Abstract

Contemporary men's and women's studies have recorded a sense of crisis concerning the concept of masculinity. What it means to be a "real" man is confusing. How to be a "real" man is torturing. The root cause of the problem has been found to be the patriarchal culture that urges traditional masculinity. According to the rulebook of traditional masculinity, a "real" man is economically efficient, is invulnerable and emotionally inexpressive, and is daring and violent. These definitions of "real" manhood have resulted, according to sociological and psychoanalytical studies, in physiological and psychological damage to men.

In racist, patriarchal societies, the black minority's culture is part of the dominant patriarchal culture. As a result, it is influenced and shaped by the same concepts and definitions of masculinity. Just like any other male, the black male desires more than anything to reflect an image of "acceptable" masculinity. He seeks power, control, and emotional and economical strength, regardless of the physiological and psychological suffering this would cause him. However, the black male's suffering in a racist, patriarchal society is duplicated, for he does not only, like the white male, have to struggle to fulfill the definition of traditional masculinity, but he also has to wrestle with a social system that works hard to deprive him of power and, consequently, of the ability to fulfill the definition. The black male in a racist patriarchal society has to undergo the dilemma of racism as well as the dilemma of traditional masculinity.

This thesis is a study of the dilemmas of black masculinity in the racist, patriarchal societies of South Africa and America as dramatized in the plays of Athol Fugard and August Wilson.

Race intersected with patriarchal masculinity is the common ground in the playwriting of Fugard and Wilson. Both playwrights have attempted to give voice to their repressed fellow men in their countries, whom are repressed twice: once by white people, and the other by patriarchal culture. In their dramas, they have dealt with conflicts and issues confronted by black men in South Africa and America, presenting images of psychopathology and suffering engendered by racism and patriarchal masculinity. The comparison between the two playwrights has revealed that the similarities outweigh the differences.