamy for equality, but so men still stop being fertile. The gender inequality in this situation is less blatant but you can still see the deeply entrenched social norms that Lakunle may not even realize he is adhering to. The present article is an attempt at probing the language used by male and female characters in Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel* to see how gender issues are grounded in the play to let it play its didactic role. The aim is to point the way female and male are represented through a lexicogrammatical analysis with the special focus on its transitivity system.

That Soyinka considers or does not consider or just recounts the situation of Yoruba traditional societies is what is at stake in this study. The results of the investigation in the light of transitivity and critical discourse analysis shows that Soyinka, consciously or unconsciously has represented male characters as strong, powerful and metaphorically as a lion, a symbol of irresistible powers. They are also portrayed as initiator, doer of something, and commander in chief, the king while the female counterparts (Sidi, Sadike) are represented as goals and/or beneficiaries of men's actions and associated with processes of sensing and of emotions. In this play Sidi views her sexuality as a weapon, men as her opponents, and her virginity as a treasure to be sold to the highest bidder. The Bale manipulates the other characters by feigning sexual impotence. Sidi the village belle about eighteen years old, very pretty and coquettish, she distracts the young teacher, Lakunle, attracts a traveling photographer who wants her picture to be in a magazine, passively flirts with the Bale, unaware of the Bale's vast experience in romance. Sidi is tricked into making love with the Bale at the end of the comedy. In *Lion and the Jewel*, women are not really considered the second sex, essentially created for serving men and in *The Road* there is no female character at all. The way his

represented women makes them male-dominated creatures and/or creatures whom things are done (goals and beneficiaries).