HOMOEROTIC DESIRE AND ANDROGYNOUS CHARACTERIZATION IN CHINELO OKPARANTA'S *UNDER THE UDALA TREES*, JUDE DIBIA'S *WALKING WITH SHADOWS* AND K. SELLO DUIKER'S *THE QUIET VIOLENCE OF DREAMS*

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MARCH, 2020

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER DEGREE IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

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ZARIA, NIGERIA

MARCH, 2020

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation titled: "Homoerotic Desire and Androgynous Characterization in Chinelo Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees*, Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows* and K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*" has been carried out by me in the Department of English and Literary Studies. The information derived from the literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and a list of references provided. No part of this dissertation was previously presented for another degree or diploma at this or any other Institution.

_____	_____	_____
Yakubu, Eugene Shichet	Signature	Date

Certification

This dissertation titled "Homoerotic Desire and Androgynous Characterization in Chinelo Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees*, Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows* and K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*" by Yakubu, Eugene Shichet meets the regulations governing the award of Masters in English Literature of the Ahmadu Bello University, and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my Grandparents (Shemang Yakubu and Bobai Lambaya) who died before I could learn from their ocean of history and knowledge.

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The writing of this thesis was made possible by God and a number of good people I am blessed to meet.I appreciate all the sacrifices, labour and toiling just so I can get to this level.

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This work is written in the memories of loved ones I have lost lately; my aunty Christiana Sunny Baba, My In-law Hosea, my grandfather Shemang Yakubu, may your souls rest in peace. While crying for the dead, I smile for the life of my little nieces and nephew--- Peculiar, Alana and Kazzah, the sound of your voices in my mind was inspirational.

Abstract

The emergence of queer themes and characterization in modern literature has challenged the traditional understanding of rigid sexuality by introducing genderqueer and androgynous characters. This has opened the possibility of diversity in literary characterization and in representing characters as either male or female. This dissertation, therefore examines the trope of homosexuality in contemporary African fiction as a biological and natural form of sexuality and in early African fiction as "UnAfrican" and a western perversion. As a result of the fluidity of characterization introduced into literary characterization by queer characters, this study conceptualizes homosexuality as arising from the mental processes of psychosexual development. It proceeds on the assumption that the trope of queerness is useful in understanding the fluidity of gender roles and the processes through which characters *choose* their sexuality and interprets queerness in the selected texts as neither a natural or biological category of sexuality but as developed through psychosexual processes of sexual development. This study maintains its arguments by understanding queerness from discourses in the field of Queer Studies and Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism that express the processes whereby sexual orientation is developed. Freudian Psychoanalytic Literary theory will show that an unresolved oedipal conflict can lead to an arrested development of normal sexuality. This study examines queerness and androgynous characterization in Chinelo Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees*, Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows* and K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* in order to deconstruct the authors' interpretations as pseudo-biological musings and to show that queerness has a possible psychological interpretation and that people are not born into but rather choose their sexuality. The study shows that even though queer characters are scarcely represented in early African fiction, sociological evidence has proved the availability of queer characters in Africa. This study also maintains that in a desperate bid to drive a queer notion into art and literature, contemporary African writers are reconstructing queerness as a biological and natural category of sexuality. The study of queerness proves to be a viable means of interrogating Africa's heterosexual history, androgynous characterization, homophobia and identity.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Background of the Study

In African literature and popular culture, homosexuality has been received with mixed feelings and reactions. While early African writers dismiss queerness as 'unAfrican' and a situational/circumstantial perversion, contemporary African writerssee homosexuality as a natural identity and a possible category of sexuality. This thesis seeks to expound the concept of (homo)sexuality in African literature as well as queer representations in early and contemporary literatures— their points of disparity and convergence as it gives adequate appraisal to the reception of queer themes by African writers. The work will discuss the origin, characteristics, and treatment of queer themes and characters. It will interpret the ways in which the selected texts Chinelo Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees* (2015), Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows*(2011) and South African K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*(2001)portray queer themes and queer characters using Freudian psychoanalytic theory to study and interpret these characterizations and themes.

The concept of queerness in African novels is not exclusively new and has given room to various scholarly appraisals. However, queer literatures despite being notable in westernacademia is a relatively new domain and just becoming a topical issue for African intellectuals, scholars and literary artistes as well. Early African writers neglect homoerotic themes, and even when portrayed it is tagged "unAfrican". However, contemporary writers are covering this controversial discourse in its philosophical, psychological, social and biological premise. In this case, early African writers like Wole Soyinka in*The Interpreters,* Camara Laye's *Dramouss (A Dream of Africa*), Ama Ata Aidoo's *Our Sister Killjoy* treat queerness as "unAfrican", unnatural,

and a taboo. And infact, Armah suggests in *Two Thousand Season* that homosexuality is what separates the African from the European. But even so, emerging African writers like Chinelo Okparanta in*Under the UdalaTrees*, Tatamkhulu Afrika in*Bitter Eden*, Achmat Dangor in*Bitter Fruit*, K. Sello Duiker in*The Quiet Violence of Dreams*, Jude Dibia in*Walking with Shadows*, amongst others portray major characters with nontraditional sexuality which they label as natural. A concise employment of Freudian psychoanalysis would, thus evaluate these appearances in African literature as psychical phenomenon and show that homosexuality has connection with human psychosexual development.

African writers always relate the African character in literature as exclusively heterosexual. Early depictions of sexuality by African writers like Achebe, Soyinka, Camara Laye, Ngugi wa Thiong'o amongst others always capture heterosexuality. By so doing, they hint that the African male had only one sexual identity and it wasn't one necessitated by personal nuances or instincts but by timeless cultural norms and values. In*Things Fall Apart* liberal sexual orientation is foreign to Achebe's settings. Early African writers force the reader to believe that in pre-colonial African society, homosexuality and gender role versatility could not have existed. According to Wazha (2014), *Things Fall Apart* captures the African male during colonialism as a man judged on three bases: his valor in battle, his ability to provide for his family and his capacity to procreate. This being the case, anything outside of this is considered effeminate and weak. As such, the characterization of Unoka and Oduche in *Things fall Apart* which contrasts with the aforementioned values leaves much to be deciphered and Achebe apparently concealing more than he reveals about their personality and identity. Going by the dictates of masculinity in *Things Fall Apart* Oduche and Unoka can hardly be called masculine, but possibly characters with a gender identity disorder, thus potential gay men. A *Things Fall Apart* set in this neo-

liberal world would have related the characters of Unoka and Oduche as queer and androgynous but not Achebe who would rather dismiss any tinge of sexual perversion as a plague.

Mapp (1991) calls the literary piece a "deliciously flawed system"; thereby open to "fault lines". Hence, the rigid and doctrinaire account of African (homo)sexuality would be treated as part of the whole and not the whole truth which may have possible accounts but all needing verification. For Epprecht (2008), "same sex exceptions to heterosexual norms and ideals were also noted in descriptive accounts of African societies from as early as the sixteenth century". In fact, one of the first accounts of Africans involved in homo-social acts is captured by a European explorer Henry Morton Stanley in *My Kalulu: Prince, King and Slave* (1873). Aldrich (2003) states that "episodes of homoerotic voyeurism occur throughout the novel"; he reads the book as an exalted homosexual love story in an erotic setting.

Still yet, Asante (1988) argues that homosexual practices among black men were initially imposed on them by their white colonial slave masters. He affirms that homosexuality "does not represent an afrocentric way of life". Hrdy (1987) believes that "[h]omosexality is not part of traditional societies in Africa". In the same way, Dynes (1983) quoted Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1781) as saying "I believe and hope that the Negroes in their own country were exempt from this moral pestilence (homosexuality)". Consequently, studying homosexual practices around Near East and South Asia, Burton (1885) reported that "the Negro race is mostly untainted by sodomy and triba[d]ism". With these graphic assertions, there is now the opinion that homosexuality is a licentious, "bourgeois Western" creation coerced upon colonial Africa by white men, or alternately by Arab traders. Despite the graphic assertions redeeming the black man from queer practices, it would rather be odd to realize that the earliest

evidence of same-sex practices was found in Africa (Murray & Roscoe, 1998; Evans-Pritchard, 1970; Gaudio, 1996; Gevisser, 1995).

Despite this evidence, some African scholars would rather dispel homosexual practices as bouts of situational perversions and not a category of sexuality. Herskovitz (1938: 289) in his study of the Fon tribe in Dahomey (now Benin) noticed that only when boys no longer have the opportunity for companionship with the girls do they think of finding satisfaction in another boy, thus taking him as a woman.

Some scholars argue that there aren't queer bodies as sexual identity in Africa but only perverted individuals who are 'confused' about their sexualities. More so, sexuality is not technically defined by sexual acts and sexual organs alone and like Seidman (1993) shows; sexuality is viewed as an identity and cannot be isolated and minimized as a discrete feeling or momentary impulse. Michel Foucault (1978) and other historians of sexuality have argued that the homosexual body is up until now just taking up identity as a homosexual. Although sexual acts between two people of the same sex had been punishable through legal and religious sanctions, they did not necessarily define erring individuals as homosexuals; only now in the 20th century did a new understanding of sexuality emerge, in which sexual desire and acts became essential for identity. Homosexuality by now is becoming the condition and identity of particular bodies— a construction of this contemporary world. With this new innovation emerges fresh problematic for the literary critic as well as the intellectual— the problem of gender and sex, controversies over the kind of sex that one is and the kind of sex that one does belong as argued for a disparity by Judith Butler in *Against Proper Objects.*

According to Muthien, the field of physiology itself evinces that chromosomes are by nature fluid and hence both 'male' and 'female' exists in all human beings. Therefore, rigid polar genders of 'male' and 'female' are not "scientifically accurate" for sexuality can be controlled, tamed and directed. So the homosexual orientation can hardly be said to be natural, for it is the inability to redirect one's instinctive drive towards either heterosexuality or homosexuality that predisposes one to a certain sexual orientation.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Existing studies on queerness in African fiction views homosexuality as 'unAfrican'--- a Western perversion andbiological, hence a natural category of sexuality. Notwithstanding, a psychoanalytical approach to the study of homosexuality opens up the possibility of viewing homosexuality beyond the usual "unAfrican" and natural tendencies highlighted above. Despite the possibility that a psychoanalytical perspective has in terms of exploring identities, critics have given it little or no attention. It is in this regard, that this study fills this gap by examining queerness through a psychoanalytic perspective which evaluates homosexuality as arising from the mental processes of psychosexual development. This study examines queer characters and themes, gender identity disorder and androgynous characterization in Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees*, Dibia's *Walking with Shadows* and Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*. The thesis is thus premised on the propositions that:

- The trope of queerness and desire is useful in exploring the dialectics of gender, sexuality and characterization in contemporary African fiction.
- Unresolved oedipal conflict and repressions can lead to an arrested development of normal sexuality.

- Freudian theory of psychosexual development contains concepts for unlocking characters' unconscious mental states to understand how infants develop sexual orientations and a feeling of maleness or femaleness.
- Queer theory and queer literary theoryinterrogate hetero-normative essentialism..

1.2 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to examine queer themes and characterization as a psychoanalytical development in Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees*, Dibia's *Walking with Shadows* and Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* from a psychoanalytical perspective. The objectives of this study are therefore to:

- Demonstrate that early African fiction didn't concentrate on queer themes and characters in their narratives.
- Illustrate that characterization in literature has overlapped the boundary of male and female, heterosexual and homosexual binaries.
- Illustrate that homosexuality is psychical and not "unAfrican" or "pathological".
- Demonstrate that the presence of androgynous characters argues that gender is a social construct and not a biological condition, hence fluid and mutable.
- Demonstrate the relationship between androgynous characters and the maxim of gender as a social construct rather than a biological condition.

1.3 Justification

Sexual essentialism and rigid heterosexuals have considered sex and gender to be unchanging and physiological, however a psychological discourse on queerness will undermine this assumption. A psychoanalytical reading of these texts Chinelo Okparanta's *Under the UdalaTrees*, Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows*, and K. Sello Duiker's*The Quiet Violence of*

*Dreams*will portray queer characters with a nontraditionalsexuality, sexual orientation and gender role— a relatively virgin domain in African literature.

This study will open up new discursive realms that the African writer and even the critic neglect. A study on the ambiguity of characterization and androgynous characterization that emerged with the presence queer literature is timely. A study on the varying depictions of homosexuality by early and contemporary writers is worthwhile. While earlyAfrican fictions seem toavoid queer themes, contemporary African fictions have continued to reflect these themes and securing a discursive space for it in the African literary scene.Queer literatures opened shows an intertwined relation with psychoanalytic theory and the controversial analytic distinction between gender and sexuality that has been prominently theorized by queer theorists like Judith Butler, Sedgwick Eve Kosofsky, and Anna Jagose as key to wholly grasping androgynous characterization in fiction.The counter-intuitive restructuring of the temporal and social logics of sex and gender, man and woman binary within the ambience of literary characterization clears a problematic space for basing gender and sexuality roles to queer and androgynous characters in fiction.

This study will critique homosexuality in literature and reconsider the "pathologization" of sexual orientations and nontraditional genders evident in contemporary African fictions. This study tends to create a secured space in literary discourses for sexuality, stereotyped characterizations and discourses on gender and sex. .

1.4 Scope and Delimitation

This study examines Chinelo Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees* and Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows* both set in homophobic Nigeria to portray a lesbian (female) and a gay (male) same-

sex relationships respectively, and also K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* set in South Africa with its hospitable terrain for queer bodies to picture a larger coverage of African queer literatures and queer identities. These texts capture nontraditional literary characterizations framed within different social, philosophical, cultural and psychological milieu. It anchors on the psychical model of queerness to show that the trope of characterization in literature needs to remain open to possible fluid representation of gender by writers. However, for the purpose of this study, all analysis will be grounded on Freudian Psychoanalytic Theory and Theories of Psychosexual Development, open but not limited to this scheme to study queer literary characterization in African literature.

1.5 Methodology

The methodology for this study is established on a qualitative analysis and interpretation of thematic and contemporary ways of how emerging literary authors are handling the politics of (homo)sexuality in African literature. The concentration will be on the themes that emerged from early African writers as opposed to contemporary African writers.

The critical analyses of the selected texts will be based on most of the postulations of Sigmund Freud, especially his Theory of Psychosexual Development. Saussure's Deconstruction literary technique will surface here and there in the thesis to reverse binary oppositions and to find contradictions in the authors' arguments, the characters' personality and the authors' portrayal as well as to uncover aspects that the authors would rather conceal beneath the lines of the narrative.

The oedipal complex is a psychic machine which fashions the appropriate forms of sexual individuals. Sigmund Freud's appraisal of the necessity of a positive resolution of the oedipal

complex will be employed to read the character of Tshepo in *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* and Ijeoma in *Under the Udala Trees,* the chaotic estrangement from their opposite sex parents which likely triggers a lack in them that has been suppressed since childhood. In the same way, Freud's theory of "penis envy" in girls and "fear of castration" in boys will be appraised as noticeable mechanisms whose effects are still evident in the characters Adrian in *Walking with Shadows* and Ijeoma in *Under the Udala Trees.*

Related ideas from queer and feminist theorists like Judith Butler, Luce Irigaray, Rubin Gayle, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Ann Jagose, will also be introduced into the work to expound on gender and sex construction. The disparity between gender and sex raised by these theorists would be used to disengage the sexual act from the sexual/biological body and by so doing resisting hetero-normative domination of the feminine gender in literature.

Notably, arguments in Michel Foucault's *History of Sexuality* which is arguably the most notable study done on sexuality will be introduced to help in structuring the crux of the thesis—sexuality. Also, journals, essays, books, magazines and internet materials will provide materials for analysis and study of the selected texts.

1.6 Theorizing Homosexuality and Same- Sex erotic desire

The title of this thesis relates two conceptually slippery and fluctuating designations: "homoerotic desire" and "androgynous characterization". These transcendental signifiers showcase a symbiotic association with the subject of the thesis as well as to themselves, but of course forming binary oppositions which opens up new concepts of gender, sexuality, sexual orientation; gay, lesbian and queer, apparently independent discourses but nonetheless intrinsically related and all appearing within the study.

The etymology of the word 'homosexuality' is traced to the Greek word 'homos' which connotes 'same' and the Latin word 'sexus' for sex[uality] which denotes any of an individual's sexual orientation; hence connoting sexual acts and affections by persons of the same sex. Homosexuality could simply mean a same- sex desire between a man and a man, and between a woman and a woman. However, it would rather be odd to note that some people who have indulged in homosexual romance at one time or the other don't quite refer to themselves as homosexuals; for them, their indulgence in such homo-erotic romance is but a circumstantial act, technically not an identity. Therefore, it is pertinent to note that to be a homosexual means having a personally significant and meaningful romantic and sexual attraction mainly to people of the same sex.

For the most part, homosexuality as the condition and the identity of particular bodies only became a notion after the 19th century (Foucault, 1978). Since then, there are now people parading themselves as homosexuals, believing homosexuality to be a possible category of sexuality like heterosexuality. Foucault in *History of Sexuality* (1978: 45) asserts that "the homosexual became a personage… a life form… morphology, with an indiscreet anatomy and possibly a mysterious physiology". Foucault affirms that homosexuality transferred from the practice of sodomy onto a kind of interior androgyny, a hermaphrodite and "is now a specie" (43). Basically, homosexuality can be seen as an 'enduring' romantic, erotic, emotional attraction and relationship between members of the same sex. Homosexuality is a sexual identity that is not heterosexual and by extension reflects on the homosexual's livelihood— his/her identity, desire, culture, ideology and sometimes gender roles. Thus, while the sodomite who engages in occasional same sex relationships is defined by his act, the homosexual is a type of person.

One can partake in same-sex romance and is not necessarily homosexual by identity, so also an individual who had desire to engage in sodomy (same- sex romance), yet did not act upon them is not a sodomite. To be homosexual, an individual must have an "enduring" craving for a same sex romance as well as view his sexual escapades as a possible pointer to his sexuality, his identity and his queerness. However, same-sex desire are bouts of erotic desire that engulf an individual momentarily only for the individual to return to heterosexuality which he views his sexuality as. As such, Men who Have Sex with Men (MSM) and Women who Have Sex with Women (WSW) are not technically homosexuals in the broad sense of the word, this circumstantial feel is only a bout of desire that the victims fall into at their most wild romance with the Id and when their Ego is at the low.

The term "desire" is a conscious choice of diction; as 'desire' technically is different from 'interest'. 'Interest' could mean but a mere feeling, an attention or affect. However, the mechanical relationship between 'desire' and 'interest' is interwoven in a symbiotic network, wherein one depends on the other. However, 'interest' breeds 'desire' and desire gears 'action'. Deleuze and Guattari (1977) agreed that "[w]e never desire against our interests because interest always follows and finds itself where desire has placed it". Hence, there may however be a certain interest for desire to fully come to life. This 'interest' is what Freud termed as "repressed desires", concealed somewhere in the unconscious waiting for a fitting time to break loose in the potential homosexual.

In this case, the term homosexual has a loose and overlapping application and has been used to indicate the homosexual herein described, the latent homosexual, the repressed homosexual (closeted) and the sexual pervert (MSM, WSM). And for the purpose of this study, homosexuality, queerness, gayness and homoeroticism will be used interchangeably and by

extension cover all male (gay) and female (lesbian) same-sex desire, perverse sexualities, gender identity disorder (failure to develop traits consistent with one's biological sex) as evident in transvestites, sissy boys, fags, butch, transsexuals, dykes, punks, bisexuals, she-boys, faux butch, and hermaphrodites in the literary space.

1.6.1 Queer (Literary) Theory: What is Queer about Literature?

Queer Theory is not strictly a theory but a conceptual field that seeks to deconstruct essentialism and rigid polar of identification. It was only in the 1990s that the post-modern theory later theorized as 'Queer Theory' by Teresa de Lauretis found a direct relations with the politics of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered activists (Cohen, 2005). According to Halperin (1995) (cited in McCormick, 2013) the term 'queer' simply does not refer to a natural type or an established category, it derives its meaning from being dissimilar from the norm. To be queer is to be a gender and sexual transgressor, to be out of place in society's hegemony. Being queer according to McCormick (2013) "is not restricted to gay and lesbian people". It covers all who do not fit into a normal society and standard. It refers to whoever is at odds with the norm or to anyone who "rupture[s] or resist[s]… normal kinship relations" (Butler, 1994:15)

Queer Theory, which Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick developed alongside Judith Butler, Teresa de Lauretis, Diana Fuss, and Michael Warner, is now a prism through which scholars and theorists analyze works towards the deconstruction of every kind of static category or identity of group which could generate social exclusion and discrimination. Queer theory reads all conventional forms of identity as coercive designations that, irrespective of individual specificity and uniqueness, subjugate everybody to the regulative duty of cultural conformity. Seidman (1996: 13)argues that queer theory is

> A study of those knowledges(sic) and social practices that organize society as a whole by sexualizing--- heterosexualizing, homosexualizing--- bodies, desires, acts, identities, social relations, knowledges(sic), culture, and social institutions.

Queer theory found its way into literature and art when theorists noticed that literature is embedded with homophobic fears and strict orthodoxy, which queer tends to disrupt and subvert. Ever since, queer theory has become one of the most popular fields for literature students especially in the West. It is now becoming a part of mainstream scholarship in Literature departments. As such Seidman (1996:13)argues that "[q]ueer theory has been dominated by literary theorists".

Queer literary theory and criticism is an array of approaches to textual discourses which analyse and contend heteronormative structures and relations of significations. This theory has its roots in a poststructuralist deconstruction of essentialism of gender and sexual identity of LGBTI political activism in the 1980s and 90s. It has a symbiotic relationship with Queer Theory which of course is multidisciplinary.

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick first developed the literary theory through a reading of Charles Dicken's novel *Our Mutual Friend* in an essay *Homophobia, Misogyny, and Capital: The Example of Our Mutual Friend* published in Raritan in 1983 which she later incorporated into a book *English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* published 1985 where she analyzed texts by Shakespeare, Tennyson, George Elliot among others for concealed homoerotic themes (Smith, 1998). Also, in her *Epistemology of the Closet* Sedgwick moved further to study Proust, Wilde, Nietzsche and Melville's *Billy Budd* against a homoerotic backdrop.

Inspired by Foucault's preconception of sexuality as a discourse, Schoene (2016: 300) contends that queer theory finds its roots in a "literary" rather than literal understanding of the society

acceptance of our existence in time not as natural but raising it instead as a historical process triggered by "quasi-textual dynamics that ensure its fruitful susceptibility to resignification". However, queer literary discourses are embedded with notions of poststructuralist and postmodernist theoretical perspectives with focus on identifying and contending the discursive and cultural markers encountered in mainstream as well as marginal identities and institutions that create heteronormativity.

Queer literatures and theories critique heteronormativity and all processes that reinforce "normal" and dismiss the "other", disrupt stable identity, corrupt normative systems of marriage to the opposite gender, and to be monogamous in a bid to show that everything has a possible option and another aspect of it that mightn't have been reified (Cohen, 2005; Butler, 1990).

When queer theorists analyze literature, they open up all sorts of possibilities from a singular and omnipotent signification, that ambiguous area between good and evil, male and female, author and reader, light and dark, homosexual and heterosexual, gender and sex. Queer theory enjoys destabilizing popular cultural narratives and exhuming meanings that might have been concealed in the narrative or that the society's heteronormative hegemony have rendered nether. And by so doing, it takes the fictional character out of place, the word out of place, the sentence and even the theme to a different socio-cultural setting and proffer that likely nothing is what it seems, there'll always be another side and another aspect of interpretation. Queer theory inspires the literary reader to view all literatures with a new critical perception. Hence, characterization and themes that once seemed familiar become totally strange, at odds with the former perceptions, a remove from reality, thus a whole set of meanings, questions and gaps shoot out.

Literature always seems complex to the queer theorist, as queer literary theorists are all interested in what is said as well as what is not said. Language for the queer theorist and reader conceals more than it reflects— it is inherently ambiguous and veiled in possibilities of meanings. But if dialogues in a narrative are carefully and clinically examined, meanings and significations hidden between and beneath the intentional and unintentional silences can be recovered. How a text portrays 'queered' language and signs, social roles, gender roles and even sexual orientation shows that every text has a hidden agenda to manipulate and think for the reader, letting the reader see just what the author wants him to see.

The author is always in charge of controlling language and creating characters that either dispute or conform to conventional gender expectations. Therefore, for the queer critic, discourses are not as distinct as they pretend to be; they are neither confined nor separated from each other by boundaries; as nothing is omnipotent and incommensurable, so also are discourses which all emerge from a matrix of conditions, girded into one another and in turn transformed into a whole new network of varying significations.

Consequently, queering a discourse means challenging a theory, a school of thought, meanings to questions its identity. Glickman (2012) offers the basic notion of queer. He affirms that

> [Q]ueer[ing]... a text, a story, or an identity, is to take a look at its foundations and question them. We can explore its limits, its biases, and its boundaries. We can look for places where there's elasticity or discover ways we can transform it into something new. To queer is to examine our assumptions and decide which of them we want to keep, change, discard, or play with. This becomes a practice in transcending the habit of settling for pre-defined categories and creating new ones

Through its conception of a wide continuum of sexual politics since the publication of Michel Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, queer literatures stand in direct contrast to the normalizing tendencies of hegemonic sexuality and identity rooted in ideas of a static, stable sexual identities

and behaviours of literary characters, Kosofsky (1993) refers to as "open mesh of possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances lapses and excesses of meaning when the constituent element of anyone's gender, anyone's sexuality, aren't made (or can't be made) to signify monolithically".

1.6.2 Androgynous characterization

Androgynous characterization has to do with a character's hermaphroditic identity. A crisscross in-between and flowing with one's instinctive desire and gender expression— how a queer or non queer character outwardly manifests gender; through name, pronoun choice, style of dress, voice modulation. How a character in literary fiction chooses to express gender might not necessarily reflect one's actual gender identity (biological sex). We can, certainly say queer characterization is grounded in fluidity and spontaneity as much as in ambiguity. In sum, queer characterization preempts critics to view characters not simply as male or female but as a collection of many possible and potential sexualities that may include various shades of heterosexuality, homosexuality or bisexuality. Queer sexuality is neither stable nor static and subject to endlessly shifting desire.For the literary critic handling bunch of unorthodox sexuality and characterization in fiction, the bone of contention seemingly becomes tagging gender a question of "being" male or female or "doing" male or female role.

It isn't any strange in literature to have characters biologically and culturally construed as a certain gender eventually fall for a role considered strange for them. Therefore, a character's behaviour, his "performativity" according to Judith Butler, his gender role choice should be ultimate in deciding the character's designation.So, basically androgynism in characters triggers our concept of "man" and "woman" as categories that need to remain open and flexible to future

and eventual radical alteration, else the literary critic will end at a dead end of interpreting queer characters. For the critic, sexuality cannot be fully apprehended through the wide rubric of gender and societal constructions of sexuality. Therefore, a character's identity is a result of regularly emerging and mutable behavioural pattern and role. This counter-intuitive reordering of the socio-cultural logics of sex and gender system clears a fragile space for the literary critic to designate his tools (theories) in reading characterizations irrespective of how ambiguous or "closeted" queer characters may be, be they transgender, transvestites, hermaphrodites, feminine boys or masculine girls.

1.6.2.1 Gender: Gender has become much more complex than 'female' and 'male' with the emergence of queer bodies in literature and the society at large. Gender refers to the non physiological aspects of sex, the socio-cultural expectations of femininity and masculinity. Gender is irreducible to anatomy and constitutes social roles expected of a certain sex— male and female, the direct consequence of the social constructionism of sexuality. Gender and sexuality are like two sides of a coin, one can barely do without the other. Rubin (1993:32) argues that gender and sexuality are modalities of the same underlying social processes; both expressions of a structuralist kinship system that over-determines the channels of political and social power. However, sexuality cannot be fully apprehended through the rubric of gender, whereas gender can be a pointer for sexuality in traditional constructivism.

In traditional feminist models, gender is understood as the cultural interpretation of the biological frame of sex. Butler (1990) argues instead that the evidently pre-cultural nature of sex is better apprehended as itself gender's effect. Gender ought not to be conceived merely as the cultural inscription of meaning on a pre-given sex, gender must also designate the very apparatus of production whereby the sexes themselves are established. To begin to theorize gender and

sexuality as distinct though intimately entangled axes of analysis has been indeed a great development of lesbian and gay theories. For queer theorists, gender is a tag, stigmata that one wears, but not a normative institutionalization of rigid social category that is inane. For queer theorists, gender has come to mean not a set of attributes or identities but a framework of differential analysis and a primary way of showing individual's sexual orientation. In this case, Butler views gender as a choice, an 'unbiological' role, and a social construction that one wears as one puts on clothes in the morning and not necessarily a normative system of strict orthodoxy.

1.6.2.2 Sexual Orientation: Sexual orientation is an enduring pattern of romantic, emotional, sexual attraction that an individual feels towards another person. Sexual orientation is defined by emotions and attractions rather than social behaviours and it ranges on a continuum which might change as time goes on. These attractions (emotional, romantic, and sexual) may be towards the opposite sex as in heterosexuals; towards members of the same sex as in homosexuals or towards the both sexes (men and women) as in bisexuals.

Current studyshows that individuals are usually aware of their sexual orientation between middle childhood and early adolescence (American Psychological Association, 2008). It is also proven that individuals do not have to partake in sexual activities to be aware of their emotional, romantic and physical attractions. There's no definite consensus by scientist as to why individuals develop sexual orientation, however, some scholars argued that conscious choice is a major factor (Freud), whereas others think it is possibly genetic and hormonal (Frankowski, 2004; Bocklandt et al, 2006). More so, queer theorists argue that gay men and lesbians might gain access to greater rights and societal acceptability if sexual orientation is proven an immutable and inane biological difference.

1.6.2.3 Sex[uality]: Sexuality refers to the biological features chosen to designate individuals as males, females or intersex (hermaphrodites). Sex is determined by categories such as sexual and reproductive anatomy as well as physiology. It is culturally an individual's biological maleness or femaleness. Doctrinaire sexologists and scholars distinguish sex on the basis of individuals' reproductive roles. However, sex in the explicit and queer sense as theorized by Butler in *Against Proper Objects*would include not only questions of identity and attributes (female or male) but discourses of "sensation, pleasures, acts and sexual practices" as well (5). In queer reading sexuality, what will be pertinent is Foucault's theorization of sexuality in *History of Sexuality* as "sensations of the body, the quality of pleasures and the nature of impressions" (106)

Even though some theorists blatantly reduce sexuality to sexual intercourse; Butler reads sex as not a bodily given on which the construct of gender is artificially imposed, but as a cultural norm which governs the materialization of bodies. Sexuality embraces a wide network of elements like beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, sexual orientation, and may include pleasure, gender identity, emotions, physical sensations etc. Hence, for the purpose of this study sex will simply mean sensational acts and practices and not merely anatomical identity. As such, individuals and characters are integrally fluid in all aspects of sexual feelings and acts; and sexuality is not necessarily binary but subjectively multidimensional depending on individual sensational instincts and vicissitudes.

1.7 The Emergence of Modern African Novel

For a reasonable theorization of contemporary African novels, it would be pertinent to trace the African novel's epochal movement and metamorphosis in its long path into the history of African literature. However, since the bidding of discussing the whole canon of an African novel

may apparently seem overly ambitious due to the continent's varying cultural framework and distinctive geopolitical background, it would be rather pertinent to have a narrow view of earlier African novel forms in relations to their major tenets and characteristics.The novel tradition in African literature can hardly be dovetailed in a homogenous framework for its irregular twists and turns in thematic preoccupation and stylistic features. However, the novel form is clearly the most enduring genre of African literature even though the African novel in English language is a developed genre that has not technically been with the black continent from inception, it is however the dominant and most popular genre of African literatures; poetry and drama unarguably being the oldest.

To understand contemporary African novels, it is contingent to have a framework of the earlier novels that have been in existence in Africa. For the most part, earlier African novels are overly traditional and culturally themed to reveal the customary milieu of the African continent. The role that folktales and fables play in traditional African societies has been a major influence in African novels as earlier novelists became mouthpieces against social immorality and cultural debasement.

The oral tradition of African societies has been evident in earlier novels that emerged from Africa; their contents, modes and styles were all reflective of the cultural setting of Africa. For instance, Amos Tutuola's *The Palmwine Drinkard* (1952) is based on Yoruba mythology using African folktale tradition as form; Gabriel Okara's *The Voice* (1964) incorporates African religion, folklore and tradition. Okara translated local language and syntax directly into the English language thereby giving literal expression to African ideas and imagery. In a similar way, Camara Laye published his *The African Child* (1953) relying solely on African oral tradition to showcase the glory of African tradition and cultural civilization. *Things Fall Apart*

by Chinua Achebe which is arguably the most popular and internationally acclaimed literature from Africa emerged in 1958 to restructure the jaundiced Eurocentric view of Africa as related in Joyce Cary's *Mister Johnson* and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. These earlier novels expunged a lot from tradition and align with their narratives to argue that Africa has always had a culture and tradition.

A paradigmatic shift in the thematic preoccupation of African authors evolved when the socio-political terrain offered a new backdrop of varying societal and political occurrences that the authors could helplessly do without reflecting in their literatures. The politics of colonialism and nationalism gradually became a background for most African writers. Authors, for the first time began to divorce the African narrative from the monolith of a traditional society. This change led to the development of new forms of writings and themes which were based on individuals' creativity not tradition and hence, the writers' voice could be heard in their narrative as they proffer means and ideas on certain socio-political issues or events. Notable amongst these novels are Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *A Grain of Wheat* (1967) and *Petals of Blood* (1977) where Ngugi offers a Marxist investigation of the African experience of colonialism and neo-colonialism which was set in the sociopolitical tussle of Kenya. Ferdinand Oyono's *House Boy* (1966) and Mongo Beti's *The Poor Christ of Bomba* (1971) were all blatant satiric attacks directed on the French colonialists. Semebene Ousmane's *Xala* (1976) reflects the state of corruption in post independent Senegal.

Apartheid and systems of violent discrimination created a background for most of the novels from Southern Africa. Alex la Guma's *A Walk in the Night* (1962), Peter Abraham's *Mine Boy* (1946), Alan Paton's *Cry the Beloved Country* (1948), Nadine Gordimer's *The Lying Days*

(1953) all portray the social instability that Blacks were passing through in the vicious and bias apartheid systems.

Literature in the English language is predominantly the language of the modern African novel. Even though the violence of colonialism and the sociopolitical tensions in Africa constitute the backdrop for most of these literatures, African novels have evolved over decades and different genres allowing for divergent thematic and ideological frames, all of which emphasize the representation of the African experience.

Nikiforova (1987) argued that the 20th century forming of a national intelligentsia preempts the development of the modern novel in different regions of Africa. Nikiforova (1977) contends that this national intelligentsia develops an "independently thinking individual who is not relying in his assessments on the authority of tradition, conventions, and so forth" (219). Hence, the traditional norms eroded and gave way for a more "secularized" individualization in African narratives which opened up way for modern African narratives.

This thesis has more or less divided modern African novels into three generations not basically because of the texts' temporal setting but mainly due to the thematic preoccupations in the narratives and also their literary style. The first generation writers will loosely cover writers who were established during Africa's independence around the 1950s and 60s at the moment of colonial tension and cultural conflict— Chinua Achebe, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Wole Soyinka, Sembene Ousmane, Leopold Sedar Senghor, Camara Laye, Mongo Beti among others. Their novels developed within the ambit of historical reevaluation, culture and nationalism, anti-colonial protest and socio-cultural backgrounds. The second generation will include writers with a relatively individualistic theme who got disillusioned by the postcolonial leadership in Africa

and decided to give their voices to sociopolitical issues; authors like Ben Okri, Meja Nwangi, Buchi Emecheta, Zaynab Alkali, Sefi Atta, Helon Habila, John Munonye, Flora Nwapa, Elechi Amadi and most of their contemporaries. The third generation of African writers is the emerging and contemporary voices that have totally liberal themes and informal styles of writing. They fall within the post-modern tradition of African literatures. They are versatile and modern in their approach of literature. Novelists such as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Binyavanga Wainaina, K. Sello Duiker, Jude Dibia, Chinelo Okparanta, Stephen Gray, Teju Cole and their contemporaries. They reformulated the themes of the city novels of Cyprian Ekwensi and Meja Mwangi with a host of issues around morality and decline of cultural values. They portrayed diasporic themes of prostitution, homosexuality, immorality, social decadence, gender non-conformity and identity. The theme of love and sex is now becoming polyphony despite it being unexplored in earlier writings. The transition to modernity in the thematic and formal development of the African novel has displaced the contemporary writer from his locale and places him in diaspora due to their universal themes.

Novels like Tendai Huchu's *The Hairdresser of Harare* and *The Maestro, The Magistrate and the Mathematician;* Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah*, *The Thing Around your Neck;* K. Sello Duiker's *Thirteen Cents,* Chika Unigwe's *On Black Sisters Street;* Phaswane Mpe's *Welcome to our Hillbrow;* Teju Cole's *Open City,* A. Igoni Barrett's *Blackass*;Elnathan John's *Born on a Tuesday;* amongst others are respectively stories of identity, race, sexuality, gender and hybridity. For the most part, these post-modern novelists' oeuvre is revelatory of the technological evolution of this contemporary age; the settings are mostly urbanized and the language is not as traditional and 'Africanized' as earlier narratives. These novels depict everyday lives of ordinary characters, identity and multiculturalism. Themes in most of these

novels swirl around gender inversion, prostitution, urban life, cultural displacement, autoeroticism, sex and sexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, violence etc.

1.7.1 The Gay and Lesbian Novel in Africa

The portrayal of gay, lesbian and (bi-)sexuality, heterosexuality and homosexuality in African literature transcends a certain temporal and spatial setting as earlier African writers like Chinua Achebe, Elechi Amadi, Gabriel Okara, Peter Abrahams, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Alex La Guma, Nadine Gordimer, Athol Fugard, Mia Couto, Ben Okri, Ousmane Sembene, Wole Soyinka, Camara Laye amongst others unanimously dispel all homoerotic themes and discourses in their narratives to relate strict heterosexuality. Save for the likes of Wole Soyinka in his *The Interpreters* (1965) and *Season of Anomy* (1973), Camara Laye's *Dramouss* (*A Dream of Africa*) (1966) and a handful of early African writers, queer characters and themes would have been outrightly "closeted" and concealed in early African literature. Early African writers persistently ostracize homoerotic discourse and themes like a plague. If at all it's being captured it is then shrewdly and surreptitiously relegated to the background and referred to in condescending "silences" and "signifyin" terms just as Wole Soyinka carved the character of John Golder, the African American gay historian who is not just a homosexual but a predatory one. Ayi Kwei Armah's *Two Thousand Seasons* relate homosexuality as a western perversion a "spirit caught straight from the white predators from the desert" (64). He believes the Arab colonizers exploited Africans sexually and economically and went as far as terming colonial sexual culture as barbaric by using animalistic terms for same-sex like "strode", "ploughing", "predator", "mount".

A textual treatment of homosexuality in early African literatures is visible in works like Yambo Ouologuem's *Bound to Violence* (1971), Rebeka Njau's *Ripple in the Pool* (1975) Ama Ata Aidoo's *Our Sister Killjoy* (1977), Mariama Ba's *Scarlet Song* (1981); all portraying homosexuality as initiated by foreigners—colonial masters and Arab traders, treating same sex romance as unnatural to Africa but a result of forced oppression rather than a possible African category of identity.

Saad Zungur, a Hausa poet and social critic portrays queerness to demonstrate societal degeneration and for socio- political critique. In his poemshe believes all perverse desire undermine the northern sociopolitical economy, but, even so Wole Soyinka in his *Season of Anomy* (1973) and *The Interpreters* portrays homosexuality "as an externalized vice associated with the northern emirates court" (Killam & Kerfoot, 2008).

In Edia Apolo's short story collection *Lagos Na Waa I Swear* (1982), a lesbian romance is branded as "grossly repulsive, un-African and most unlikely". In some South African narratives that captured homosexual romance, it is nonetheless not exclusively treated as a sexual identity or a personality but to signify moral decadence and gross licentiousness as well as a systemic disintegration of societal values to showcase the incompetence of governmental institutions and networks. In Bessie Head's *A Question of Power*(1974), the narrator refers to the slums of South Africa as settings where child abuse and rape is bred and homosexuals are "laughingly accepted" (17). Early South African fiction depicts homosexuality as a mirror of the calamity caused by apartheid as evident in prisons and in mining towns where "[y]oung men became wives in the mines in order to become husbands at home" (Hyam, 1990). Treatment of homosexuality by virtually all early African literature tends to revolve around theportrayal of homosexuality on the

themes of colonialist sexual exploitation and as momentary bouts of perversions by disillusioned Africans that need to get institutionalized into Africa's strict heterosexuality.

Now, a whole new school of queer African writers and literatures are emerging by the break of dawn and breaking all literary barriers, stepping on status quo and creating a unique literary culture in Africa that houses all sort of weird characterizations and diverse queer discourses. With the advent of this class of literature emerged a canon of African literature now known as "Queer African Literature" which thematically contrasts earlier depictions of queerness.

With South Africa's legalizing homosexuality in 1995 and the eventual acknowledgement of gay/lesbians in the May 1996 constitution, South Africa became the first state in Africa to provide constitutional protection to LGBTIQ people, via section 9(3) of the South African Constitution. This move opened up the gateway to a boatload of queer African literature with most of them from South Africa. This new novels parade characters whose sexuality and identity is queer, not a perversion and even capture same- sex desire as natural and biologically geared.

The argument for a "born this way" sexual orientation was emphasized in this body of African literature with the arrival of narratives like Tendu Huchai's *Hairdresser of Harare* (2010), which sympathetically tells the story of a young man forced to lead a double life to avoid the harsh consequences of being openly gay in Mugabe's homophobic Zimbabwe. This narrative breaks socially constructed gender roles and expectations and portrays Dumi as a Drag (showy and flamboyant dresser) and an androgyne (a gender non- conformist). Dumi, who is physiologically male but "genderly" female is given feminine gender role to play despite being biologically male. He's a hairdresser— a woman's work and is extraordinarily fragile and soft.

A substantial body of queer literatures emerged from South Africa because of its homo- friendly terrain and systems. Literatures like Damon Galgut's *Sinless Season* (1982), Stephen Gray's *Time of our Darkness* (1988) explored homosexuality during the apartheid regime when it was illegal. Ian Murray's *For the Wings of a Dove* (2000), Micheal Heyn's *The Children's Day* (2002), Barry Levy's *Burning Bright* (2004) and K, Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* (2002) are all bildungsroman narratives which capture young boys trying to come to terms with their sexuality in a pan- gendered world.

By the year 2000, there was a bulk of queer literatures mostly featuring male same-sex desire. Books like Guy Willoughby's *Archangels* (2002), and Michael Heyn's *The Reluctant Passenger* (2003). Tatamkhulu Afrika's *Bitter Eden* (2002) portrays men playing a heterosexual identity, still yet struggling with issues of masculinity, sexuality, intimacies and relationships. Fred Khumalo's *Seven Steps to Heaven* (2007) captures an erotic love between a White and Blackman who were formally heterosexuals. K. Sello Duiker became notorious for his gender bending characters and alien sexualities he depicts in narratives. The publication of *Thirteen Cents* (2001) first captioned Duiker as a queer writer. His main characters are always into drugs, same- sexed prostitution and victims of psychosis. As evident in Duiker's characterization, Azure in *Thirteen Cents* and Tshepo in *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* survives poverty by engaging in all sorts of demeaning acts just to eke out a living. They become the marginalized, the abused and the exploited victims of a sexually violent society. *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* (2001) offers various degrees of gender identity disorder and sex versatility. With the publication of this searing narrative, Duiker secured his place as an undeniably queer writer, discussing issues that most will consider explicit and gory. Duiker played with rigid views of sex, sexuality and gender and proved his liberality of art and creativity by subverting all mainstream notions and norms.

Women were making popular the lesbian fiction series too and most of them from black South African women. Notable examples are Rayda Jacob's *Confessions of a Gambler* (2003), Barbara Adair's *In Tangier We Killed the Blue Parrot* (2004) portrays a bisexual American couple living in Tangier and indulging in same- sex romance with Moroccans. Also, in 2008 a lesbian- themed book *Open: An Erotic Anthology by South African Women Writers* emerged with lesbian and bisexual narratives. Lesbian short stories also emerged with Jane Bennett's short stories collection *Porcupine* (2008) dealing with issues about being black and lesbian. Along came Wame Molefhe's story *Sethuaya Likes Girls Better* and a spectacular memoir by Nkuzi Zandile Nkabinde *Black Bull, Ancestors and Me: My Life as a Lesbian Sangoma* (2009) where Nkuzi is confident enough to challenge cultural norms and balances the androgynous aspect of her personality as a lesbian Sangoma (traditional healer) in the face of homophobia.

Chris Abani's *Graceland* (2004) is arguably one of the first contemporary Nigerian texts to deal mildly with untraditional sexuality and desire. *Graceland* has a queer main character, Elvis Oke. This novel captures gender-binarism queerness. Elvis is a cross dresser, a transvestite and a notorious gender non-conformist. Chris Abani's third novel *The Virgin of Flames* is a diasporic literature set in the United States with a half-Nigerian and half Salvadorian queer character Black. Black is a transvestite and a cross dresser and prefers a femme identity. Also, Chimamanda Adichie's short story collection *The Thing Around Your Neck* (2009), has short stories like *On Monday of Last Week, Jumping Monkey Hill, The Shivering* which all treats same-sex desire humanely.

Jude Dibia published*Walking with Shadows* (2011) arguing that individuals realize rather than choose their sexuality. His protagonist Adrian is made seemingly gay since from childhood, and as such affirming that being gay may possibly be an inane and biological phenomenon. Adrian

shows noticeable signs of transvestitism and symptoms of Sissy Boy Syndrome (feminine boys) which he could barely tame. However, the major aim of this narrative is to give a glimpse at the homophobia in the Nigerian society and the availability of "closeted" homosexuals in the supposedly 'straight' society.

Success Akpojotor's *Sex and Lagos City*(2016) is an erotic narrative set in urban Lagos that reflects the visibility of the gay community in Nigeria. It accounts for the diverse sexual orientations in Lagos, Nigeria. Chinelo Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees* (2015) made its debut into the literary world championing a tongueless love that dares not speak its name in the African society. Chinelo intentionally chose homophobic Nigeria as her setting to portray the visibility of the LGBTI community in Nigeria and to fight homophobia which has been triggered by the criminalization of same-sex practices by the Nigerian government. Chinelo formed an appealing lesbian protagonist who is helplessly gay and despite society's demeaning stares and accusing glances she manages to come out of the "closet', escapes her heterosexual marriage and live her life with her lesbian lover.

From radically homophobic Egypt came *The Yacoubian Building* (2007) by Alaaa Al- Aswany set in Cairo with two homosexual characters Hatim Rasheed and Abd Rabbuh. It discusses sexuality, race, unequal power relations and class. Diriye Osman's *Fairytales for Lost Children* (2013) captures Boniface and Shoga's homosexual relationship in Kenya. In 2013, *Queer Africa: New and Collected Fiction* edited and compiled by Karen Martina and Makhosazana Xaba published a collection of unapologetic, raw and gritty stories about pansexuals playing diverse gender roles and expressions in Africa.

Depictions of queer bodies and discourses in African fictions have come a long way in the 21st century setting; it has however transposed queer themes from early literatures to contemporary literatures and writers.

1.8Theoretical Framework: Freudian Psychoanalytic Theories of Psychosexual Development

In the course of the 20th century, Sigmund Freud's theories of psychoanalysis have acquired an almost omnipotent status despite continuing controversy about its empirical validity. Psychoanalysis has attained prominent explication and attracted bulk of intellectual elaborations in the field of history, sociology ethics anthropology, literature, education, medicine, civil law and even religion. Psychoanalysis despite its handiness in literary criticism is honestly not indigenous to literature— literary criticism has to do with books while psychoanalysis with the human mind. However, the theories and inferences of psychoanalysis suits fittingly in literature in a system called "Psychoanalytic Criticism".

Psychoanalysis tends to explain the growth, development, and structure of the human personality. According to Tyson (2006: 11)

> If psychoanalysis can help us better understand human behavior, then it must certainly be able to help us understand literary texts, which are about human behavior

Until Freud came, attempts to understand human psyche, its formation, its organization and its maladies lacked broad and developed theoretical basis. Sigmund Freud (1856– 1939) provided convincing proofs of the unconscious aspects of the human psyche; through his analyses of his many hysterical patients infers that most of our behaviors and actions are triggered by psychological factors of which we are likely unaware and have limited control of. He eventually

believed that fantasies and desire too eccentric and grotesque to reconcile to had been inconspicuously suppressed, inhumed so deeply in the unconscious part of our psyche, that even though the desire did not have to be confronted directly, they however, led to neuroses and mental illnesses. Freud demonstrated that the human mind is integrated like an iceberg; so that its great weight (the unconscious) lies boldly beneath the surface (consciousness). Freud compared the conscious mind to the obvious tip of the iceberg above the water surface while the unconscious is "like the powerful unseen mass below it" (Dobie, 2012). Since the unconscious is the prominently submerged part of its modest counterpart, it basically gears all outward show of behaviour and habits according to Freud. As such, our actions and personalities are the consequence of forces we neither can recognize nor control.

Freud views the unconscious as "the nucleus of our being" and the repository of all repressed desire, fantasies and illusion. Thus, the unconscious is jumbled, chaotic and unstructured with all sorts of "unachievable" desire. We come closest to the unconscious when it is relaxed by hypnosis, sleep or unintentional slips of the tongue. Nevertheless, Jacques Lacan reformulated Freud's propositions in light of the Structuralist and Post- Structuralist Literary theories to prove that unlike Freud's "unconscious", the unconscious is orderly and structured, and not chaotic, jumbled and full of repressed wishes (Lacan, 1993). Lacan argues that "The Unconscious" is structured like a language and expanded these ideas by modifying Sausurre's Theories. He emphasized the supremacy of the "collective unconscious" as the storehouse of knowledge, experiences, and images of the human race— shared and primeval and often expressed outwardly in myth and ritual.

Freud's first major premise is that most mental processes are unconscious. He later propounds that all human development of personality could solely be understood in terms of the vicissitudes

of the sexual drive. Freud's primary focus was on the sexual drives which he often equaled with psychic energy. However, his conservative stand on sexual drives as primary instincts met firm oppositions by many professional psychologists (Kohut, 1966; Klein, 1948; Eagle, 1984; Fromm, 1947; Sullivan, 1953), as well as his own disciples (Carl Jung and Alfred Adler). Freud's third major premise is that due to the notable social taboos attached to certain sexual impulses, many of our desire and memories are repressed, ejected from conscious life.

Freud designated the mental processes to three psychic zones: the Id, the Ego, and the Super Ego. The Id is entirely unconscious and operates according to the pleasure principle; only a tinge of the Ego and Super Ego is conscious and they operate in contrasting principles with the Id. Freud in *The Anatomy of the Mental Personality* (1932) called the Id the "obscure inaccessible part of our personality, and only an impulsion to obtain satisfaction for the instinctual needs in accordance with the pleasure principle". Hence, the Id--- the repository of the libidinal instinct, source of psychic energy and psychosexual desire gives us vitality. It operates with no thought of consequences, anxiety, ethics, logic, precaution or morality. Dobie (2012) calls the Id "lawless, asocial… amoral". The Id being a socially destructive force has to be tamed to prevent societal chaos and perversion, hence, the Ego which operates according to the reality principle must harmonize its wild passions. The Ego dispels all the Id's energies by postponing them or diverting them into socially acceptable acts or finding ideal time for gratifying those instinctive desire and stimulus. Freud (1920) sees the ego as "the sense- organ… that part of the Id which has been modified by its proximity to the external world". The Ego control instincts and "stands for reason and circumspection" while the Id is the "untamed passion[s]". Therefore, since the Ego has to be instructed by the Id to provide succor to it, it sometimes create safe conditions under which the Id and its instinctive and libidinal advances can be best carried out. As the Ego

mediates between the Id and the reality— society, it reveals itself in intentional slips of the tongue, sleep, hypnosis and dreams, reflex actions.

The Super Ego, the third part of the psyche offers added balance to the Id. The Super Ego operates according to the morality principle and it "holds up certain norms of behavior" Freud (1932). The Super Ego compliments the Ego and the Id with the sense of moral and ethical misconduct. Parents are the chief source of the Super Ego as they enforce values through punishments and rewards. The Super Ego works against the drives of the Id and represses socially unacceptable desire into the unconscious, but when the repression becomes overly excessive it may lead to unhappiness and dissatisfaction with the self.

Like Freud, Westen (1998) believes that much of mental life is unconscious, including thoughts, feelings and motives. He believes that stable personality patterns begin to form in childhood and childhood experiences play an important role in personality development, especially the ways people form later social relationships. In this case, human personality is a network of nature and nurture which when equally appraised make for a fully developed adult personality. According to Westen (1998:57), psychoanalysis believes in

> [t]he importance of unconscious processes, conflicts and defenses, the Oedipus complex, and the centrality of the sexual drive in the development of personality and neuroses…

For Freud (1923), psychoanalysis is a theory of the mind or personality, a method of investigation of unconscious processes and a means of treatment. Freud's theories were almost always grounded in sexual and libidinal undertones. He asserts that sex and aggression are the basic human instincts from which all other motives ultimately flow (Freud, 1914) and believes that our unique characters and odd habits and obsessions are products of how our personality develops during childhood.

Freud categorized maturation into different stages, the oral stage, anal stage, phallic stage, latency stage, and genital stage. Each stage opens up new challenges, and if successfully overcome, a fully mature personality is acquired but if not, a fixation on one occurs. During the Oral Stage, the mouth is site for sexual gratification. The mother's breast is a source of connection and satisfaction, but eventually the child gets weaned from breast feeding and experiences his first conflict between desire and reality. He realizes the Id has to be always tamed and checked by the ego. If the infant fails to wean, or is weaned harshly or incompletely, he will become fixated at the oral stage and transform the mouth to an erogenous zone stage which may likely derive pleasure from an excessive use of oral stimulation, such as cigarettes, drinking or eating and even obsessive habits like nail biting. An unresolved sexual urge at this stage will bar the child from moving to the next psychosexual stage, the Anal Stage.

The second stage is the anal stage, a stage that recognizes not only the need for "jouissance" in elimination but the possession of another erogenous zone. In the Phallic stage, the child discovers the pleasure of genital stimulation. This period starts about age 4-5 years and some critical episodes for development occur during this stage, but differently for boys and girls. In the Phallic stage, gratification begins with autoeroticism (masturbation and self-stimulation). But our need for satisfaction soon turns to our parents, typically the parent of the opposite sex. As this happens we find ourselves in one of Freud's most controversial and strange contributions to the study of personality, the Oedipus complex. Freud borrowed the plot of Sophocles Oedipus Rex to explain that the boy begins to have sexual desire for his mother, and sees his father as a rival for her affections. The boy begins to fear that his father is suspicious of his longing for his mother, and that the father will punish him for his desire. That punishment, the boy fears, will be castration, which opens up the "Castration Anxiety". This anxiety would ordinarily lead the boy

thinking the father hates him, this trauma becomes unbearable and the boy renounces all incestuous feelings for his mother and instead chooses to identify with his father and lives hoping to, like his father have his own sexual relationship with a woman and anticipate his sexual passion just like his father has with his mother. Such a step, according to Freud, is a necessary one in the growth of the boy towards manhood. The boy who fails to make these necessary steps suffers from an oedipal complex; unresolved incestuous complexes and enduring fear of castration can lead to difficulties in dealing with authority figures and a tendency to have trouble with loving relationships.

For girls, Freud shows the passage from childhood to womanhood requires suiting negotiation of the "Electra Complex". Freud believes the girl child too, has an attraction to her mother and sees the father as a rival, however, as soon as she realizes she's castrated and lacks a penis, she develops an attraction for her father, who has the penis she lacks and desire(Penis Envy). Eventually, she fails to attract the father's attention and suspects the mother is suspicious of her incestuous desire, she drops her feelings towards the father and identify with her mother while awaiting her own male partner who will compliment her with the penis she lacks.

The child passes through the latency stage repressing his sexual urges only to develop a sense of male or femaleness in the genital age which ushers him into puberty and reawakening of the sex drives and libido which lay dormant during the latency stage. The child sublimates sexual energy at the latency stage into emotional commitments to sports, academics and other intellectual endeavours.

According to Freud, proper movements through each of the five psychosexual stages shouldn't result in any consequences; however, conflicts in specific psychosexual stages can impact the life

of an individual drastically and impact his behaviours. If these childhood needs and psychosexual stages are not reconciled, the adult is likely to suffer stunted and arrested development---fixated on a behaviour that serves to fulfill what was not satisfied at an early age. The early ages are fragile and vulnerable stages because repressions formed at that time may resurface as problems later.

For Freud (1924), the positive resolution of the Oedipus complex is the central developmental task for all human beings. In his *Three Essays on Sexuality*, sexual and psychological maturity were defined as identifying with the parent of the same sex, renouncing one's longing for the parent of the other sex and then ultimately seeking an adult heterosexual partner. Therefore, homosexuality and all sexual perversions could only fit through a way of either juvenilization or pathologization (deviation from a healthy or normal condition). The Oedipus complex, according to Freud offers the boy two possibilities of satisfaction, an active and a passive one. He could put himself in his father's place in a masculine fashion and have intercourse with his mother as his father does, in which case he would soon have felt the latter as a hindrance, or he might want to take the place of his mother and be loved by his father, in which case his mother (and of course all women and female relationships) would become superfluous for the boy child who eventually grows up to be a homosexual and always wanting a male love (which symbolizes his father's estranged love and dispelling his mother's; unconsciously constituting all feminine and heterosexual romance).

Freud and later psychoanalysts ultimately came to explain the homosexual's nonconformity with the expected oedipal outcome by focusing on pre-oedipal aspects of development. Based upon Freud's *Theory of Psychosexual Stages*, analysts looked to the visible unfolding of events occurring in the years prior to the resolution of the Oedipus complex. Thus, homosexuality was

commonly attributed by psychoanalysts to traumatic experiences that either arrested development (the individual's inability to reach positive oedipal stage) or caused a regression (the individual reached oedipal development but went back to an earlier psychosexual stage due to some trauma).

According to Freud, there are three alternate routes out of the oedipal catastrophe. The child may simply freak out, repress sexuality altogether, and become asexual. The child may protest, cling to his/ her narcissism and desire, and become masculine for the girl child or feminine for the boy child or become a homosexual or the child may accept the situation, flow with the social trend and attain "normality" hence heterosexual

To fully understand the cause of sexual perversions in literary characters we must adequately understand character's hidden minds, their repressed wanting and their past experiences and events they encountered during their maturation age. Westen (1990: 82) believes that "psychological experience is… so rich, and current thoughts, feelings, and actions… are densely interconnected with… levels of consciousness developed over time, that studying an adult form without its developmental antecedents is like trying to make sense of current politics without any knowledge of their history'.

Also, appraising the aptness of psychoanalysis, Odiwo, (2010: 34) confers the novel form as "profound" because of its ability to "explore interiority"--- the inhumed content of a literary character's "mind memory, sense perceptions, feelings, intuitions and thoughts" using psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis has come a long way in literature; it has opened up some of the most complicated narratives and has unlocked the most ambiguous of characters. This literary tool reads life into the most surreal and phantasmic of literary themes and discourses. With

psychoanalysis, what the author says, what he refuses to say and what he intends saying are all given life to and set in motion to evaluate and make elaborate contention of the literary work; for with psychoanalysis "'anything can mean something else" (Jaspers, 1968)

Therefore, this work will be appraised using Freudian psychoanalytical theory and Theories of Psychosexual development.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1Literature Review: Queer Representations in African Fiction

For most African writers, homosexuality could either be understood as an 'UnAfrican' phenomenon or a pathological trait, and by so being natural and triggered by certain biological factors that the victims can barely tame. However, Freud repeatedly and graphically proved that all adult sexualities result from psychic rather than biologic development.

In 1973, The American Psychiatric Association (APA) Board of Directors voted to remove homosexuality from its *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) declaring that a same-sex orientation is not inherently associated with psychopathology (Minton, 2002). By so doing, homosexuality is termed as neither a mental/ psychological illness nor a perversion. The stigma that comes with a same sex orientation is being reduced to the barest minimum and homosexuality is now viewed as a natural and possible sexual identity. This view of homosexuality has found its way into the African literary terrain with emerging writers' socio-temporal and neo-liberal discourses on sexuality. In fact, Dunton argues that the admirable and socially developed gay characters were "designed to help carry the novel's radical morality". It isn't strange to see queer figurations that view homosexuality as a natural phenomenon in Africa, even when early African writers would repeatedly term it as 'unAfrican'. With this graphic statement of 'unAfrican' homosexuality Wazha (2014) believes that African writers take a very extreme Afrocentric view of homosexuality seeing it not as an individual choice with which to explore one's sexuality but a western aberration that is part of the psychological baggage of colonialism.

Similarly Vignal (1983) (cited in Dunton's "*Wheything Be that"?*) contends that

> [F]or the majority of (African writers), homophilia is exclusively a deviation introduced by colonialists or their descendants by outsiders of all kinds: Arabs, French, English, *met`is* and so on. It is difficult for them to conceive that homophilia might be the act of a black African (74-75).

But even so, Wazha (2014) believes that though "there's no proven litmus test to label a race as essentially heterosexual, the writers would like it to be this way". Wazha argues that homosexuality was intentionally excluded from the content of African literature by writers who commented on colonialism and the African identity. Whatever the reason or condition despite available evidences; African writers would rather view homosexuality as a vice of some 'other' people— non-indigenous to Africa.

On the other hand, a relatively new field in clinical medicine is demonstrating that it is possible for same-sex orientation to be 'genetic' in nature— epigenetics. Rice et al (2012) demonstrated that homosexuality maybe a "trans-generational epigenetic inheritance". He argues that "epi-marks" genes can be passed down to the next generation (Rice et al; 2012). As such, if passed from a man to his future daughter, may make her oversensitive to testosterone— a steroid hormone responsible for the development of secondary sex characteristics in the male (butch females). Similarly, women might pass on to their sons under-sensitivity to testosterone trait (sissy [boys] syndrome). According to Rice et al, Epi- Marks 'dictate' the presence or absence of certain genes. They either weaken or strengthen the development of genes peculiar to one's biological sex. This argument augments Quinsey's (2003) assertion that "most people discover rather than choose their sexual interests", thus viewing sexuality as supposedly a natural given.

However, Foucault (1978, pp.105-106) argues that

> Sexuality must not be thought of as a kind of natural given which power tries to hold in check, or as an obscure domain which knowledge tries gradually to uncover. It is the name that can be given to historical construct: not a furtive reality that is difficult to grasp, but a great surface work in which the stimulation of bodies, the intensification of pleasures, the incitement to discourse, the formation of special knowledge, the strengthening of controls and resistances are linked to one another, in accordance with a few major strategies of knowledge and power.

Therefore, sexuality is not fixed, immutable or unchanging. This of course is what Cohen tagged as "fluidity and movement of people's sexual lives" (439)

Some scholars trace homosexuality to conflicts in parental upbringing. Seutter and Rovers (2004) argues that gay men have distant relationships with their fathers, and conversely very close relationship with their mothers, while lesbians usually have 'harsh' and 'distant' mothers, and disagreeing relationships with fathers or other men (Peplau and Garnets, 2000; Rosario and Schrimshaw, 2014). Therefore, Freud makes a valid a priori by reading all theories of sexuality development as psychological cases. Freud provided convincing proofs of the unconscious aspects of the human psyche. Through his analysis of his many hysterical patients, Freud infers that most of our behaviours and actions, as well as sexuality are triggered by psychological factors of which we are likely unaware and have very limited control over. As well, Dallery (1989) argues that (homo)sexuality is not exclusively driven by biology; a very significant part of it is socially constructed through legal, cultural and religious forces.

Nonetheless, emerging African writers are attacking the traditional post-colonial notion of sexuality as 'strictly heterosexual' and bringing to limelight the once abhorred themes of (homo)sexuality, queer identity in Africa. Queer African literature is divorcing African literature's overstayed romance with overt post-colonial theory and post-colonial discourses and embracing neo-liberal theories that speak on identity, desire, and the 'other' in literature. As

such, instead of the usual 'Africa writes back' to the West, it is now basking in what Nwangi (2009) describes as "Africa writes back to Self"; thereby transcending postcolonial paradigms. The politics of sex and sexuality in African fiction is gradually gaining grounds as certified literary discourses despite its initial abhorrence in the African society. Osofisan (2008) contends that (cited in Adenekan, 2012: pp.8 & 9)

> Up at least till the turn of the new millennium, you will observe, that the exploration of romantic love or of sex as theme was remarkably rare in the output of our writers. Virtually no literary work dared venture, except in the deflected language of metaphor and refringent(sic) echo, into the contentious area of carnal experience. From Tutuola to Okpewho; Achebe to Iyayi; Soyinka to Sowande; Clark to Onwueme--- we are talking of over four decades of writing--- there is no instance of a memorable kiss…. Thanks to this, the old notions of privacy, the consensual secretiveness and 'holiness' that used to be attached to such matters as love and sex have long been axed and discarded as antiquated relic. Bashfulness, decency and self- respect have become casualties in the new ethos of the so- called 'free society', where the reigning creed is to write it all.

For contemporary African literature, it isn't strange to parade queer bodies and identities that are culturally African and socially queer. The strict notion of gender has been refurbished and liberated from biologic essentialism and having very little to do with anatomy. Africa's strict heterosexuality has been undermined and procreative sex banished for sexual pleasure. This new canon of literature is directly contrasting earlier writers' conservative essentialism.

According to Adenekan (2012) older writers treat the subject of sex with reverence in order to preserve Africa's dignity and to *counter the image of sexually perverted* Black bodies(my emphasis). Sex is treated as secondary in explaining Africa to the rest of the world through literature. However, while earlier African writers cover issues swirling around sex and sexuality in metaphors, several young writers dismiss coded language— and are 'queering' normative attitudes towards sex. This new feature of African literature agrees with Kesteloot, (1996:8)

assertion that African "novelists no longer want to be seen as moralists, mouthpieces, catalysts of their people". The whole idea of literature existing in a backdrop of socio-political events and nationalist ideologies has been technically undermined with queer themes which were technically tabooed issues now taking stalls in African narratives.

Homosexuality can hardly be viewed as a new issue in African literature. Some early novelists gesture towards topics centering on same-sex relationships and identities but barely uncovering the issue in all ramifications. Simms (2016: 140) argues that Soyinka and Chinua Achebe "gestures toward the presence of queer love but does not actually bring it into discourse". Simms (2016: 141) asserts that early literatures "for the most part, loudly and forcefully neglected to tell the stories about the love, joy and heartbreak of African men who love men and women who love women". However, for Simms, after a span of two decades, the silence among African writers about queer sexualities is "not only eroding, but turning into a polyphony" and a new breed of writers (third generation writers, mostly post-independent and post-apartheid) have begun to tackle themes previously taboo in African literature.

On the other hand, Adenekan (2012: 106) opines that homosexuality has existed before the advent of European rule, but that oral texts have largely placed it as secondary to heterosexuality, with only intermittent recognition by history. Adenekan argues that "what some of the emerging texts now provide is a more direct challenge to history by affirming that homosexuality belongs to the mainstream and not the periphery of both historical and urban discourse". For Adenekan, Soyinka's *The Interpreters* and Aidoo's *Our Sister Killjoy* began the problematization of African homosexuality as belonging to the margins of the African text from the pre-colonial era to the age of colonial modernity. Nonetheless, for Tamale (2013) arguing on a feminist backdr op says

the power elite effaced same-sex relations by rewriting the history of African sexualities in order to uphold their control over the heteronormative hold on women.

To understand the relationship between homosexuality and literature is to open up the discrepancies that gender and sexuality have been immersed in lately. These literatures are all together grouped in a canon called 'Queer literatures'. Norton (1999) argues that "[t]he substantive issue in such literature is homosexual love, or the ambiguously intermingled erotic, emotional, and spiritual relationship between members of the same sex". However, these literatures aren't technically about homosexual love and relationships. They deal with a boatload of other issues swirling around gender, sexuality, sexual orientation and non-normative identities.

Giving queer theory a singular signified is problematic because queer itself transgresses a single caption and is enshrouded in multifarious discourses. However, what queer theory is not is "simply the promotion of homosexual or lesbian relationships set in opposition to heterosexuality. Rather than referring to same-sex object choices, 'queer' defines a method of thinking about desire outside binary oppositions, including the opposition between heterosexuality and homosexuality"(Newell, 2009). Norton (1999) appraised the ambiguity in defining homosexual literature in heterogeneous terms to cover an umbrella theory about the state of such literature. He asserts that

> Homosexual literature as a monolith, would have to be represented not only by literature with a dominant and overt homosexual theme written by an overt homosexual, but all the seemingly disparate categories of literature with a dominant and overt homosexual theme written by a latent homosexual; literature with an overt heterosexual theme written by an overt homosexual; literature with a bisexual theme written by a latent homosexual; literature with a latent lesbian theme written by a latent or overt bisexual and vice versa; literature with an overt homosexual theme written by an overt heterosexual; and a truly vast number of

> mathematical possibilities of literature with positive or negative, dominant or subordinate, overt or latent, male or female homosexual or bisexual or heterosexual themes written by guilty or proud overt or latent homosexual or bisexual or heterosexual male or female authors.

Hence, in as much as queer literatures aren't exclusively about queer love and same sex relationships, they however rally round non-normative sexualities, queer relationships, and disputing hetero-normative cultures. Kosofsky (1997) tries to determine "the queerness of a queer reading" and contends that "these readings begin from or move toward sites of same-sex, interpersonal eroticism--- *but not necessarily so*" (my emphasis).

For the most part, African queer literatures cannot be strictly viewed as "queer" but as queering hetero-normative hegemony. For now, queer African literatures are only handling issues revolving around gender, sexuality, homophobia and the "other" identity in literature. Unlike their Western counterpart that has 'queered' discourses and is now securely portraying narratives that are strictly queer. Souza (2016: 39) argues that authors of homosexual narratives have mainly focused on renouncing homophobia and glorifying queer pride. There has been a shortfall in capturing the true picture of homosexuality as it is lived in the societies. Souza argues that African literature through representation has captured the various dimensions to homosexuality in Africa--- limited though; some see it as a "taboo according to religion". Some even regard homosexuality as not an important issue for discussion or attention. Still yet, some Africans recognise and are beginning to recognise homosexuality as a possible sexuality. Souza argues that African literature has tried to capture aforementioned dimensions but to a very limited scope. He asserts that homosexual representation in African literature is "too shallow".

According to Stobie (2016), the fiction that emanates from postcolonial societies may be less graphic and explicit about sexualities than Western fiction, instead including homophobic judgments and coded references to queer sexuality.

For the most part, African queer fiction is still in its level of "queering" discourses still trying to drive a queer notion into literature, art and society in general, hence covering issues bordering around homophobia, gender, sexuality, transvestism and androgynous characterization. Maybe because of the hostile laws against homosexuality in Africa; African writers would rather cover discourses swirling around homosexuality and negate the basic theme of homosexuality. If not for South Africa where there are relatively lenient laws against homosexuality, most African states are hostile to LGBTI individuals and this is apparently captured in queer fictions that erupt from such terrains.

Chantal (2009) argues that the South African context, especially under the post-apartheid constitution, with its debates on human rights, sexuality and accountability, offers an excellent terrain for testing queer theory. However, queer discourses in South African fiction cannot be neatly tucked within a postcolonial politics, for there have been queer narratives abounding in South African literature which might not be necessarily read as queer narratives though. Set in the 1950s South Africa, with relatively no outburst of gay movements and queer prolepsis, Bessie Head's *A Question of Power*, long considered ambiguous and even unreadable now becomes clearer in the light of a queer reading. In Head's book, homosexuality is called "a disease one had to live with (and) one of the oddities of life" (p.120)

Epprecht (2005: 153) argues that early African literatures usually treat same-sex relationship in "schematic ways". Epprecht contends that African novels almost always have a general trope of

showcasing homosexuality as a Western import to corrupt or trouble Africans. He asserts that homosexuals also stand as "foils that allow African protagonists to reflect on the dignity of African culture and struggles against cultural imperialism" (140). African homosexuals in literature were always portrayed as indifferent and naive tools for the European's strange desire. Dunton (1989) believes that earlier African writers' depiction of homosexuality showcases an ideological foreshortening that is not typical of their larger thematic structures. He asserts that the more responsive and detailed treatments of homosexuality became evident in contemporary African fiction. However, the treatment of homosexual relationships still remains "schematic, and intentional".

For the time being, contemporary African narratives are practically at odds with the doctrinaire view of sexuality in African literature. For emerging writers, sexuality--- homosexuality and heterosexuality is no longer taboo issues in narratives. Epprecht (2005:140) contends that "homosexual characters and themes have been cropping up for at least five decades" in African literature. Nonetheless, Epprecht argues that a "common trope" is African writers presenting homosexuality as imported to corrupt, trouble and denigrate the African morality principle. He contends that gays and lesbians in these novels act as foils and baits that allow African protagonists to reflect on the dignity of African culture and struggles against cultural imperialism.

However, there are some narratives that are up and about tagging queer sexualities as natural and a possible pointer of sexuality. These contemporary African fictions are creating a secured haven for all queer subjects--- bisexuality, transvestism, gender identity disorder, transgender and non-normative homo-social cultures. In K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams,* the gay protagonist Tshepo argues that

> People always say that black culture is rigid and doesn't accept things like homosexuals and lesbians. You know the argument--- it's very unAfrican. It's a lot of crap. In my experience that kind of thinking comes from urbanized blacks, people who've watered down the real origins of our culture and mixed it with Anglo- Saxon notions of the Bible. It's stupid to even suggest that homosexuality and lesbianism are foreign to black culture. Long ago, before whites, people were of the blurs. They must have been (250)

The Quiet Violence of Dreams desperately tries to place the gay culture within the realm of normal African culture. Fortuin (2015:218) argues that the novel wrestles with whether "gay literature is part of the imperial cultural formation, or library of stolen ideas and images. Conversely, is Duiker's use of the coming-out novel also 'plagiarism' or indeed mimicry? Consequently, Munro (2012, Cited in Fortuin; 2015:199) analyses *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* as "revisiting the sexual trauma that haunts the prison memoirs of the apartheid era, reframing it within a celebration, rather than a stigmatization, of consensual same- sex erotics". Dlamini (2016) argues that in the novel's bid to create a secured space for the homosexual in the African culture it destabilizes and rejects the traditional sex and gender labels and performances. The novel shows characters that do not fit into the gender categories of man/woman, homosexual/heterosexual.

This argument fits into Cathy Cohen's acknowledgement of the "fluidity and movement of … sexual lives" (439), whereby a unique conceptualization of sexuality, one which tends to supplant socially named and presumably stable categories of sexual expression with a new fluid movement for and between varying forms of sexual behaviour. She asserts that queer theory and literature "stands in direct contrast to the normalizing tendencies of hegemonic sexuality" grounded in the idea of a static, stable sexual identities and behaviours (438).

Dunton (1989) contends that homosexuality in African societies is a discursive space that has "not been granted a history by African writers" but approached with a "sustained outburst of

silence". For Dunton, African writers were always willing and eager to override history and construct their tales with homosexuality totally dismissed and tagged 'unAfrican', thereby shunning available histories (Murray & Roscoe, 1998; Evans-Pritchard, 1970; Gaudio, 1996; Gevisser, 1995) of a native homosexuality in Africa. However, despite desperate bids to clean Africa of the queer syndrome it is pertinent to note that homosexual practices in Africa is as native as the African soil itself, and the unavailability of evidence of homo-social practices in Africa doesn't necessarily suggest an evidence of unavailability. As such, African authors step on these histories, reformulating them to suit the African strict hetero-normative hegemony, thereby relating homosexuality in disparaging muteness and intentional ignorance.

Epprecht (2009) asserts that same sex exceptions to heterosexual norms and ideals were also noted in descriptive accounts of African societies from as early as the sixteenth century. However, in *Heterosexual Africa,* Epprecht gave a different dimension to the open backlash of homosexuality as "Un- African". He argues that the view of an 'unAfrican' homosexuality might be true because "few Africans South of the Sahara even today would identify as homosexual, bisexual, lesbian, gay, queer, or any of the other terms coined by the West to signify a more or less innate individual sexual orientation". Epprecht unveils the notion of homosexuality in Africa as possibly bouts of situational perversion but not natural and immutable sexual identity as developed in the West.

Seidman (2013) argues that homosexuality must be viewed as an identity and "cannot be minimized as a discrete feeling or impulse".A vivid case of homosexuality not having to be an identity is captured in Gevisser's short story *Walking Girly in Nairobi*. Africans cannot relate to a homosexuality as natural identity. It is considered alien to the black culture. If an individual falls for a sexual role considered strange for his gender, the only way it has been read in the

black continent is that it is just a momentary perversion. For instance, Peter's homophobic father argues that

> Perhaps it is easier for many traditional Christian Africans to understand homosexuality as a material relationship than to accept it as natural and perplexing human behavior- or even as an offense against God. If my son is gay because of his desire or something innate, then the world is inexplicable. What becomes of all the church's teachings about sin? And what will happen to the family bloodlines and wealth? But if my son is gay *because he is needy, or greedy, it makes more sense*. (p.117) (my emphasis)

Peter's father only relates to Peter's homosexuality as a strategy to get out of poverty by getting support from foreign benefactors and sponsors. For him, the idea of a natural homosexuality is unfathomable. Moreover, "what will happen to the family bloodlines and wealth? Peter's father like the traditional African he is strictly views sex as exclusively for procreation.

Also, critiquing Dibia's *Walking with Shadows,* Chukwumah (2015) analyses the text as a "pro-gay and anti- Darwinian" narrative and the queer characters as critiquing the evolutionary character of their forbears". Chukwumah reiterates that *Walking with Shadows* undermines the biological theory of evolution by negating procreation and living as gay men, for homosexual romance apparently lacks coitus. In Chinelo Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees,* Ijeoma's mother who is totally at odds with Ijeoma's lesbian orientation argued on a Judeo-Christian backdrop that "how can people be fruitful and multiply if they carry on in that way?. (75), for her, homosexuality is an "abomination" and "is scandal enough--- the fact that it does not allow for procreation" (75)More so, Downing (1989) contends that

> In the medieval world, the most important distinction was between procreative and non-procreative practices. Anal or oral sex was condemned even within marriage, and regarded as more sinful than rape or incest because it was non- productive.

However, contemporary queer literatures are echoing that sex can merely be for pleasure and not necessarily for procreation. Hence, the rigid polar of sexuality as a fixed heterosexual coitus has been undermined and fluid sexual acts have taken over lovemaking. In *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*, Tshepo recounting his ordeal as a male prostitute complains that

> It all comes down to that: penetration. That's what (the clients) all want eventually. It is also what they persecute us for, that unspeakable thing men do together, corrupting nature. That final act (134)

In the same vein, it is pertinent to note that Podolsky (1991:54)argues that always almost, lesbian and gay sexuality and desire always have "more to do with personal happiness and sexual pleasure than with the 'material basis' of procreation". This being the case, these queer novels undermine and invert the meaning of sex which Baudrillard had identified as "a mode of production". Now, with neoliberal conceptions of sexuality, sexual activities have been dissociated from procreation and sex liberated from reproduction as evident in homosexual romance— lacking coitus.

According to Stobie (2016) contemporary African fiction since the publication of Coetzee's *Disgrace* has made a shift by portraying a more varied spectrum of sexuality, more awareness of gender issues, a consciousness of post colonialism and an experiment with form which envisions a future with new forms of gender performance and sexuality.

Ever since the characterization of Golder in Soyinka's *The Interpreters*, queer West African literatures created a space to be realistic and accommodating for shifting sexual meanings and erotic choices. Adenekan (2012) opines that like Aidoo's *Our Sister Killjoy*, Soyinka's *The Interpreters* (1965) speculates on homosexuality through the rubrics of race and culture. But even so, while lesbianism of Sissie in *Our Sister Killjoy* takes place in a foreign land— assigning foreign clime to homosexuality, queer representation in *The Interpreters*takes place in Nigeria,

but with a foreign gay character Joe Golder— an African American portrayed as too white to seem black. It would be rather odd to agree that Soyinka's *The Interpreters* treated homosexuality sympathetically and naturally African as some scholars think (Wazha, 2014; Desai, 2011:142). For Soyinka, homosexuality in the African American character Golder could only be appraised as a result of his intermeshing of race and identity; as "everything that is wrong with a Western- based romanticized Afrocentricity (Desai, 2011:141); what Homi Bhabha termed as the "compulsory hybridity of the colonized", through a process of enculturation---whereby the colonized or the subjugated culture is overwhelmed by the dominant tradition and the minorities accrue and take on the cultures and identity of the mainstream. Soyinka's tacit portrayal of Africa's homophobia is clearly evident in Noah's suicide for the singular fact of Joe Golder's sexual advances. As such, Wright (cited in Desai, 1997:122) views "the neurotic American quadroon" Joe Golder's obsessive attraction to blackness as "more sexual than racial". Wazha (2014) opines that Soyinka's *The Interpreters* is one of the first novels from West Africa to suggest that homosexuality was not a colonial burden that came across the Atlantic. It shows how Africans were unwilling to acknowledge the real possibility that being gay has nothing to do with the dictates of geography or with one's culture. Dunton (1989: pp.440&444) reads Soyinka's representation of a queer character Golder as "interesting" because "while Soyinka seldom projects a metaphorical identification of the stigmatization of homosexuality with that of blackness, he creates such identification as fundamental to Joe Golder's psychological make. He shows how Golder flaunts his blackness as a means of undermining the alienation he suffers because of his homosexuality. Dunton reads Soyinka's depiction of Golder as "unsympathetic", but even so, "goes beyond a simple stigmatization of his sexual orientation". Soyinka exhumed

the mental psychology of a homosexual, his racial complexes and his diverse and blended personality.

Nevertheless, Soyinka'a depiction of gay character Golder can barely be said to be a profound fit in African queer literature, for it quite sure depicts a queer character, but it nonetheless speaks volume about the reception of homosexuality in the African culture as represented in the characterization of Noah, and Sagoe; whose homophobia is symbolic of Africa and would rather continue in his intentional ignorance of queer practices than hint at its existence. In *The Interpreters,* Golder attacks Sagoe and show the availability of evidence of queer practices in Africa, for instance, "Do you think I know nothing of your Emirs and their little boys? You forgot history is my subject. And what about those exclusive coteries in Lagos?"(p.199), however, Sagoe, reflective of Africa's novelists', intellectuals' and politicians' general act of feigning ignorance of homosexuality; would rather "persist in [his] delusion" (199).

Golder in the same way is, as symbolized by Soyinka, the evidence that no race can be immune to "desire" and queerness. As such, Roberts and Reddy (2008: 11) argues that the view of homosexuality's 'UnAfricanness' "conceals a moral and cultural view that African societies are somehow unique and therefore immune to what perceived to be a Western and European import". But, Soyinka's characterization is absolutely at odds with this cultural and racial view of homosexuality. Nonetheless, despite Joe Golder's blackness, Zabus (2013:80) affirms that Soyinka's portrayal of an African American character as homosexual rather than a Nigerian hints that a Nigerian homosexuality was "unimaginable and only a diasporic black sexuality was conceivable". Therefore, Golder's homophobic representation by Soyinka is an intentional technique to flaw all alien sexualities as 'UnAfrican'; moreover Golder is always portrayed as too white to be black.

On the other hand, Simms (2016:149) argues that Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows*is the first West African novel to feature a protagonist struggling with his identity as a gay man. Simms reads the novel as "neither a happy coming out novel, nor a tale of despair and hopelessness". Dibia is arguably the first author from Nigeria to offer a fully developed account of homosexuality in literature. Before Dibia, Nigerian writers shrewdly refrained "from fully character[izing]… [a] non-schematic depiction of a homosexual relationship between African[s]" (Desai, 1997:733)

Dibia's daring narrative struck at issues considered sacred and profane in the Nigerian and African culture. With the criminalization of homosexuality in Nigeria and a 14years jail term adopted as punishment for all guilty of the crime, the Nigerian society outrightly condemns homosexual practices, thereby encouraging a public system of homophobia that has slyly crept into the society and its art as well that depict any queer theme. Authors try as much as possible to avoid topics that hint at fluid gender roles and non-normative sexualities. However, with the publication of Dibia's novels *Unbridled* and *Walking with Shadows*, these doctrinaire and rigid appraisal of gender and sex has been toppled with a new fluidity in gender roles in Nigerian literature.*Walking with Shadows* can rightly be said to be the icebreaker for queering Nigerian fictions.

Onukaogu and Onyerionwu (Cited in Chukwumah, 2015:131) avows that

> Jude Dibia's Walking with Shadows has remained of the talking points of present day Nigerian literature because of its audacious exploration of homosexuality. No Nigerian novel, present or past, has taken such a sacred and blasphemous tangent that has found a home in the West. With this novel, Dibia has become almost the Salman Rushdie (Satanic Verses) or Naguib Mahfouz (Children ofGebelaw) of Nigerian literature.

African queer fictions, despite queer themes are not fully 'queered'. Zabus (2009) argues that to date there have only been "embryonic attempts to consider the literary representation of same-sex desire in a pan- African context". And "more so than any discourse", Zabus believes that "literature, and in particular the novel, provides a necessary subjectivity by projecting homosexuality as a lived experience, contributing to shaping identity". As much as this argument is tenable, contemporary and latest queer fictions especially ones sprouting from South Africa renders the argument invalid. K. Sello Duiker's novels cannot be strictly placed in the same level with most emerging queer narratives. Pucherova (2009) asserts that Duiker is the first South African novelist to create a black gay protagonist, whose quest for identity eventually brings him to see his homosexuality as an inalienable part of his African identity and who prides in his queer identity.

Duiker's works are strictly queer and restructuring the mainstream idea about sexualities and sexual orientation. Carolin & Frenkel (2013) contends that Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* "maps the protagonist's burgeoning consciousness of the fluidity of sexual desire while it explores myriad same- sex intimacies". They proffer that by structuring the novel as a series of intersecting narratives and perspectives, Duiker resists and modifies singular readings of intimacy, desire and sexual identity in the text.

A common trope among contemporary African fiction is labeling homosexuality as a natural and inane identity— biologically and pathologically geared. Ijeoma in *Under the Udala Trees* argues that "it's not anybody's fault" (88) that she is gay. She feels and believes her sexual orientation is a product of biology rather than choice. Ever since the estrangement of homosexuality in the American Psychological Association's (APA) *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM), homosexuality has been denied to be triggered by psychic disorders. Most

homosexuals believed they were "born this way", to be gay and they "map all non-procreative sexualities against psychological problems of inadequacy or excess" (Carolin & Frenkel, 2013:43). Nonetheless, Duiker's novels according to Carolin & Frenkel "resists this pathologization of sexual variation" by relating his characters to have suffered one psychological trauma or the other and to have bisexual tendency". By so doing, Duiker is "disarticulating a long history trajectory of attempts to develop a medical pathology of non-procreative sexualities while simultaneously legitimizing a variety of same- sex desires".

Consequently, Carolin and Frenkel (2013:38) believes that Duiker "eroticizes rather than pathologizes same- sex sexual desires". *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* is one of the first notable South African texts to "engage critically and meaningfully with same- sex intimacies outside of a *taxonomical framework*" (my italics). In this case, Tshepo's homosexuality in *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* is read as a psychological syndrome and not "taxonomical"---- not natural or biological as appraised by most contemporary queer authors. The novel (*The Quiet Violence of Dreams*) resists "any singular taxonomical reading" and negates legitimizing the fixed categories of gay and straight by "disarticulating the relationship between sexual acts and identity formation". In Duiker's work, we can see an intentional bid to deconstruct the immutability of gender and dovetail the fragile space between sexual acts and identity formation. At a point in time, Tshepo is even unsure of his biological sex; he thinks he is gradually becoming a woman and having rounds of menstruation cycle because of always having to be penetrated like a woman and treated like one.

On a general note, *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* challenges the cultural invisibility of black homosexuals by proposing different ways of reading sexualities that refuse the simplistic binaries "between gay and straight, penetrative and non-penetrative, physical and emotional… explores

the multiple subjective aspects of male same-sex intimacies, embracing their fluidity and undefinability" (Carolin and Frenkel, 2013:37).

In *Walking with Shadows,* Dibia tries to proffer an argument for a natural sexuality, whereby individuals 'realize' rather than 'choose' their sexualities. The gay protagonist Adrian argues that

> He was gay. He knew this ever since he started having sexual urges as a child. He had realized he was different from his brothers and other boys. He knew at seven when he shared a bath with a friend spending the night, Ekene…he felt a closeness to Ekene that was not entirely platonic. He had no name for it then as a child, but as he grew up, experiencing this feeling for other boys and then men, he knew the words: homosexual, gay! (24)

Azuah (2009) criticizes Dibia's unrealistic and unpalatable thematic construction. She affirms that "verisimilitude is also an issue" in the text. She finds fault in reconciling Dibia's use of characters who are crippled by a lack of good knowledge of the theme of the story. For instance, it is rather ambiguous and seemingly manipulative to understand some of Dibia's arguments. For instance, Adrian the protagonist says

> …being gay has nothing to do with the physical action of sex or a person's sexual preference, be it with the opposite sex or same. Sleeping with a man or woman will always remain the individual's choice. I am gay because it is who I am. It is the way I see the world. It is the way I reason and live. It is waking up in the morning and going to bed at night. It is listening to music and loving it. It is watching a movie and wanting to see it over again. It is laughing when I am happy and crying when I am sad. It is appreciating the simple things life brings and not the act of sexual intercourse. Sex on its own is a physical expression of love or lust… a man can be gay all his life without actually sleeping with another man (239)

For the most part, mode of sexual romance preempts sexual identities and sexuality is technically determined by how and why individuals copulate. As such, this jaundiced view of sexual orientation isn't necessarily tenable for it undermines the basic pointer to sexual orientation—genitalia. Adrian argues that gayness comes natural to him because it is "who I am" as he said. It

would also be rather odd to reconcile that a naturally gay character could father a baby with a woman and get married and partake in a heterosexual romance for five (5) years. This overemphasized view of queerness by Adrian lacks a fully appraised knowledge of queer orientation which as Chukwumah (2015:611) affirms that "[p]hysical contact is the very essence, the definitive essence of being gay— the evidence he (Adrian) and his gay group friends (Femi, Abdul, Antonio) exhibit".

Despite the emphatic argument for a natural and biological gayness, Dibia overlooks the fact that Adrian's first erotic contact was with a man like him Ekene, and isn't it typical that had it been it was to be a woman, he certainly would have felt this certain throb or "closeness" or "feeling" as he has felt for Ekene? For Edelman (2004: pp. 24&25) "queerness undoes the identities through which we experience ourselves as subjects, insisting on the Real of a 'jouissance' that *social reality and the futurism on which it relies have already foreclosed*" (my italic).

Moreover, Carter in her *The Sadeian Woman* refers to "erotic relationship" as the "most self-conscious of all human relationships". As such, Schoene (2006) argues that "no sexual desire or act ever comes 'naturally' to anybody", however, argued Schoene, "sexualities operate as [a] dependent variables within a vast complexity of macro-political equations of power which for the most part are entirely beyond our control". This being the case, sexuality shifts and constantly dovetails according to one's instinctive drive.

Duiker preordains his characters to be bisexual; and practicing at a point in time either of the sexualities according to their pleasure seeking thralls. It is pertinent to note that Tshepo in *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*drops heterosexuality "[a]fter experiencing unsatisfactory sex with women, he then embraces homosexuality as a transcendental, superior form of mystic

brotherhood, which entails the exclusion of women" (Zabus, 2009). As such a sexuality cannot be said to be natural and preordained by biological factors because individuals always have a choice to choose their behaviour and personality— to be or not to be, to "do" or not to "do" as triggered by their individual drive. If sexuality was predetermined by genes and hormones, it would be technically impossible for Ijeoma in *Under the Udala Trees*, Tshepo in *The Quiet Violence of Dreams,* Adrian in *Walking with Shadows* to crisscross between homosexuality and then back to heterosexuality with such apparent ease. This therefore evokes that there is an element of flexibility in sexual orientation; and most possibly, socio-cultural traditions and mores are basic influential factors. As such, we can't absolutely dispel Freudian theory and psychological drives for forming sexual orientation.

Souza argues that there's a lot to be done on the study of homosexuality in the African context, which many authors have shied away from and instead immerse themselves with popular themes such as post-colonial disillusionment, corruption and politics. Apparently, the need in African literature to project a strong, undaunting masculine image of a married male overrode the need to depict an alternative sexuality. However, Epprecht in *Heterosexual Africa* argues that "what appears… as timeless African tradition today… is often historically quite recent and contested. Same-sex sexuality and attitude toward it thus clearly have a history in Africa, just as they do elsewhere in the world (p.10). Hence, all sexualities cannot be said to quite fit into Adrienne Rich's (1980:140) abhorred term of "compulsory heterosexuality" and "institutionalized heterosexuality", after all, as Foucault (1978: 49) shows that since the 19th century there has been "an explosion of unorthodox sexualities" and sexuality has overlapped the tiny and rigid canvas made for it. Queer narratives, in the same vein, portray this paradigmatic shift in the politics of

sexuality and project narratives that do not adhere to popular performances of gender or biological sex.

Souza (2016) contends that "homosexual characters are represented in a marginalized fashion", and that the homosexual protagonist is not treated accordingly and proffer that perhaps African authors are still struggling to address the issue of homophobia and later on move to the normal representation of homosexual protagonists as always related in the West. Even though Epprecht argues that African artists who were once coy about portraying same-sex desire in positive light, now do so with considerable verve and artistic merit, Simms (2016) gave an unlikely view and contends that despite a "mouthful of LGBT narratives in [African] literature, there has been relatively little or no critical attention to these queer emergences in African writing as most writers still dismiss homosexuality as a Western perversion introduced by colonialists and technically not a black man syndrome who is ultimately immune from its grasp.

Also, Dunton (1989:422&427) argues that even when the treatment of homosexuality is not "crudely stereotypical, it remains monothematic… restricted and predictable". However, Dunton affirms that in some other texts, homosexuality is treated "non-pejoratively and plays an elaborate and central thematic function". Hence, the idea of literature as imparting traditional values had also changed its paradigms, since the so-called lesser issues of life are now the legitimate concerns of contemporary world and literary scholarship have, however, deviated from its overstayed order of strict and rigid orthodoxy.

Scholars dictate that there is a lot to be done in the area of queer studies in African societies which many authors have shied away from (Souza, 2016; Dunton, 1979; Adenekan, 2012). Souza (2016:40) proposed the need for much interest in African queer literature. He believes

> There is a need for a comparative study in the representation of homosexuality in traditional fiction such as that of Wole Soyinka and Ama Ata Aidoo to that of contemporary authors such as Binyavanga Wainaina, Osman Diriye, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Jude Diriya (sic) and evaluate the shift that has been there in the representation of homosexuality. Furthermore, it can be helpful if African literature that represents homosexuality be put in comparison with Western literature that represents the same. This is to draw similarities and differences since there have been speculations that African homosexuality maybe Western import. The comparison will be necessary to appreciate how the issue of homosexuality is treated in different cultural contexts and the way it is represented in fiction by authors from different continents.

This comparison will depict the major thematic preoccupations of these temporal settings, their points of disparity as well as convergence; it will also open up new discourses that have not been covered by any of these socio-temporal authors. Nevertheless, it is apparent that early and contemporary authors have diverse thematic preoccupations. While contemporary authors are reflective of queer themes and characters, earlier writers are deflective and burying this history, while early writers are concealing, contemporary writers are conveying. These different preoccupations will say a lot to the queer African reader trying to understand the politics behind queer culture in Africa.

CHAPTER THREE

A PSYCHOANALYTICAL READING OF CHINELO OKPARANTA'S *UNDER THE UDALA TREES*

3.0 Introduction

This chapter employs Freudian Psychoanalytic theory to explore and appraise queerness through the actions and thoughts; subconscious and subliminal desire of queer characters in *Under the Udala Trees*. Freudian psychoanalytic theory and theories of psychosexual development will go a step further to uncover libidinal impulses and queer tendencies in queer as well as heterosexual characters which might have been repressed, suppressed, sublimated or actuated as the case may be. Freudian theories of the tripartite psyche (id, ego and super ego), dissolution of the Oedipus complex, fixations, and penis envy in girls will be used to read queer characters and themes as psychical disorders.

3.1 A Freudian Psychoanalytic Analysis of *Under the Udala Trees*

For Freud, inserting the penis in the vagina is the normative representation and expression of a mature human sexuality, anything short of this is either a "perversion" or "inversion". Chinelo Okparantra's *Under the Udala Trees* portrays a totally odd kind of sexual desire in some queer characters, Ijeoma, Amina and Ndidi— homosexuality and amorous fetishism even when Freud (1905: 1476) argues that the "normal sexual aim is regarded as being the union of the genitals in the act known as copulation, which leads to release of the sexual tension."

In *Under the Udala Trees*, to understand Ijeoma's sexuality it is pertinent to understand the circumstances she grew up in: her absent father, her distant mother and her comradeship with

Amina. According to Freudian Psychoanalytic theory, an individual's early experiences and unresolved development of personality resurfaces later in his/her life as inversion or perversion.

3.1.1 Sublimated Desire

It is undeniable that Ijeoma's inversion has come a long way. She has always had homoerotic tendencies since her childhood. In page 36 of the text (*Under the Udala Trees*), it is remarkable the profoundness with which Ijeoma notices the "two older girls from school". She notices their untidy hair, she notices "something" in the manner of their movement which she says reminded her of "old dishrags, worn and poked through with holes". But most importantly, she notices "something beautiful about them too. Something about the way their body swayed as they walked". Ijeoma's lurid description of these strolling ladies has gone beyond a normal description. Ijeoma is unconsciously watching the ladies erogenous parts and the way they walk stimulates her which she thinks is "beautiful". More so, the "old dish rags" that their bodies remind her of can accurately be a yonic symbol which Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams* says denotes the woman and her body. Freud maintains that "boxes, cases, chests, cupboards and ovens represent the uterus, and also hollow objects, ships, and vessels of all kinds… are usually women" (821). Thus, we can conclude that "dish rags" as graphically captured can fall under Freud's "vessels of all kinds" because of their "hollow" shape and similar build. This symbol may have been represented in unrecognizable form, but the symbol in itself is a repressed wish connected with repressed thoughts— thus a disguised fulfillment of repressed wishes during the latency stage. Moreover, for Freud inversion may either date back to the very beginning or as far back as the subject's memory reaches.

The text portrays characters that intermittently live a double life as closeted homosexuals and public heterosexuals in view of the society's strict hetero-normative status; in this case, Freud's theory of the id, ego and super ego influences characters' instincts according to their ability to resist and tame or subject themselves to the demands of their desire and the id. Ijeoma, even with a firm super ego symbol in her mom, helplessly falls into the demands of the id and follows her instinctive feelings to homosexuality. Her wildly ravishing id has overwhelmed her feeble ego, conquered a firm super ego and finally tosses her into impulsive sexual desire she is totally remorseless of and oblivious of societal norms. Ijeoma's sexual instinct struggles against mental forces which Freud stipulated as requirements for resistances against libidinal impulse and instinctive desire of which shame and disgust are the most prominent. Freud (1905: 1487) argues that

> It is permissible to suppose that these forces play a part in restraining that instinct within the limits that are regarded as normal; and if they develop in the individual before the sexual instinct has reached its full strength, it is no doubt that will determine the course of its development

Hence, in Ijeoma, Amina and Ndidi the different course of development of these restraining "resistances" which practically gears their different degrees of homosexuality is evident. Ijeoma is obviously a passive homosexual who has to struggle with her sexual instincts to submerge her pestering ego and superego before giving in to her homoerotic cravings; while Amina, a latent one is inactive with a stronger ego and super ego to direct and caution her wild id, any wonder she abandons her first love (Ijeoma) and passion aligning herself to the society's heterosexual standard by getting married to a man. On the other hand, Ndidi's homosexuality, what Freud referred to as "the most extreme form of inversion" is present from early childhood and "the person concerned will feel at one with his peculiarity" (1466). Ndidi is helplessly a contented

lesbian who decides to have nothing to do with heterosexuality throughout the text, unlike Ijeoma who had bouts of heterosexual romance before finally accepting her queerness as a natural category of sexuality and even went as far as abandoning her family and husband just to practice her queer desire.

According to Freud, *inverts* vary according to the peculiarity of their sexual instinct. Some of them accept their inversion as natural just as a normal person accepts the direction of his libido, and even assert energetically that inversion is as legitimate as the normal attitude; others rebel against their inversion and feel it as a pathological compulsion. This view is evident in the three queer characters in *Under the Udala Trees* with their different orientation to their homosexuality. More so, Freud (1905:1466) maintained that the fact of a person struggling in their way against a compulsion or to 'right' their inversion may perhaps determine the possibility of his being influenced by suggestion or choice. Hence, homosexuality is strictly determined by choice.

It would also be rather odd that after Freud's assertive statement of the unnaturalness of "inversion" he concedes that inversion as an *innate* character "is only attributed to the first, most extreme, class of inverts, and the evidence for it rests upon assurances given by them that at no time in their lives has their sexual instinct shown any sign of taking another course" (1468). Therefore, Ndidi, and eventually Ijeoma show signs of *extreme* inversions which probably, even though debunked by some scientists and sex theorists, have a pathological cause. Nevertheless, Freud argues that in many other homosexuals, external influences at one point in their lives, whether of a favorable or inhibiting character, have led to a fixation in inversion. Meanwhile, in *Under the Udala Trees*, Ndidi is self-satisfied with her personality that she sees nothing remorseful about being a lesbian in Nigeria except for the homophobic systems. She tells Ijeoma in proud contentment that "[t]his kind of life is not for everyone. People like us are getting

killed" (215), nevertheless, she'd rather bask in her homoeroticism despite its riskiness than be heterosexual. But for the other inverts, Freud sees influences like: "exclusive relations with persons of their own sex, comradeship in war, detention in prison, the dangers of heterosexual intercourse, celibacy, sexual weakness" (1469) as a major trigger to homosexuality.

Therefore, all or most of these factors have here and now appeared in the queer characters in *Under the Udala Trees* which possibly shows and affirms Freud's (1910: 2819)) assertion in *Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis* that early in the lives of homosexual characters, a sexual impression occurred which left a permanent link towards one's predisposition to homosexuality or not.

Ijeoma's inability to resolve her penis envy adequately because of the absence of her father has dire consequences in her sexual development. Her distant mother's failure to offer her the figure to align to in order to be femininemakes her to grow up craving the penis and thus puts herself in the place of her father in order to exercise the masculinity she was unable to resolve and then eventually abandon to learn femininity from her mother who also wasn't present when she needed her. In the case of Ijeoma, the lesbian protagonist of *Under the Udala Trees*, 'sexual weakness' as Freud graphically stated is noticed in her characterization since from childhood. She never felt woman enough when she saw the two unidentified ladies strolling pass her house with visible "chests" (breasts) while hers is "hardly a chest at all, more like two tiny balls of pounded yam, flattened…"; she suddenly felt "shy and inadequate" (35). This feeling, this withdrawnness from sexuality and her sexual body becomes buried in her unconscious mind, where Freud sees as comprising acts that are "temporarily unconscious… processes such as repressed ones, which if they were to become conscious would be bound to stand out in the crudest contrast to the rest of the conscious processes" (2996), only to dictate her sexual feeling

in later years. Ijeoma, who sees herself as not woman enough for her body's inability to develop feminine sexual organs totally "freaks out", despises her feminine body and sees herself as more man than woman. This inverted transsexual feeling is what conceives her promises to Amina while trying to woo her love back that:

> All the things the boy will do, I promise to do better. In all the ways that he can love you, I promise to love you better (166)

Hence, Ijeoma fittingly shows signs of what Freud (1920:3859) refers to as a "masculine mind, irresistibly attracted by women, but alas! Imprisoned in a feminine body".

Freud argues that in homosexuals, exclusive relation to persons of their own sex or comradeship positively triggers homoerotic feelings. And in fact, it is worthy of mention that Ijeoma, emphatically asserts that "if I had not met Amina, who knows, there might be no story at all to tell" (5). This affirmation goes beyond a mere statement seeing that in page 4 of the text Ijeoma fretted over her not meeting Amina if the "sending away had not occurred". This goes to show that the girls' contact had dire consequences for their later personalities. Ijeoma and Amina have been together, enclosed in their little hut and young mind, away from the society's systems where Ijeoma led Amina, her teenage lover "into [her] hovel, where [she] offered half of [her] mattress to her" (107). Hence, isn't it rather less surprising, that the first sexual object that Ijeoma had has to be Amina who she has been locked up with in her world? As such, it isn't any odd when Ijeoma say about her meeting Amina that: "[t]his was my first time getting to know one in an intimate way (108). In this case, supporting Freud's (1920) argument that "[h]omosexual enthusiasms, exaggeratedly strong friendships tinged with sexuality, are common enough in both sexes during the first years after puberty."

Ijeoma undergirds Freud's argument about comradeship and exclusive relations to persons of the same sex as a pointer to homosexuality when she agrees thus

> I crave Amina's presence for no other reason than to have it. It was certainly friendship too, this intimate companionship with someone who knew me in a way that no one else did. It was a heightened state of friendship. Maybe it was also a bit of infatuation. But what I knew for sure was that it was also love. Maybe love was a combination of friendship and infatuation. A deeply felt affection accompanied by a certain sort of awe. And by gratitude. And by a desire for a lifetime of togetherness. (150)

The bonding between Ijeoma and Amina is thus precipitated by their comradeship at the grammar school teacher's house which continued up into the future.

Freud also supports his theory of psychoanalysis by tendering that the fear of the dangers of a heterosexual intercourse can also give rise to homoerotic desire. Superficial as this assertion may seem, it is however valid when considering the unmentionable effect that phobic disorders can have on an individual's psyche.

Freud argues that in young unmarried women sensual excitation has an admixture of fear of what is coming and what is unknown and half-suspected. The girl, thus look away and try to repress from her consciousness the thing that frightens her.

In *Under the Udala Trees*, Ijeoma is fully aware of her mother's widowed status ever since her father was killed in a military shoot out. The fear of ending up in marital misery like her mother— widowed at an early age causes her to repress her heterosexual inclinations and abhor anything or means that may likely want her in the same path with her mother. Ijeoma meditates on the endless pathetic possibilities that a heterosexual romance might end up with. She thinks about her mom and her misfortune cautioning herself "I would one day marry, but what if one day I found myself like her, suddenly without a husband" (23). This fear is likely what resurfaces

in her fortuitous distaste of Chibundu and his love advances. In fact she refers to his visits as "unwanted attention that I did not know what to do about, how to dispose of" (211), but even so, her evenings were "reserved for Ndidi, and [she] could hardly imagine a better way to spend them" (211)

3.1.2 Battle for Resistance: Id vs. Ego

In *Under the Udala Trees*, there are visible evidences of the tripartite psyche and its constant meddling with human personality and acts. A conscious tussle between giving in to the id, affirming the dictates of the ego or upholding the super ego is noticeable in the characters' personality and actions. The 'id', what Freud (1923:3950) referred to as "the great reservoir of libido" contains all pleasure seeking thralls, amorous passions and libidinal satisfactions. The 'id' is basically hedonistic and the "ego will be needed to bring the influence of the external world to bear upon the id and its cravings to substitute reality principle for pleasure principle which are unrestrained in the id. Freud sees the ego as representing "reason and common sense, in contrast to the id, which contains the passions" and the superego as the part of the unconscious that acts as the conscience, the moral guide. In *Under the Udala Trees*, the struggle for dominance between the id and the super ego in Ijeoma is remarkable. Referring to her romance with Amina, she says:

> I wanted to ask for forgiveness for the things I had done in Nnewi. Not a day had passed when I did not remember those things… crave those things; … wanting to repeat them. But now, I sat in church and for the first time I felt an overwhelming sense of guilt. I wanted to ask God to help me turn my thoughts away from Amina, to turn me instead onto the path of righteousness … but somehow the words of prayer would not come. (72/3)

The superego, the conscience is trying to reconcile Ijeoma to a moral conscience, to a normative value and align her into the society's accepted system, however, the lewd and pestering id, that has never been to no good is adamant and seductively bewitching by opening up hedonistic cravings for her lesbian partner. The id is known for offering up instinctive libidinal urges and desire to subjugate the conscience and perception in individuals thereby predisposing them to cathectic desire.

The superego can also be seen doing its bidding of redirecting Ijeoma's instinctive sexual drive to the norm. The superego, which also appeared in the form of a dream, what Burdach (1838: 499; cited in Freud) says represent "reality in symbols". Ijeoma's dream is considerably as vital as her waking life. Hilderbrandt (cited in Freud) argues that dreams

> Derive their materials from reality and from the intellectual life that revolves around that reality… Whatever strange result they may achieve, they can never in fact get free from the real world; and their most sublime as well as their most ridiculous structures must always borrow their basic material either from what has passed before our eyes in the world of the senses or from what has already found a place somewhere in the course of our waking thoughts— … from what we have already experienced either externally or internally (524)

This insightful argument shows that dreams lead us back to ordinary life instead of divorcing us from it. Hence, Ijeoma's dream of confrontation "with mama's scolding face, her reprimanding finger wagging at me, threatening to poke out an eye. The images of mama were interspersed with a thunderous sound that, in the dream, was the voice of God, scolding also like mama, reprimanding, condemning me for my sins (201)" could hardly be classified as merely another surreal mental activity. The dream is immersed in symbols which inordinately caution Ijeoma's conscience. The image of her mother and the "voice of God"— scolding, reprimanding is a significant symbol of the superego. As Dobie (2012) affirms "[p]arents, who enforce their values

through punishments and rewards are the chief source of the superego, which furnishes a sense of guilt for behavior that breaks the rules given…" The superego basically works against the demands of the id, repressing socially unacceptable desire. In Ijeoma, the superego came in a dream, cautioning and warning her. The thunderous sounds and the voice of God is another symbol of the superego, which aligns with the threatening mother to work against Ijeoma's id and repress her homoerotic desire into the unconscious. The ego, which operates according to the reality principle, also contributes in regulating the wild desire of the id. The ego is noticeable when Ijeoma acknowledges that "[t]he Koran condemns it as well. I don't know much of Islam, but I know enough to know that the Koran and the Bible see eye to eye on this matter! (125)". This comment recognizes the state of affairs in the society. It mediates between the inner selves of the characters and the outer world.

Unlike Ijeoma and Ndidi who cannot conquer the desire of their id and ends up as extreme inverts and feel themselves "every bit a couple" (320), Amina, one time a lesbian but moves on to divorce her homoerotic feelings and practice heterosexuality. Ijeoma, who is symbolic of the id trying to rapture Amina to their lesbian relationship stated that "you and I both know it's not what you want (a heterosexual love)" (171), but Amina, with a stronger ego at work cut in "I want to marry him, I really do" (171). This goes to show that the id, all sorts of sensual perversions, inversions and regressions can be adequately conquered and their libidinal urges suppressed. According to Freud (1905:1466) "inversion….may either persists throughout life, or it may go into temporary abeyance, or again it may constitute an episode on the way to a normal development… [a] periodic oscillation between a normal and an inverted sexual object" depending on the conquest of the id over the ego and superego or vice versa. This oscillation is noticeable in Amina and even Ijeoma here and now until she finally plunges fully to the demands

of the id. But Ndidi, who at no time has ever tried being heterosexual can be said to be fully under the caprices of her desire what Freud refers to as "absolute inverts"— whose sexual objects are exclusively of their own sex. Persons of the other sex leaving them cold, or even arousing sexual aversion in them. Ijeoma eventually descends into this stage and shares decades with her lesbian partner Ndidi in exclusive homosexuality.

The fact that Ijeoma's husband Chibundu cautions Ijeoma to dispel her lesbian urge and try loving him shows that the id— the reservoir of lewd and instinctive urges can actually be redirected and tamed. Chibundu says "[y]ou haven't tried enough. If you put your mind to it, I know you can love me the way a woman is supposed to love her husband" (285). Thus, with an increased effort from Ijeoma to dispel all instinctual urges she would have possibly and successfully overwhelmed her lesbian desire.

3.1.3 The Oedipus complex and Infantile Development of Sexuality

Before Freud, children are believed to be asexual, lacking any sexual drive or feeling; however Freud propounds that the best way of handling psychoanalysis is by tracing its origin and development. As such, Freud plunges into the roots of sexual personality development and found out that children are as sexually active as adult only that theirs tend to be unconscious. Freud (1898:472) in *Sexuality in the Aetiology of the Neuroses* argued that "[w]e do wrong to ignore the sexual life of children entirely… children are capable of every psychical sexual activity, and many somatic sexual ones as well… human sexual life does not begin only with puberty", however, this libidinal drive is sublimated and it strives to avoid any great degree of sexual activity during childhood; the sexual instinctual forces are meant to be stored up so that, on their release at puberty they may serve and direct the individual's sexual instinct and urge. In *The*

Sexual Enlightenment of Children (1907)Freud believes that the new born baby brings sexuality with it into the world.

Freud argues that it is a "gross error" to believe that the sexual instinct is absent in children and only begins to emerge in them at puberty when the sexual organs must have been matured. In *Under the Udala Trees*, we can see the work of the Oedipus complex in Ijeoma and eventually the unfortunate dissolution of that complex which most probably disposes her to her unique sexuality. Freud (1905:1539) sees the Oedipus complex as "represent[ing] the peak of infantile sexuality, which through its after-effects, exercises a decisive influence on the sexuality of adults. Every new arrival on this planet is faced by the task of mastering the Oedipus complex, anyone who fails to do so falls a victim to neurosis". Ijeoma, as well experienced her Oedipus complex but which unfortunately ended up unresolved. Unlike the boy whose 'normal' Oedipus complex entails taking the place of his father in a masculine manner and having intercourse with his mother as his father did, hence developing a masculine sexuality, the girl's complex, according to Freud, simply involves taking the place of her mother and adopting a feminine attitude towards her father. Ijeoma's positive dissolution of the Oedipus complex was relatively achieved until her father's sudden death— the bearer of the penis and the baby which she so much deserves from him to have a healthy and developed personality complex but unable to. Hence, in *The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex* (1905:4090) Freud says the feminine Oedipus complex

> [C]ulminates in a desire which is long retained, to receive a baby from her father as gift—to bear him a child. One has an impression that the Oedipus complex is then gradually given up because this wish is never fulfilled. The two wishes— to possess a penis and a child— remain strongly cathected in the unconscious and help to prepare the female creature for her later sexual life

This libidinal and incestuous urge towards the father is seen in Ijeoma's total veneration of her father and physical bonding to him. The feelings Ijeoma shows towards her father can be said to be a little more above ordinary. Her countenance changes, her feelings heightened and sensations deepen anytime she comes in contact with her father. For instance, she agrees that she "stood so close [to her father] that I could not help but take in the smell of his Morgan's hair pomade" (6) which she says reminds her of medicine, which she wished she could cure the war (Biafran War) if it was "some sort of illness". This 'cure' that Ijeoma is so much seeking for can be a cure from her father, his phallic symbol which is supposed to offer her a baby and the 'war' she is trying to cure is a personal repressed war she is fighting in her subconscious to dispose of her mother and fully possess her father but sublimates the latent content to dissolve its potency.

Ijeoma's nagging bid to sexually posses her father is portrayed in the text in the arousing and erotic manner she notices her father's physical features. For instance, she says

> We stayed in silence, and I observed the rigidness of his posture, the way his back refused to lean against the chair. His legs appeared to be stuck firmly to the ground. His lips spread… (7)

Throughout the text, Ijeoma whines and fumes over her father's absence in her life. His vacant space, which would have provided her a template for a heterosexual romance became suddenly cut up and immaturely dissolved which finally predisposes her toward a homosexual inclination. Left alone with her mother, who doesn't have the penis she desires, and her object of jealousy, Ijeoma's attainment of a normal feminine sexuality becomes jeopardize and her thought of obtaining a penis someday and becoming like the man she never had (her father) persists into her subconscious, then adulthood and becomes a motive for strange and unaccountable sexual desire. As Freud (1925: 4154) argues in*Some Psychical Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction*

Between the Sexes, the girl's attachment to her father has to be abandoned later on which may lead to her identification with him and the girl may get fixated to her masculinity complex.

Freud believes that the "biological bedrocks" that influences sexual behaviour are penis envy in women and castration anxiety in men. In Freud's philosophy, every human being is biologically ordained to be sexually attracted to the parent of the opposite sex during childhood and to identify with the parent of the same sex (Freud, 1933, 1940). Thus, since Ijeoma doesn't have a regular dissolution of the Oedipus complex, her inability to fully construct a feminine personality due to an incomplete presence of the incestuous symbol— her father, made her protest her sexuality, cling to her narcissism and desire and become homosexual and masculine rather than take the place of her mother. After she has had to relinquish her father as a love object, Freud (1923:3966) argues that the little girl will become masculine and identify with her father (the object which has been lost) instead of with her mother.

Ijeoma refuses to accept the fact of being castrated since she lacked that consummation from the Phallic symbol (due to her father's early absence), she thus hardens herself in the conviction that she does posses a penis, since she had been given none; and subsequently compelled to behave as though she were a man searching only for feminine symbols to satisfy her sexual desire. A chaotic dissolution of the Oedipus complex can hamper the attainment of a normal sexuality, as some theorists assert that unresolved pre-oedipal and oedipal conflicts invariably were the driving force behind homosexuality (Socarides, 1978; Bergler, 1944).

Freud (1924) propounds that the positive resolution of the Oedipus complex was the central developmental task for all humans in order to attain a healthy sexuality. In his *Three Essays on Sexuality*,sexual and psychological maturity were defined as identifying with the parent of the

same sex, renouncing one's longing for the parent of the other sex and then ultimately seeking an adult heterosexual partner of one's own. We can say that, Ijeoma immaturely had to let go her longing for her father because of his sudden demise and didn't necessarily renounce her feelings for him, thus the arrested development. And by identifying as him— a 'fixation' on her teenage oedipal development that serves to fulfill what was not satisfied at an early age. Hence, the unconscious repressions formed at that tender age is what is resurfacing as inversions in the future— her same sex orientation and lesbian libidinal urge. A typical Freudian explanation for homosexuality is the inverted case of a boy identifying with his mother and seeking an object resembling his father and a girl identifying with her father and seeking a symbol like her mother as is the case with Ijeoma in *Under the Udala Trees*.

According to Freud, the most extreme form of inversion is present from a very early age and that the person concerned will feel at one with his peculiarity. This is evident in Ijeoma and the manner in which she negated societal demands of a heterosexual marriage, her mom's persistent nagging about her sexual orientation, and even her family and husband just to settle down with Ndidi her lesbian lover which she sees as her other wheel of a bicycle (320). This feeling of an inborn homosexuality that Ijeoma thinks she has is what triggered her to ask her mother who was encouraging her to get married: "what if it's(marriage) not for me?" (223).

Freud (1905) argues that in the case of some hysterics, it is found that the early loss of one of their parents, whether by death, divorce or separation, with the result that the remaining parent absorbs the whole of the child's love, determines the sex of the person who is later to be chosen as a sexual object, and may thus open the way to permanent inversions. Even though, Ijeoma does not neatly show signs of hysteria, it can be deduced that events she have been forced to pass through can predispose her to hysteria. But even so, she here and now shows symptoms of mild

hysteria in her excessive and uncontrollable fear, emotional outbreaks and mental agitation. Her violent childhood— faced with grievous wars, gory scenes and tumultuous environments from the Biafran war can be said to distort or arrest a normal development of personality in her childhood. As well, the sight of her father murdered in his own blood can be traumatic and psychologically threatening for a teenage girl. Thus, the mere fact that Ijeoma loss one of her parents through death; she ordinarily transfers her whole love and emotions to the other, the living mother. This bond between mother and child is so strong that Ijeoma develops a paranoiac fear in her unconscious. For instance, her stream of consciousness about her mother thus "[a]lready I had lost papa. How could I bare to lose her too? (39). In this case, the absences of the opposite sex father— a model for heterosexual love ordinarily directs the emotions to the same sex parent— the model for a homosexual love. As such, Ijeoma's choice of same-sex love partners over the opposite sex is a 'regression' to her earlier love object— her mother.

Among the accidental factors that influence sexual object- choice, Freud finds that frustration (in the form of an early deterrence by fear, from sexual activity) deserves attention, and that the presence of both parents plays an important role. Also the absence of a strong father in childhood favors the occurrence of inversion.

Ijeoma avers heterosexuality since from her childhood. She confesses "[s]omeone kissed me once before… It didn't feel the way it feels with you" (118). But kissing Amina is "[t]ingly and good and like everything is perfect in the world" (119). This early frustration at trying heterosexuality totally distances Ijeoma from heterosexuality and drives her into homosexuality which she feels is harmless, spontaneous and undemanding.

What constitutes homosexuality is the peculiarity in choosing a sexual object and not even the instinctual feelings. Freud contends that the source of an instinct is a process of excitation occurring in an organ and the immediate aim of the instinct lies in the removal of this organic stimulus. Hence, a desire might not necessarily mean a fruition of the sexual drives; it is only a manifestation of instinctive desire which are lying dormant in every man, waiting for a suitable moment to find execution. A desire for a sexual object is psychically, physically, emotionally and mentally overwhelming. It goes beyond just what people do with their genitals and extend to feelings of satisfaction in aberrations, inversions and perversions. Freud (1905: 1477) in his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* argues that psychical valuation of the sexual object doesn't just stop at the genitals but extends to the whole body and even involves the sensations derived from it.

Even though the text doesn't specifically say that Ijeoma had a fetish, but her adoration and idolization of some of her lesbian lovers' body parts is remarkable. For instance, while sitting alone with Amina in their apartment at the grammar school teacher's house she confesses

> I… ran my fingers through her braid… the braids that I had plaited for her just that morning. I held her face in the palms of my hands and *pretended* to inspect her hair (117) (emphasis mine)

Admittedly, this action isn't merely an inspection of her lover's hair but a "physical valuation" driving towards attaining sexual pleasure. Ijeoma admitted running her "hands up and down Amina's braids some more, up and down her arms. And Amina did the same to me" (117) under the charm of the "usual night sounds: grasshoppers hopping, fireflies buzzing and crickets singing their songs, leaves rustling in the breeze" while the two lovers consummate their union in a blissful atmosphere under the sensation of nature and amorous bliss. Freud acknowledges that the subject becomes "intellectually infatuated" and his/ her power of judgments is weakened by

the mental stimulation and the beauty of the sexual object and thus submits fully to desire. Ijeoma affirms Freud's notion when she confesses to being instinctively aroused when her fingers brushed Ndidi's (184) and also when she was sitting with Ndidi on the sofa. Thus

> She reached out and slid her fingers up and down my arm. There was a clear attraction by now between us, and *therein lay my struggle* (189) (emphasis mine)

On the other hand, homosexuals are mostly known to be narcissists— in love with the charms of their own body too. Narcissism denotes the attitude of a person treating his own body in the same way in which the body of a sexual object is ordinarily treated— who looks at it, that is to say, strokes it and fondles it till he obtains complete pleasure and contentment through these activities.

Freud (1910: 2345) in the essay *Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis* avows that the absence of the original object of a wishful impulse is substituted by other objects which do not bring full satisfaction and this may include a longing for self-stimulation.Since Ijeoma met Ndidi, her ego has been trying to repress the id— her homoerotic urge, but not steadfast enough even with the presence of her mom (the superego) "in the next room". The autoerotic and masturbatory manifestations of her sexuality become apparent because of the failure to curtail her strange desire of the id. She says

> Alone in my bedroom, I was full of thoughts of Ndidi… she was there taking up all the spaces, right down to the cracks and crevices of my mind.… I found myself having a physical reaction to her in my thoughts. I became so engorged, so swollen with desire, that the only relief I could think of was to pleasure myself, a thing I had hardly done before (194)

Thus, Ijeoma's autoeroticism (masturbation) is a fixation to her narcissism which she eventually transforms into a homosexual object, thus her homosexuality. For according to Freud and Breuer

(1893) in their essay *On the Psychical Mechanism of Hysterical Phenomena: Preliminary Communication* sexual need, when once it has been aroused and has been satisfied for any length of time, can no longer be silenced; it can only be displaced along another path. So basically Ijeoma fits into Freud's (1909: 2093) definition of homosexuals as "persons who, owing to the erotogenic importance of their own genitals, cannot do without a similar feature in their sexual object. In the course of their development from autoerotism to object love; they have remained at a point of fixation between the two". Ijeoma, obsessed with her own body even to the extent of fondling herself, rightly has to find another object that will possess those same erotogenic features she has in order that she may not fully be dispossessed from her own erogenous body, thereby directing her sexual object choice to always reconcile with her own body in another similar body— the lesbian object.

To understand the characterization of Ijeoma, Ndidi and Amina (queer characters inChinelo Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees*) it is pertinent to employ Freudian psychoanalytic theories and Theory of Psychosexual Development to disclose that a character's identity is a considerable network of material of sexual excitations, composed of instincts that have been fixed since childhood, of constructions achieved by means of sublimation, and holding in check perverse impulses which has been lying dormant in all humans waiting for a fitting trigger to expose it.

3.2 Lesbian Feminism and Subversion of the "Phallus Quo"

> The Lesbian was and is unquestionably in the avant-garde of the fight for equality of the sexes, and for the psychical liberation of women
> (Wolffe, 1971: 66)
>
> I have nothing against the penis, it's the life support system that comes with it which I object to.
> Marianne Thamm

The avant-garde of Feminism— Lesbian Feminism, is the living proof that women do not need the phallus (Man) to bank on for sexual, physical, social and economic security, thereby undermining patriarchal status quo. Even though liberal feminism emphasizes women's emancipation from a masculine culture and society and equality of the two sexes; lesbian feminism on the other hand desperately encourages an outright divorce from overt phallic hegemony, radically undermines the tenets of "compulsive heterosexuality" and heteronormativity by advocating for policies of "separatism"— what Sheila Anne, (1992) sees as "not only a movement away from men, [but] also a movement towards women. A principle of moving towards lesbian, life- loving reality" and challenging the idea that women exist for and by men and that their sexuality is forever supposed to remain passive, fulfilling and accommodating to the masculine phallus and culture.

Lesbian feminism is a cultural movement that broke loose from Feminism to encourage women to rather channel their physical, sexual and intellectual drives towards other women and critically not to men, thereby advocating lesbianism as the crux of feminism. These activists propound that feminism might be the theory, but lesbianism is the practice; and every woman passionate about feminism must therefore compliment with a lesbian identity. As well, the lesbian manifesto of The New York Radicalesbians (cited in Denise) called on women to:

> [W]ithdraw emotional and sexual energies from men, and work out various alternatives for those energies in their own lives… disengaging from male-defined response patterns. In the privacy of our own psyches, we must cut those cords to the core, for irrespective of where our love and sexual energies flow, if we are male-identified in our heads, we cannot realize our anatomy as human beings (*Radicalesbian*s, 1970:20)

Sigmund Freud's antifeminist phallocentric assumption that "anatomy is destiny" couches his psychoanalysis in biological determinism whereby one sex is given natural prominence towards the other and undergirded his hegemony of the masculine phallus over the feminine. Hence, there is a congenital feminine inferiority placed on the woman since she is the castrated other— living eternally in infancy and objectivity and "deprived of the value of their sex", less likely to become the autonomous subjects, therefore being displaced and misrepresented in his psychoanalysis. Irigaray sees the woman as a "lack, absence, default", an incomplete creation in Freudianism. In this case, lesbian activists and key thinkers like Irigaray, Butler, Adrienne Rich, Audre Lorde, Anzaldua, amongst others were encouraged by this jaundiced standpoint in Freudian psychoanalysis and tried to critique and criticize Freudianism in order to recreate and rewrite the female identity in his premises. Masculinity has been enduringly marketed as the normative cultural identity. Lieberman (2012:9) contends that:

> Not only has sexuality been defaulted to the masculine, but masculinity has positioned itself as the master subject. By residing as the main subject, man is able to choose a point of reference from which he can always refer to as Other…. By positioning himself as the subject, man is able to prioritize himself as the only consistent perspectival position. That then leaves all other things in a position of reference.

In Freud and patriarchal culture, the woman is placed as the 'other' of man, a pathological dependent on the phallus, always jealous of the penis of the man; a jaundiced "representation" which Beauvoir sees as "the world itself, is the work of men; they describe it from their own point of view, which they confuse with absolute truth". This undeserving phallic hegemony is what lesbian feminism tends to subvert, invert and displace and because the lesbian makes love to the woman like herself outside the confines of procreation, she daringly stands as the ultimate threat to hetero-patriarchy. Her existence jeopardizes the myth of the inferiority and dependency

on the phallus of femininity and motherhood. In this case, Denise Thompson sees lesbian feminism as "commitment to women— our energies must flow towards our sisters" (21) in order to overlap the subjective status forced on femininity and rigorously attack and critique heterosexuality which assist in making the woman subservient on the male as a passive love object. As such, Denise blatantly argues that 'when you strip off all the packaging, you must finally realize that the essence of being a "woman" is to get fucked by men' (18). This notion Chinelo Okparanta braced up in a queer premise in *Under the Udala Trees* when Ijeoma argues that:

> Woman was created for man, yes. But why did that mean that woman could not also have been created for another woman? Or man for another man? Infinite possibilities and each one of them perfectly viable (83)

Radical lesbians argue that the central strategy of lesbian feminism was 'separatism'. Literally a total detachment from men in sexuality, and in virtually every way the separation of the sexes "organizationally, politically and personally" (Valeska, 1975: 8), as such, becoming desiring subjects just as the man. To be a lesbian and free from masculine subjugation, Frye (2005) believes the woman has to be a "heretic, a deviant, an undomesticated female, an impossible being. You have to be a virgin"; and being a virgin doesn't literally mean a woman whose "vagina was untouched by any man. It meant a female who is sexually and hence socially her own person". In this case, the characterization of Ndidi in *Under the Udala Trees* neatly fits into Frye's notion of "virgin" because Ndidi is portrayed as being 'socially and sexually' independent. Ndidi is free from the shackles of masculine domination because of her secured social status as a working class lady and her remorselessness at being without a man in a heterosexual culture. No mention was made of Ndidi ever being heterosexual in the novel; hence

she is totally independent of the grip and subjugation of masculinity. And in fact, Rich (1996:136) defines "lesbian existence" as:

> [C]omprises both the breaking of a taboo and the rejection of a compulsory way of life. It is also a direct or indirect attack on male right of access to women… a form of nay saying to patriarchy, and act of resistance

Ijeoma, who has been relegated to the duty of housewife due to society's patriarchy, sharply repels when Chibundu refers to her cooking as "tasteless" with "[t]hen next time you can make your food yourself'. Even when Chibundu snaps back telling her of his going to work all day and still yet coming home to hear her speak rudely to him, Ijeoma bravely adds:

> I cook for you all day and you have the audacity to complain that the food is no good to my face (255)

This subversion and inversion of the fixed categories of gender roles is what lesbian feminists are agitating for— turning the 'phallus' on itself, so gender roles become fluid, plastic and liberal. Ndidi, Ijeoma and even Amina— at a point in time, have all broken the boundary set for their sex and dispelled all obligatory roles the society have inflicted on them as "passive" objects during sex to follow their instinctive urges and drives. After all, Chibundu— Ijeoma's chauvinistic husband says "every man needs a wife", Ijeoma impudently remarks "I suppose *some* women would also do well to have a husband" (213) (my emphasis) and repeatedly emphasizing "some".

Adrienne Rich maintains that women are confined in a system of "compulsive heterosexuality" even when they don't want to because of the societal acceptability of heterosexuality and degradation of homosexuality. The society scorns at any identity that is non-normative because of its strangeness and instill rigid cultures on 'helpless bodies'. Rich (1996:134) sees compulsive heterosexuality as what "leads the daughter to 'accept' incest/ rape by her father, the mother to

deny that it is happening, the battered wife to stay on with an abusive husband". It is this 'compulsive heterosexuality' that inspires Ijeoma's mom in *Under the Udala Trees*to warn Ijeoma that "a woman and a woman cannot be. That's not the way it's done" when Ijeoma asks "what if it (heterosexual marriage) is not for me?" (223); the grammar school teacher to remind Ijeoma, after Amina was getting married that "it's (heterosexuality) just the way things are done" (177); it is also this 'compulsive heterosexuality' that also forces Amina to finally end up with a heterosexual partner despite the erotic bonding they share with Ijeoma. Eventually, when Ijeoma conquers this "compulsive heterosexuality" and heteronormativity, abandons her loveless and abusive marriage she soothingly exclaims "I would finally be excused from anymore of those nighttime obligations… from this captivity of a marriage (304)"

This aversion for the phallus is noticeable in Ijeoma who had to practice heterosexuality for its societal acceptability. Ijeoma refused consummating her marriage with Chibundu on their honeymoon and isn't it rather odd that a new bride, at the most erotic moment of her life refuses the penetration of the phallic on the wedding night? And even when the consummation finally happened (only because it was bound to), Ijeoma confesses "I allowed him to make love to me" (238) and not "they" making consensual love as she does and so graphically recount with her lesbian lovers Amina and Ndidi. So basically, to avoid the subjugation that heterosexuality comes with for the woman, the woman has to be radically indifferent towards the masculine phallus. She must be at odd with masculinity and hetero-patriarchy by being a non- conformist to customs and cultures. She must be a 'lesbian'— a menace to heterosexuality— though not necessarily become a lesbian to be a feminist, for being queer does not necessarily put one in an erotic relationship with people of the same sex, it only makes one 'queer', at odd with society, gender non- conformist and bender, different and most importantly be everything that the

'phallus' isn't. As Frye (2005:331) affirmed, "you do not have to be a lesbian to uncompromisingly embody and enact a radical feminism, but you also cannot be heterosexual in any standard patriarchal meaning of the word". For the clinical appellation of the term "lesbian", Adrienne Rich uses the term "lesbian continuum" to:

> [I]nclude a range— through each woman's life and throughout history— of woman- identified experience, not simply the fact that a woman has had or consciously desired genital sexual experience with another woman… intensity between and among women, including the sharing of a rich inner life, the bonding against male tyranny… (135)

Rich propounds for a female friendship and comradeship, as well as erotic relationship which is not in any way circumscribed to particular body parts or even to the body alone, but even to emotional, physical and social bonding. In *Under the Udala Trees,* this feminine comradeship and intense bonding is noticeable in Ijeoma and Amina and later in Ijeoma and Ndidi. Sharing a room together, the girls must have definitely formed an intense feminine relationship, away from the world and hetero-patriarchy. They bask in the uniqueness of their sex and sexuality and form a very strong bond that even after they were separated from each other, Ijeoma emotionally complain thus:

> I still thought of Amina. And, yes in that way (lewd way). How could I force away memories of a person with whom I'd shared all that time? There were nights when I dream of her, dreams so vivid that when I woke it seemed that the waking was the dream, and the dream my reality (85)

Ijeoma and Ndidi "feel [them]selves every bit a couple" (320) even though they can't be legally married in homophobic Nigeria, nonetheless, Ijeoma refers to her partner Ndidi as one wheel of the bicycle while she is the other one; such a supposedly rapturous bonding isn't any surprising considering the fact that Ijeoma abandoned her marriage, risked "coming out" in homophobic Nigeria and cared less about being an oddity in the society's strict normativity just to be with her

lesbian "sister", even though in phallic hegemony, "[w]omen are made taboo to women— not just sexually, but as comrades, Co-creators and conspirators" (Rich, 2005) and are forced and required to fit into an imposed system of female heterosexuality whereby

> Social institutions and practices [are] defined and regulated by patriarchal kinship systems, by both civil and religious law, and by strenuously enforced mores and deeply entrenched values and taboos. Those definitions, regulations, values and taboos are about male fraternity and the oppression and exploitation of women. They are not about love, human warmth, solace, fun, pleasure or deep knowledge between people (Frye, 2005: 329)

In exploiting women, there sexualized bodies are used as products for sustaining the phallic economy— producers of power but never to be empowered, only to be used as 'merchandise', 'commodities' to guaranty the organization and reproduction of the social order. In *Under the Udala Trees*, Chibundu's love for his wife Ijeoma is a conditional one— if she can birth a male child for him. And in the absence of the male child, the once caring and emotional Chibundu suddenly becomes a ghost of himself. Ijeoma alleges that "something had gotten into him. The way he was snapping more often than ever. As if all the world, and especially me and Chidinma (Ijeoma's girl child), had become like thorns on his skin" (266) and even went as far as threatening Ijeoma with a machete "pushing heavily on the skin of [her] leg…pushing the big knife farther into [her] leg" (273) because his dreams of a male child has been dashed— a selfish prerequisite for his masculine love and protection for his family. With such monstrous tendencies, it is only ideal that Ijeoma escape such horror of a marriage and find redemptive solace in the arms of her lesbian "sister" whose cultural and biological identity is analogous to hers, thus critiquing and resisting patriarchy, male chauvinism and the institutionalization of heterosexual culture, thereby defying "genealogical institutionalization… be[ing] neither

husband nor wife, do without the family, without roles, functions, and their laws of reproduction… it's quite enough to feel alive" (Irigaray, 1980: 72).

After all, adopting and living non-heteronormative identity is a subversion of hetero-patriarchy, hence contributing towards transforming society. And in fact, according to Irigaray, love for "women- sister" is necessary if

> [W]e are not to remain the servants of the phallic cult, objects to be used by and exchanged between men, rival objects on the market, the situation in which we have always been placed.

Thus, the lesbian is unquestionably and radically in the drive for the fight for equality of the sexes and for the physical, psychical, emotional, economical and sexual liberation of women from the clutches of overt hetero-patriarchy.

3.3 "Re-Righting" the 'Other' Body in Freud: Irigaray, Butler, Rich and their Macho Sisters

> Women who do not rebel against the status of object have declared themselves defeated as persons in their own right (Charlotte Wolff, 1971: 65)

Nowhere has the feminine identity been so unfairly treated as in Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis and theories of psychosexual development— which has literarily accessed femininity through a masculine discourse. In Freudian psychoanalysis, virtually all inferences are concluded with a masculine bias against the 'passive' and insignificant female, whereby, the feminine sex is only analyzed as means to an end and strictly not an 'end' in itself. 'She' compliments the 'omnipotent' phallus and only appears when the need be to offer support for Freud to drive his phallocentric theories home.

In Freud's essay *Femininity* in the paper *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, he refers to the male sex cell as "actively mobile and searches out the female one" while the "Ovum", the

female is “immobile and waits passively… [to be] seize[d] … and … penetrate[d]” (4717). This sweeping speculation is devoid of any biological or pathological backing but rather assumptive and presumptuous; as such, inspiring lesbian and feminists theorists to revisit doctrinaire Freudianism to uncover the so many loopholes in it. Freud regarded women as “having little sense of justice” because of their demand for gender equality and justice between the two sexes. He sees women as “weaker in their social interests and as having less capacity for sublimating their instincts than men” (4736).

Freud met with different oppositions even within his students and disciples, but all of them have been a reexamination of his theories and have been majorly influenced by his inferences; however, a more scathing criticism and even dismissal of his theories came mostly from feminist and lesbian theorists, of which they try to subdue Freudian analogies that favors masculinity with a more femininized reading and remolding of such theories. As such, Irigaray in her *The Poverty of Psychoanalysis* dismisses its theories and practices as “rest[ing] upon historical nothingness” by challenging and shattering what she calls “the empire of the phallus”.

Freud sees the girl child as suffering from a penis envy that develops from her lack of a similar organ which requires her to find a similar organ in a man— either her father, or lover— hence, the feminine bid for a phallic penetration and wanting to be boys. Freud asserts in his essay *The Sexual Aberrations* that

> Little girls do not resort to denial of this kind when they see that boys’ genitals are formed differently from their own. They are ready to recognize them immediately and are overcome by envy for the penis— an envy culminating in the wish, which is so important in its consequences, to be boys themselves (1514)

However, since Freud tellingly stressed at the presence of a “penis envy” in women, isn’t it logical then— if at all psychoanalysis is a genuine theory, that there should be an analogous

theory to show this aberration in men too? Unfortunately Freud dismissed all signs of a lack in 'man' but not Waynes & Hill (1974) and Horney (1967) who propound theories of the "womb envy" and "vagina envy" in men to denote the anxiety that many men may feel because of an envy and craving of the biological functions of the female sex (pregnancy, parturition, breast feeding). Waynes & Hill (1974) addresses the gender roles of sexual culture underlying the "envy and fascination with the female breasts and lactation, with pregnancy and childbearing and vagina envy (that) are clues and signs of transsexualism and to a femininity complex of men" which is defended against by Freud.

Freud in his paper *The Sexual Aberrations* defines the feminine sex with respect to the masculine, she has a secret craving to be a man and own the penis she lacks; he sees "the sexuality of little girls … [as] of a wholly masculine character" (1533). This phallocratic notion, Horney and Jones dispelled by arguing for an innate femininity and Horney defended women against penis envy by postulating that women are made not born. Irigaray kicked against feminine "otherness" to man in an interview in her essay *The Power of Discourse and the Subordination of the Feminine* thus:

> The "feminine" is always described in terms of deficiency or atrophy, as the other side of the sex that alone holds a monopoly on value: the male sex. Hence, the all too well- known "penis envy" (69)

For Irigaray, (cited in Geerts, 2010:11) woman has long overlapped the vacant volume for the phallus (penis craving)— "the sheath envelope", "she exceeds definitions and rigid representational systems, since she is a "shapeless flux" and complete 'fluidity'. Irigaray is geared towards moving over and subsuming the tiny canvass set for women in the "faulty phallogocentric representational system of Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis."

Irigaray criticized Freud and later Lacan for their prejudiced analyses of sexuality through masculine lens and the indifference to the female sex. She reconsiders and restructures the issues of feminine sexual drive and 'jouissance' in Freudianism and considers it her mandate, as a woman and a lesbian too, just as Freud did with the phallus to situate it as the 'untouchable' and 'sacred' crux of her feminine philosophies. Irigaray lashes Freud's psychoanalysis thus

> How can we accept the idea that woman's entire sexual development is governed by her lack of, and thus by her longing for, jealousy of, and demand for, the male organ? Does this mean that woman's sexual evolution can never be characterized with referenced to the female sex itself? All Freud's statements describing feminine sexuality overlook the fact that the female sex might possibly have its own "specificity" (69)

Irigaray in *Speculum of the other Woman* contends that femininity is tauted because "she doesn't have it (penis), she must wish to have it, since it is the guarantor of sexual exchange" (114), however, in the last section of *This Sex: When Our Life Speak Together*, Irigaray divorces all feminine erotic impulse from heterosexuality, believing that women erotism is signaled by the presence of various genital areas, diffuse and pluralistic. So basically, woman sexuality can naturally not reconcile to a single sexual identity. Irigaray asserts that this diffuseness of sexual drive triggers the woman to focus on the "hidden female body" as a way of sliding in the sexual uniqueness of homo/heterosexuality.

In *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality: Sexual Aberrations*Freud argues that men are influenced towards heterosexuality due to a recollection and "re-wanting" of the affection shown them by their mother and others of the female sex who tended them when they were children; and also discouraged from homosexuality because of their earlier aversion of their father during the dissolution of the Oedipus complex. For women, Freud, in an unlikely analysis also proffer that "both of these two factors (in men— mentioned above) also apply to girls, whose sexual

activity is particularly subject to the watchful guardianship of their mother. They thus acquire a hostile relation to their own sex which influences their object-choice decisively in what is regarded as the normal direction" (1541). It would also be rather odd to agree that the girl ordinarily— with no justified psychological or pathological cause, develops a feminine hostility for the trivial reason that at an earlier time her sexual activity is dependent on "watchful guardianship" of her mother. In the same vein, Freud seemingly instigates that a 'normal' sexuality ultimately has to be heterosexual relationship which Irigaray blatantly undermined with her theory of a feminine development of lesbianism in the essay *The Bodily Encounter with the Mother*. She argues in support of a congenital feminine lesbianism that given that the first body that infants have to deal with is the woman's body— during breastfeeding, hence the first love they share is mother love— a feminine kind of romance. Irigaray argues that women always stand in an "archaic and primal" relationship with homosexuality due to their earlier sensual relationship with the mother during breast feeding— a woman to woman bonding. In this case it isn't unlikely for women to plunge back into seeking a same-sex sexual object to unite with that earlier love of the feminine mother. But for men, Irigaray argued "start an archaic relationship with heterosexuality, since the first object of their love and desire is a woman".

However, Freud argues that a positive dissolution of the Oedipus complex requires the little girl to forfeit her love for her mother and tally with her father— thus inspiring heterosexuality. Freud sees this incestuous relationship in his essay *Femininity* as "originally the wish for the penis which her mother has refused her and which she now expects from her father". But even so, Irigaray counteract his claims by proffering that the little girl giving up her love of and for her mother so as to enter into the desire of/for her father subordinates the woman into normative

heterosexuality. Neither girl nor woman, Irigaray argues must give up her love for her mother because that uproots them from their identity and subjectivity.

The problem with Freudianism is that it seems to define feminine sexuality through masculine lens which makes for distorted and jaundiced half-truths. Freud sees the woman as "wo- man", a bodily part of the man, who cannot exist independently and whose only duty is to compliment masculinity. Freud even went as far as instigating a biologic factor as root to the cause of the feminine domination in society. For instance, in *The Sexual Aberrations* he says that the conviction reached by males that women have no penis often leads to an enduringly low opinion of them (1514)

Freud instigates that depreciation of women, and aversion to them, even horror of them, are generally derived from the early discovery that women have no penis by men. This bias assumption of the woman's fate in Freud, Irigaray (1985: 23) sees as that of "lack", "atrophy" (of the sexual organ) and "penis envy", the penis being the only sexual organ of acknowledged value which she tries by all means necessary to acquire by servile love to either the father or eventually the husband.

Freud transposes Napoleonic aphorism of "anatomy is destiny" to further secure the phallocratic stronghold on women being passive objects as constitutionally innate and biologic; while men in his *TheSexual Aberrations* are "aggressive… desire[ing] to subjugate; the biological … need for overcoming the resistance of the sexual object (woman)". Freud goes ahead in his lectures on *Femininity* in the paper *Female Sexuality* (1931) to propose that the suppression of women's aggressiveness which is prescribed on them constitutionally and imposed on them socially favors the development of powerful masochistic impulses. Thus, according to Freud, "masochism is

truly feminine" (4718), however, this kind of ethics is more associated with ideas of racial discrimination and segregation where the dominant group is upheld and acquitted while the dominated, the 'other', is relegated and reviled. This social construction of gender demands certain attributes and characteristics for certain sex in the most limited terms— regulatory; and of which is unfortunately at an all-time bias against women. That being said, this crude phallocentric notion is what lesbian feminists and queer theorists are up and about trying to subvert by proffering that gender has nothing to do with anatomy— therefore not fixed and unchanging— regardless of a person's sexual anatomy, but are societal roles imposed upon fixed categories of identity demanding certain general mannerisms, demeanor, social behaviors and sexual orientations in specific ways from specific sexes. (Butler, 1990; 1993; 1997)

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter attempted a psychoanalytical critique of Chinelo Okparanta's queer narrative *Under the Udala Trees*, noting its pro- lesbian ideologies and feminist backdrop. It employed Freudian psychoanalysis to x-ray queer characters and theme and also uses propositions from radical feminists and queer theorists who considerably want to disengage gender from sexuality in order to exonerate the feminine sex from rigid social constructivism of their gender as inertly passive and insignificant. The chapter also delved into the misogynistic tendencies of Freudianism and the neutralization of patriarchy and male chauvinism by renowned radical feminists and queer activists, while still using instances and arguments from the text *Under the Udala Trees*.

CHAPTER FOUR

A PSYCHOANALYTICAL ANALYSIS OF QUEER CHARACTERISATION IN JUDE DIBIA'S *WALKING WITH SHADOWS*

4.0 Introduction

This chapter will analyze characterization in Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows*, which is arguably the first Nigerian novel to portray a queer main character and to considerably deal with the trope of queerness in literature. A Freudian approach to psychoanalysis and psychosexual theories will be used to conceptualize queerness in all ramifications, examine queer characters, queer notions by the author and queer prolepsis in the narrative.

4.1 A Freudian Psychoanalytic Study of *Walking With Shadows*

Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows* emerged at a fragile time when Africans are still battling with the scourge of an "UnAfrican homosexuality" with a sympathetic treatment of an African queer character, Adrian, who symbolizes the closeted queer body in Africa and in literature. This text became the subject of much critical acclaim by scholars and critics for its staunch argument of a native queerness in Africa and also its biological and pathological discourses on queerness. However, judging by the dictates of Freudian psychoanalysis, this thesis proffers that Dibia's arguments are pseudo-biological notions and queerness vehemently fits into psychically induced factors and not inane causes. Freud (1905: 1469) in his paper *The Sexual Aberrations* contests the possibility of an innate inversion. He argues that when closely examined, some childhood experience would account for the direction taken by a person's libido.

In Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows*, Adrian effusively argues that "[h]e was gay. He knew this ever since he started having sexual urges as a child. He had realized he was different from

his brothers and other boys" (24). However, Freud in *The Sexual Aberrations* proved that it is "crude" accepting the explanation that everyone is born with his sexual instinct attached to a particular sexual object. In Adrian, we can see psychical pre-genital and infantile factors that all contributed in forming his queer identity. For instance, Adrian grew up predisposed to feminine gender roles and games like "running around in circles, singing and chasing his shadow", singing feminine songs like "Ringa- Ringa- Roses/ A- pocket-full- of- poisies" (15). Thus, Adrian could possibly pass for a feminine- boy, a sissy boy. What Freud (1920) referred to as a "feminine mind, bound therefore to love a man, but unhappily attached to a masculine body" (3859). Men are physical and tense and this extends into their sexual life; what Freud (1905) in the essay *Sexual Aberrations* written in the paper *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* called "aggressiveness"--- a desire to subjugate. Thus, this absence of masculinity in Adrian from inception rendered him aloof from heterosexuality as an adult. Consequently, the psychological trauma and discontent that Adrian had to pass through as a child all too often contributed in forming his personality. For instance, at an early age, he "realized… that he was not the favourite of either of his parents" (45) He craves their attention up to the extent of idolizing his father so much to come in contact with the water that drips from his body after shower. This obsession with parental love that is unfortunately lacking triggers Adrian to supplement the unavailable love from his parent with another figure that can stand in for his father's; hence, the longing for a same-sex love. A typical Freudian model for a heterosexual identity is the case of a boy identifying with his father and seeking a sexual object like his mother and a girl identifying with her mother and seeking a sexual object resembling her father. Homosexuality comes in when that "identification" with the same-sex parent is unavailable, whereby the child has to go out looking for same-sex sexual objects to satisfy that unsatisfied longing. This is true of Adrian who is said

to be everything physically and emotionally detached from his father. One remarkable event in Adrian's childhood that affected his sexual identity is the shower he shared with his friend Ekene. He recounts that he knew at seven that he was gay when he was alone with Ekene in the bathroom. Adrian admitted that

> As they sponged each other laughing and squealing, he felt a closeness to Ekene that was not entirely platonic. He had no name for it then as a child, but as he grew up, experiencing this feeling for other boys and then men, he knew the words--- homosexual, gay! (24)

Even though Groos (1899; cited in Freud, pg. 1496) argues that "some children are already accessible to sexual life and impulse at a very early age and feel an urge to have contact with the opposite sex", it is however significant that the first sexual organ that Adrian was predisposed to was an organ like his— the male phallus. The availability of this organ in just another human being, all too well struck Adrian to be the only organ in all humans. This belief had been suppressed in the unconscious and hence Adrian will eventually see even the female clitoris as most likely an atrophied organ and thus discourage him from any heterosexual romance with the opposite sex. In this case, Freud argues that children assume that all human beings have the same genitals (male).. This belief deposited in the unconscious of infants, Adrian as well, and undergirded by his experience with Ekene in the bathroom most likely wired Adrian to believe the penis, the male sexual organ as the only desirable organ for sex. Freud believes that the experiences of the earliest years of our childhood leave ineradicable traces in the depths of our minds. More so, in his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905) he propounds that in many homosexuals and sexual inverts, very early in their lives, a sexual impression occurred which left a permanent after effect tending towards homosexuality. This "sexual impression" in Adrian is the assumption that the phallus is the only sexual organ natural to humans, as firstly realized from his friend Ekene.

Thus, the woman's vagina is likely an abnormal form of a penis. This assertion, Freud undergirds when he said in *On the Sexual Theories of Children* (1908:1971) that

> The woman's genitalia, when seen later on, are regarded as a mutilated organ and recall this threat, and they therefore arouse horror instead of pleasure in the homosexual. This reaction cannot be altered in any way when the homosexual comes to learn from science that his childish assumption that women had a penis too was not so far wrong after all

4.1.1 The Tripartite Mode (Id, Ego and Superego)

Freud's theory of the tripartite psyche— the id, ego and super ego has been a powerful means of describing the conscious and unconscious of the mind. In Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows*, the constant tussle between these three parts of the psyche is noticeable in all characters that have in one way or the other dealt with their subconscious instincts. Not just in queer characters, the fight for morality is an ordeal for every man. While some characters suppress their instinctive feelings, others are finding it hard to. In the text, Adrian the protagonist had to at so many points decide between his id, ego and super ego. He has been suppressing his id and upholding his ego until the revelation about his homosexuality flared up. The author affirms about Adrian's struggle to tame his id

> The sheer guilt of living a lie for so long pricked him. But he had gone straight, suppressed a lot of feelings and had even denied himself so much (20)

This suppressed feeling is however not buried fully for it is capable of shooting out anytime the ego and super ego seem to be left unattended. For according to Freud, the sexual instincts and sexual need, once aroused and satisfied, can no longer be silenced but pointed towards another path for gratification. Freud says when the superego is strong and desperate; it can lead to dissatisfaction and frustration in individuals. Adrian after suppressing his homosexuality for too

long because of the societal unacceptability of sexual aberration, he expresses his discontent thus "I got really sick of the life I had, the lying, and the hiding. It was killing me" (30). Due to the strong queer libidinal pull that Adrian was dealing with, he sublimated his feelings to his occupation. The strong excitations trying to shoot out from particular sources of his sexuality found an outlet in his job, spending time at work, working diligently and committed just so he can obliterate that part of his life. As captured in the text:

> He had been denying his sexuality for many years and had almost become an expert at it. It was easy. All he had to do was focus on work (74)

Unfortunately, the sexual instinct can barely be exhausted before it irrupts again. According to Scholz, 1893; (cited in Freud, p. 534) "nothing which we have once mentally possessed can be entirely lost". As such, that repressed aspect of Adrian is what is shooting out when Adrian demanded, "why was he thinking of things he had laid to rest for so long now? Why was he loosing focus? (87)

In *Walking with Shadows*, a noticeable example of an untamed id is the characterization of Abdul and Femi— gay couples who have been living together for 10 years despite the society's strict heteronormativity. Abdul and Femi abandoned their ego, undermined the superego and embraced their instinctive drive unabated. Unlike Adrian with a relatively remorseful ego who "feel[s] ashamed of himself" (32), Rotimi who practices homosexuality when convenient— what Freud referred to as "contingent inverts", who under certain external conditions, of which exclusivity with same- sex partners is one, they take as their sexual object someone of their own sex and derive sexual satisfaction from him. Rotimi is a situational homosexual; he flows with the available sexual object; people who according to Dibia are "self- proclaimed women lovers, who, when the opportunity arose, would go with men as well" (146). Thus, inversion is clearly a

case of how well or bad the id is tamed and controlled, how strong the super ego and ego restraint the id and how psychologically predisposed the individual is to inversion. For most likely, according to Freud, "a very considerable measure of latent or unconscious homosexuality can be detected in all normal people" (3859) and only the drastically constrained ego lets inversion to manifest.

Consequently, in 'straight' characters like Chiedu, Chika and Adrian's wife Nkechi, with a totally strong and imposing superego and ego, the queer tendency is at an all time low because they've perfectly mastered their id and aren't slaves to their desire. Chiedu's superego abhors homosexuality. He has circumscribed his personality to only acknowledge normative cultures in the society. For instance, he tries institutionalizing Adrian thus

> You know what the Bible says about homosexuals… God forbids it!
> The law says it's a felony for a man to practice sodomy (52)

This notion is rooted in the morality principle of society within a religious backdrop. Nevertheless, Adrian whose id has totally overwhelmed his superego counteracts thus, "I know what the Bible says. And it's open to different interpretations", in order to justify his queer inclination.

4.1.2 Dreams and Personality Complex

Of dire importance too is the significance of dreams in revealing personality complexes. Adrian's dream in *Walking with shadows* is pregnant with psychological meaning which aids in unlocking his subconscious mind. Freud in his *The Interpretation of Dreams* shows that there is a psychological technique which makes it possible to read dreams, and when applied, dreams unveil themselves as psychical structure with meanings and connection to the mental activities of waking life. Adrian dreamt in his gay friends' (Femi and Abdul) apartment about meeting his

real parent, his own parent being not his parent. The absence of and longing for a significant parental love at childhood had been deposited and repressed in his subconscious only to escape at later years in his dream. The Unconscious which houses all infantile wishes and repressed desire only comes to life through dreams and slips. Adrian's dream reveals that Adrian has never felt like "the ideal son" (180), still seeks approval from his parent (124), and still seeks love from his family. A lack of that love made him withdrawn and narcissistic, in love with the charms of his own sex, so much so that he seeks sexual satisfaction in an object like him. Hence, when Chika, Adrian's younger brother articulated his love for Adrian, Adrian admitted that "[a]ll his life he had waited for a moment like this, when someone from his family would say those very words to him", when someone from his family will tell him "I love you".

Adrian fits into description of what Freud calls "amphigenic inverts", psychosexual hermaphrodites whose sexual objects may equally well be of their own sex. Amphigenic inverts according to Freud lack the characteristic of exclusive homosexuality and may have sexual relationship with the opposite sex even though in their psyche they feel themselves every way homosexuals. Even when society obliges Adrian to practice heterosexuality with his wife Ada, he nonetheless feels his gayness as an inane personality he can't very soon do away with. After all, he tells Chiedu assertively

> I am gay… I've always been and I've always known. Yes I'm married and I have a kid but take away who and what I am (50)

More so, Adrian even "hoped that he would wake up one morning and find himself cured, straight" (65) but he knows that day will never come. As such, he practiced heterosexuality because of the societal acceptability of it but still he is undauntedly a homosexual and has never seen himself as being abnormal.

The other queer characters Abdul and Femi can rightly fit into Freud's classification of "absolute inverts", whose sexual objects are exclusively of their own sex, heterosexual objects repulsing them, "leaving them cold, or even arous[ing] sexual aversion in them" of which they are incapable of and derive no sexual enjoyment from. Asked if he doesn't mind the disapproving looks on their gay relationship, Abdul answered thus "I love myself and my life, and I love Femi. This is all that matters" (29). Abdul and Femi are characters who have totally given in to the desire of their Id, unheeding their superego and ego, and unmindful of society's hetero-normativity just so they could live their lives as homosexuals, as absolute inverts. Some inverts like Abdul, Femi and even Adrian accepts his inversion as something natural just as a normal person accepts the direction of his libido. Freud in *The Sexual Aberrations* asserted that the earliest assessments regarded homosexuality as an "innate indication of nervous degeneracy. This corresponded to the fact that medical observers first came across it in persons suffering, or appearing to suffer, from nervous diseases" (1467), however, Freud added that inversion as innate character only attributes to "absolute inverts", the most extreme class of inverts who have been strictly homosexual all their lives, like in the characterization of Abdul and Adrian. Hence, it isn't unlikely when Abdul cautioned Adrian thus "[y]ou sound like you are ashamed of your past… like you had a choice in determining your sexuality" (32). Even though Adrian "did feel ashamed of himself" (32), Abdul and Femi feels no remorse in being sexual deviants, thus believing they were born that way with gayness which Freud assertively countered but still yet acknowledges as a possible cause for homosexuality. Freud made known the place of shame and morality in neutralizing sexual deviations. He laid emphasis upon "shame, disgust, pity and the structures of morality and authority erected by society" (1542) as factors which not infrequently dispel homoerotic tendencies in individuals, and in fact, he said in his *Three Essays on the*

Theory of Sexuality (*The Sexual Aberrations*) that "[w]here inversion is not regarded as a crime it will be found that it answers fully to the sexual inclinations of no small number of people". The ego and the super ego do most of the work in dispelling tendencies of inversion and deviation, for individuals with a good part of them have a strong influence over their desire— suppress it, sublimate it, or even neutralize and subvert their desire to acceptable standards. However, individuals with a poor grasp of their id and a weak ego and super ego turn out slaves of their desire. For Freud normality is a result of the repression of certain component instincts and constituents of the disposition.

4.1.3 Identification: Oedipus complex and Repressed Desire

Adrian felt his queerness must have in one way or the other a relationship with his childhood. "[H]is mind kept going way back to his childhood, as if whatever answers he was looking for were somehow hidden in those suppressed memories" 62). This validated opinion is possible seeing that Freud sees perversions as either inhibitions or dissociations of normal development during childhood. He sees the sexual drives of adults as "aris[ing] from a *combination of a number of impulses of childhood* into a unity, an impulsion with a single aim" (1542) (my italics) Hence, the lack of love, emotional trauma, rejection that Adrian all too often suffered as a child contributed immeasurably to his untraditional sexuality. For instance, Adrian knew that "he was not the favourite of either his parents" (45), always called a "sissy" and a "girl" (48), and knew that "everyone hated a sissy" (115). Adrian always feel that he "had never really been of [his] family" (62) and he "had his fill of rejection as a child" (77). Sigmund Freud traced people's personality to events of their childhood and believed that those events have a way of creeping back into adult life, not necessarily as same experiences but as set off for other personality

complexes. Adrian quite knew this, for "his mind kept going way back to his childhood, as if whatever answers he was looking for were somehow hidden in those suppressed memories"(62)

Also, In Freud's psychosexual theories, the boy's object-cathexis of his mother must begin with the demolition of the Oedipus complex. This new void must be filled by either identification with the mother or an intensification of identification with the father. Freud regarded the latter outcome— identification with the father for the boy as the more normal outcome. In consequence to this it allows the affectionate relationship to the mother to be in a measure continuing. While the intensification with the father aids the boy in developing masculine traits. In this way, a proper dissolution of the Oedipus complex would strengthen the masculinity in a boy's character. Unfortunately, for the gay protagonist of *Walking with Shadows*, Adrian, his Oedipus complex wasn't resolved properly for his father who was supposed to be available so Adrian could learn masculinity from was literally distant and emotionally detached, unheeding the presence of his son Adrian so much so that Adrian lives his whole life longing for his father's attention. When Adrian won a prize for being the smartest kid in school, Adrian complained that unlike his other brothers Chika and Chiedu, "his success was not celebrated, not in the way his brothers' had been… Nothing!" and it "hurt him so badly" (124) Adrian craved for parental love and attention so much so that he always have this dream of meeting his real parents and of his parents not being his real parents. Adrian wonders "what [his] life would have been like if [he] was indeed introduced to another set of parents who would love [him] (123). This unrequited parental love is what Abdul said is "the one love you can't do without" (123). The absence of such love left Adrian estranged from masculinity for he had no masculine template to align himself to but rather "freaks out" and accepts himself as the sissy and "girl" he has always been thought to be. The Oedipus complex proffers the boy-child two possibilities of satisfaction,

an active and a passive one. He could put himself in his father's place in a masculine fashion and have intercourse with his mother as his father did, in which case Freud said he would soon have felt the latter as a hindrance; or he might want to take the place of his mother and be loved by his father, in which case would become superfluous. A male child who takes the place of his mother and be loved by his father will always seek a male partner in sexual relationships, thus homosexual, because of his always having to be the object of satisfaction of his father. The Oedipus complex according to Freud offers the child two possibilities of satisfaction, an active and a passive one. Adrian apparently took the passive one, for he ended up passive in his choice of sexual roles, an object for sexual satisfaction— not a subject. He makes love to his wife out of obligation to satisfy her and not because he was interested, thereby, justifying Havelock's (1915) assertion that "[a] general lowering of the sexual instinct… is found frequently in inverts".

Homosexual men experience a bindingly strong fixation to their mother because they couldn't learn masculine traits from their male parents. This Freudian notion is apparently noticeable in Adrian and his emotionally dependent relationship with his mother. Adrian lived his childhood secretly craving his mother's attention which unfortunately never came. Even though his mother treated Chiedu like a king and flaunts him to her friends, Adrian has always been abandoned lonely and alone and has to "watch from his little corner with an uneasy smile" (46) that he was not his parents' favourite. He was barely noticed and left to withdraw into his soul. This craving for his mom's love Freud sees in his theory of the Oedipus complex as an incestuous feeling towards the mother that is buried in the unconscious. For a normal resolution of the Oedipus complex, the boy fearing castration threats from the father has to renounce his incestuous feelings for his mother and awaits a relationship with his own wife. Apparently, Adrian was unable to resolve his secret craving for his mother's attention and love, for when he was bruised

from Pastor's Mathew's supposedly homosexuality curative flogging, he so much cherished his mother's attention, thus

> [He] let her feel him. He could not remember when last her hands had touched him (181)

Abdul saw through Adrian's secret craving, burrows into his unconscious and tells him that he (Adrian) "desperately want[s] their (parents) approval. Theirs is one love you can't do without" (123). Freud in *Some Neurotic Mechanisms in Jealousy, Paranoia and Homosexuality* (1922) opined that the ideal process established from empirical observation and in innumerable cases is that at post-puberty stage, an individual fixated to his mother, changes his attitude; identifies with his mother and anticipates love-objects in whom he can rediscover himself, and whom he might then love as his mother loved him. In this case, Adrian's unresolved craving for his mother alters the positive resolution of his Oedipus complex which has left him fixated on her, unable to move on to another woman, and incapable of loving women which will neutralize his incestuous feelings for his mother. As such, he winds up with a narcissistic inclination which lies readier at hand and more available than a move towards the other sex. Thus Freud opinesthat attachments to the mother, narcissim, fear of castration are factors that have been found in the psychical aetiology of homosexuality. (3907)

Worthy of mention is the distant relationship between male parents and children that turn out gay. Adrian had always held his father in high esteem, reveres him, seeks his approval, and craves his attention. This longing for his attention had even crept into his unconscious, manifesting in his dreams and his personality. His "little showers of love" from his father were dear to him for it was the closest he ever felt to him (42); he felt like he had never really been part of his family (62) and he lived all his life trying to win his father's love and attention like his two

brothers Chika and Chiedu but it never came. In this case, Freud saw a homosexual tendency in boys who had one time or another avoided their fathers for fear of castration as a possible propeller for inversion. Freud (1922:3907) asserts

> We subsequently discovered, as another powerful motive urging towards homosexual object- choice, regard for the father or fear of him; for the renunciation of women means that all rivalry with him (or with all men who may take his place) is avoided

This Freudian notion tallies with Dibia's characterization of Adrian especially when Adrian thought Chiedu looks an exact copy of their father except for the lack of a baldness which Adrian is glad about for it will mean him facing his father in Chiedu which will be "too much to contend with" (47)

Judging by Adrian personality traits and experiences he had to pass through as a child, it wouldn't be rather farfetched if we conclude that Adrian all too often shows signs of psychical disorder, personality aberration, atrophy of the sexual instincts, and emotional imbalance and trauma. These factors contribute in making Adrian the gay man he is, the cocooned individual he is, and the insecure attention freak he is, thus, his affirmation that he "knew he was the way he was right from the moment he became aware of himself as a human" (202). Therefore, psychoanalysis which is a procedure for the investigation of mental processes which are almost inaccessible in any other way excavates the subconscious of individuals and proffer that most likely, factors or events that people experience endure, even though latently in the unconscious, to the adolescent stages of human life only to shoot out as deviations and perversions and even psychical traits much later.

4.2 Querying Queer Characterization in African Fiction: Sex[uality] as Usual or Gender Unusual?

Gender as argued by queer theorists and gender theorists is a free-floating social construction. It is a social idea and not in any way a natural facticity holding us captive like sex, and lately, even sex has been reconsidered as having multiplicitous potentialities with the advent of transsexuals and hermaphrodites in the discursive space. Hence, gender is not a given but enduringly established and accrued in accordance to the social and archetypal mores in a society. Therefore, a human being is not solely defined by its sexual organs. Gender is a lot more complex than male or female; it is rather the social division of the sexes. Thus, if gender is the cultural specificity of sex, then a sex cannot be said to be derived through a gender, for gender will always be fluid and mutable, a product of cultural determinism and social construction.

Even though sexual essentialism considers sex to be eternally unchanging, asocial and trans-historical, queer theorists (Butler, 1993:5) argue that sex is fictitious, a fantasy which is retroactively established at a pre-linguistic stage that is inaccessible. Hence, a split up of gender from sex for queer theorists opens up a boatload of diversified masculinities and femininities, multiplicity of gender roles and identities and by extension a slippery sexuality whereby sexual acts and gender identity are literally individualistic.

Foucault (1978) argues that sex is not a given and criticizes the traditional understanding of sexuality as preexisting biological entities. He contends that sexuality is constituted in the course of historically specific social practices. Foucault argues that new sexualities are constantly remerging and hence overlapping the binary category of sex.

Consequently, all what queer theorists are out to debunk is the social constructivism of sex and essentialist notion of gender and sexuality, for sexuality to transcend physiological parameters

and for human sexuality to not be delineated in pure biological signification— basing an argument for the fluidity of gender roles and sexuality as asserted by Feinberg (1998: 5) thus

> We are a movement of masculine females and feminine males, cross-dressers, and transsexual men and women, intersexuals born on the anatomical sweep between female and male, gender- blenders, many other sex and gender-variant people, and our significant others, our lives are proof that sex and gender are much more complex than a delivery room doctor's glance at genitals can determine.

For cultural essentialism, a man is his penis and a woman her vagina, however Butler (1990) argues for a disparity between "having" the phallus and "being" the phallus, Beauvoir argued that one is not born a woman but rather becomes a woman. Hence, gender roles are set of performative attributes that requires certain individuals from certain roles. Gender is always a doing, though not a "doing" by a subject who can be said to exist outside categorization and deed. It isn't enough to "be" the phallus for gender has become an organized system of behavioural and accruing identity that inculcates into a norm outside of biology.

Hence, for queer theorists, the corporeal body is always a mesh of possibilities, both conditioned and limited by cultural convention, what Beauvoir sees as manner of doing, dramatizing, and reproducing a historical situation. Accordingly, Butler also claims that the body is not a natural, material entity, but a discursively regulated, cultural construction, while gender is a performative that produces constitutive sex. It isn't enough to be a man or a woman without the social specificity that codifies such gender norms. Men become men by enduringly performing masculinity and women by doing femininity.

If gender is thought of having to be fixed and to be directed from a sex, what happens to a woman who refuses to perform femininity and a man who refuses to perform masculinity? The controversy abounds in the literary discursive space with the advent of queer characters with

totally odd and unconventional practices of gender— masculine girls, feminine boys, transsexuals, intersex, hermaphrodites and transgender.No one is actually born with a gender; it is acquired, all products of societal reconfiguration. However, sex is unalterably factic and gender is the cultural construction of sex. Therefore, to be a given sex doesn't technically guarantee a certain gender. Gender roles are fluid and not reducible to sex. Butler (1990:112) argues that

> "[W]oman" need not be the cultural construction of the female body, and "man" need not interpret male bodies. This radical formulation of the sex/ gender distinction suggests that sexed bodies can be the occasion for a number of different genders, and further, that gender itself need not be restricted to the usual two

It isn't enough to have a penis or thick muscles to be man, thus the body is not predetermined by some interior essence which holds bodies captive. Biology in no way makes one feel more woman or less, it is only the ontological expression of *being* in the world that produces and renders an identity and possibility. Sex only stops at being the biological, genetic and chromosomal features that comes with being males or females or lately other bodily forms that does not neatly fall into the binary category of male and female— hermaphrodites, intersex and transsexuals. On the other hand, gender means the social identities of bodies that are sexed in particular ways, being a woman or man. Adrian, as portrayed by Dibia in *Walking with Shadows* shows all too often effeminate signs. He is said to be

> Gentle in spirit, with an elegant gait… walked funny, a calculated yet animated strut. He spoke with such elegance and polish. His hair was always in place, always perfect… His mustache eternally trimmed… His voice? Soft and musical" (37).

Sex would consider these signs odd to Adrian but not gender, for gender is a network of behavioral possibilities and cultural artifices that has been mastered through behavioral patterns, voice modulation, appearance etc.; what Repo (2014:523) sees as "the body becom[ing] its gender

through a series of acts which are renewed, revised, and consolidated through time" as such, playing or "doing" gender roles send signals of belonging to a given gender, but not exclusively for gender can be done and undone, subject to mutation and instinctual behavioural patterns.

The whole schema of characterization has been restructured since literary characters are all a potential mesh up of varying gender roles; doing gender not as stable categories of personality but as fluid irregular systems. Thus, analyzing characters in queer literature as binary systems of either having to be woman or man is problematic for the fact that it isn't almost always that characters become cisgender and identify with the very gender that they have been assigned at birth. Most a times we see androgynes, gender variants, genderqueer and gender non-conformists— like Adrian, Abdul and Femi— what Bornstein (1994) termed "gender outlaws", who are individuals who act according to gender that does not conform to sex.

Therefore, when doing queer characterization, we disregard characters' sexuality and "'read' people for all sorts of things— social cues, personality traits, race, ect(sic)— and use these characteristics to fit the person in question into categories within the large schema of "human"" (Wilson, L. *Gender Performativity and Objectification*).

Freud sees a homosexual as a man wanting to be a woman but tied to a man's body and a woman wanting to be a man but tied to a woman's body. Bailey (2003) sees some males as "women's souls in men's bodies". However, the American Psychiatric Association sees such cases as Gender Identity Disorder, whereby the person shows "strong and persistent" signs of cross-gender identification, wanting to be a member of the opposite sex. Nkechi in *Walking with Shadows* fears that her son Junior is "going to become like one of those sissies" (101)because he all too often shows effeminate signs and "… seemed too soft for a boy" (100). Nkechi's assertion

shows that gender is fluid and people challenge the ontological assumption that gender falls into binary categories. This shows that gender is a doing; a role play by a subject whose present actions can be categorized as male, female or both. To a large extent gender roles are performative entities, what Repo (2014:528/9) sees as "…simply … real only to the extent that it is performed. It seems fair to say that certain kinds of acts are usually interpreted as expressive of a gender core or identity, that these acts either conform to an expected gender identity or contest expectation in some way". As such, the concept of man and woman needs to remain open to future alteration and subversion being that a certain sex can possibly have a different gender and vice versa. If gender is appraised as the cultural interpretation and reordering of the biological basis of sex, then sex is an effect of gender and gender an apparatus whereby sex is construed and apprehended.

Core Gender Identity (CGI) as posited by John Money and Robert Stollers's study is an individual's basal sense of being male or female--- before, or even independent of any sexual orientation or choice of sexual object. Therefore, gender and sexuality as distinct and though intimately entangled as they appear are unique entities, where sex cannot determine gender but gender can be a pointer to sex. To prove that sex doesn't determine gender is the inability to develop a gender identity consistent with one's biological sex— Gender Identity Disorder. This disorder according to Thompson (2004) "…usually are first seen in children between the ages of two and four". This disorder, as seen in Adrian in *Walking with Shadows* is what manifests in his fragile and effeminate gait and his love for gender roles that directly contrast his sexuality. For example, at a very young age, Adrian is said to love the song and the game "Ringa- Ringa- Roses/ A- pocket- full- of- poises", a rather feminine game and "he had been told he was not supposed to like it. It was not a manly game and he was often laughed at when he played with

the girls" (15/16). Thus, Adrian can be rightly termed as a gender outlaw, one who acts according to a gender that does not conform to sex and which doesn't tally with social expectations. Therefore, gender roles are always social expectations, they do not hold us captive like sex and anything against those inert sexual congruent are considered odd by society and not necessarily by nature unlike sexuality which is chromosomal and by extension natural.

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (III) contends that two components make an individual to be diagnosed with Gender Identity Disorder (GID). There must be "strong and persistent" cross gender identification— wanting to be a member of the opposite sex by either cross dressing, or performing the other gender's role; a "desire to participate in games and pastimes usually enjoyed by the opposite sex or simply a preference for playmates and friends of the opposite sex". The individual must also display total discomfort with his or her assigned gender role which can be realized in the individual's "significant social or occupational impairment". At one point in the narrative (*Walking with Shadows*), Adrian feels uncomfortable with his occupation making him to finally quit and experience social instability almost to the point of depression and had to return to his former gay partners Femi and Abdul for mental consolation. These signs are triggered by his discomfort at being himself. He confesses that he "was losing focus" (87) and would rather the people that meant the most to him accept his gayness or he "would lose faith in himself as well" (83). His mental impairment and social instability are all signs of his inability to freely play his preferred gender role, but rather codified into a social strata that has to be conformed to. This discomfort according to the manual (DSM) can also be seen in a boy's aversion "rough and tumble play" or a marked rejection of males stereotypical toys. Adrian in *Walking with Shadows* is said to be a "sissy" when he was skeptical about rolling on the stairs in a carton (48). Chiedu taunted him to "stop being a girl" when he complained of the danger of

such a game. In another aspect, Adrian is also said to invert male stereotypical roles and would rather perform the feminine like "[being] immaculately neat… [A]lways arranging things and had all the best ideas for doing up the house" (39); these subtle signs all too often are feminine stereotyped roles and for Adrian to feel comfortable doing them and always wanting to shows an inversion of his masculine gender roles. Thus, it wouldn't be odd to assert that Adrian falls into the category of what Green (1987) calls the "sissy boy"; American Psychiatric Association calls "Gender Identity Disorder" and the transsexual writer Bornstein (1994) calls "Gender Outlaw".

There is a reason why Adrian in *Walking with Shadows* turns out a homosexual. The majority of boys who exhibit feminine characteristics in everyday behaviours will essentially "grow up" to be homosexuals and a significant number of homosexual men also have been found to have histories of cross- gender behaviour during childhood (Green, 1987; Raphling, 1989). This sweeping assertion is however viable noting that Rubin (cited in Butler,1990: 73&74) maintains that before the transformation of a biological male or female into a gendered man or woman, "each child contains all of the sexual possibilities available to human expression", therefore it is the ability of a child to redirect his sexual instincts to a certain sexual orientation that labels him either of the sexualities— heterosexual, bisexual or homosexual; and to be one gender is to not be the other, for no two genders can play out simultaneously in a single body. Gender can be mutable, it is fluid. Dibia understands this making some of his characters open to different gender roles. Nkechi believes her son Junior with his "girlish ways" (166) can be corrected before it is too late. She believes Junior like "Adrian was a child at a point in his life. Maybe if someone had corrected his behaviour earlier, he would never have turned out gay" (167), it is then safe to affirm that gender does not rigidify and codify sexed bodies forcing it to act

according to biology or inert anatomy, but can be altered and remodeled according to individual instincts as Butler in *Bodies That Matter* (1993) sees it as "performative", whereby

> [O]ne woke in the morning, perused the closet or some more open space for the gender of choice, donned that gender for the day, and then restored the garment to its place at night.

Gender constructivism arranges individuals in the most specific ways, bounded by society and repeatedly inculcated into a norm but not projected through the body. If sex doesn't circumscribe gender, Butler (1990) argues, perhaps there are possibly various genders, ways of culturally interpreting the sexed body that are not bounded by the binary of sex. And if gender is a "doing", a "becoming" by a subject but never to be, then, Butler argues, gender should not be thought of as a substantial thing or a static cultural marker but as periodized and reoccurring actions, a reenactment of meanings socially stratified to denote ritualized taxonomies.

There are various types of gender which in and of themselves are not gender, but criteria for systematic classification. The signifiers male, female, feminine, masculine, man, woman, girl, boy, he, she are strictly not signifying any sexual act but fall under the category of gender that are highly subjective terms and could denote anybody and nobody only depending on the doer of the gender. Gender is ambiguous; it refuses classification and can be transgressed and non-definable as in transsexuals, intersex, androgynies, butch dykes, transvestites, and all gender non- conformists.

Consequently, due to this fluidity of gender and ambiguity of gender roles, queer theorists opined that to avoid making assumptions about people's gender before they play gender or fit into a gender role, gender neutral and gender- inclusive pronouns like "ze" and "hir" which could denote any of the genders without being specific could be employed. Others still argued that the plural pronouns "They" and "Their" are more expressive of ambiguous gender and representing

people with more than one gender, whereby no specific gender binary is hinted at but could be any (QMUNITY, 2013).

Meanwhile, to decipher queer characterization in literature, readers must eliminate obligatory sexualities and fixed sex roles, thereby conceiving an androgynous and genderless (not sexless) society, whereby a character's sexual anatomy is irrelevant to who or what he/ she is, what he/she does and with whom one makes love. The portrayal of queer characters in fiction is even contesting the traditional view of characterization based on the sex and gender binary---- male and female, man and woman, boy and girl. Thus, characters can only be appraised by their outward show of personality— what they do or say not what they are being or any innate anatomy. Therefore, characters are neither male nor female but "having" to be male or female. And a character's gender or sexuality cannot be deciphered pre-behaviourally or prior to performative acts, for gender and characterization is always relative to the constructed relations in which it is determined. Admittedly, gender is a doing, but not a doing by a subject which is said to exist prior to the deed. Characterization ends at the reader's analysis of what denotes feminine or masculine based on what characters play in a literary space at varying times; and since gender is a "free- floating artifice", Butler (1990:24) argues that

> If it is possible to speak of "man" with a masculine attribute and to understand that attribute as a happy but accidental future of that man, then it is also possible to speak of a "man" with a feminine attribute, whatever that is, but still to maintain the integrity of the gender

Hence, gender role versatility in queer characters instigates the literary critic to read characterization as an open mesh of possibilities whereby the Napoleonic aphorism of "anatomy is destiny" doesn't hold ground for fluid gender roles simply because an individual can adopt a sex or a gender that isn't essentially or biologically his or hers. Therefore, a belief in a

chromosomal gender will undergird the notion of the supremacy of the body in determining identity which of course is problematic with the emergence of genderqueer characters.

4.3 Homophobia and the Battered Bodies, Muted Voices, and Mangled Desire of African Literature

> I know that these people are God's children like the rest of us… but let's call a "spade" a "spade". They're perverts. Every last "queer" of them.
> *Nipigon Gazette*, June 9, 1993

Despite increasing awareness of the dangers and effects of homophobia in Africa, educational study has only been conducted sparingly about the issue, maybe because of the stigma that queer topics are enshrouded in or possibly because of the society's vitriolic laws on homosexuality. However, this is a "literary" appraisal of the negative connotations and treatment of homosexuality in African literature and by African writers.

Africans and African writers argue that homosexuality is not part of the African culture because of Africa's closeness to nature and native ways, however, some studies (Murray and Roscoe,1998) believe that homosexuality is as native as the African soil itself and "…it is found throughout the African continent" (Appiah & Gates, 2010). The presence of homosexuals and homosexual acts in Africa gave rise to vituperative railings from political leaders like Robert Mugabe who dismissed homosexuality as "unAfrican" and "white disease"; Uganda's Yoweri Museveni dismissed same sex relations as choicely, calling homosexuals "disgusting" and "unnatural", and promising a 14 years jail term to life imprisonment to defaulters. Nigeria, under President Jonathan's administration signed an anti-gay bill in 2014 criminalizing same sex relationships and marriages with a penalty of up to 14 years in prison, while some states in Northern Nigeria imposes a death sentence on homosexual offenses. Homosexual acts are faced

with gruesome and harsh treatment of a dead penalty in some countries especially in Northern Africa while others, with a mild treatment, still yet legalized and made provision for in the constitution as in the case in South Africa.According to Downie (2014:4)

> LGBT Africans have become accustomed to the state taking an unhealthy interest in their love lives. The problems they face are not new; neither are they confined to Uganda and Nigeria. Five African states carry the death penalty for homosexual acts, in all or part of their territories. In total, 38 countries in Africa criminalize homosexual conduct, many of them through sodomy laws dating back to colonial times. While many do not enforce these laws, so do. Cameroon is notoriously aggressive in its pursuit of homosexuals

The emergence of homophobic legislation in Africa has unfortunately generated dire consequences for LGBT communities. These laws stirred up a wide range of homophobic attitudes and violent backlash of gay Africans whereby lesbians are subjected to so-called "curative rape" (Mthathi, 2013; Jewkes et al., 2009; Muthien, 2007)gay men are violated and lynched, and gender non- conformist are ostracized and relegated to the nether of society. Downie (2014) argued that anti gay laws entrenches discrimination, creating avenues for subjugations "to deny LGBT citizens access to schools, healthcare, employment, and housing. The victims of these abuses are understandably reluctant to report them, making it impossible to quantify the scale of the problem" (7). In *Walking with Shadows*, the narrator affirmed after Adrian's homosexual secrets have been let out by a spiteful colleague that

> [T]he truth was he, Adrian, was being harassed because of his perceived sexuality, and the legal system in the country was not equipped to deal with anything remotely resembling this and Adrian knew that even if there was a law against such thing it was not meant to favour homosexuals. In fact, there was a law against homosexuality! (141)

Anti gay laws are only recycling crimes being that individuals are taking laws into their hands and using them to intimidate weaker bodies, overwhelmed in society's heterocentrism. In *Walking with Shadows,* Adrian recalls "reading on the front cover of a Sunday newspaper some

years back about how a homosexual couple was paraded naked" (141). Homophobic tendencies are noticeable in the varied ways in which the society uses prejudice and distaste to treat people considered outside of the boundary of what the society stipulates as normal. Homophobic acts ranges from one society to the other, as well as from an individual to another but all directed towards a public aversion of LGBTI persons. Homophobia encompasses a range of negative attitudes and feelings towards homosexuals (lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender) and also towards homosexuality. It is mostly feelings of contempt, prejudice, aversion, and antipathy for people identified as homosexuals. Psychologist Weinberg (1972) coined the word to mean a phobia for homosexuals, a "dread of being in close quarters with homosexuals--- and in the case of homosexuals themselves, self-loathing". Homophobia isn't exclusive to heterosexuals alone; homosexuals have these feelings too. This "self- loathing" by homosexuals is what is termed as "internalized homosexuality" resulting from the negative ideas about homosexuality that gay men and women are forced to feel from the dominant society. Bullough (2004) asserts that

> [H]omosexuals who suffer from homophobia also tend to suffer from low self- esteem, depression and isolation. Such individuals may be prone to increased use of alcohol and drugs and often fail to engage in safe- sex precautions. Internalized homophobia has also been seen as the cause of high suicide rates among gay and lesbian teenagers

The whole idea of queer literature when theorized by Theresa de Lauretis was grounded in the belief that literature is more too often embedded in homophobic fear of rigid and essentialist sexuality, which of course is heterosexuality. De Lauretis masterminded this gap and formed what has now become a popular field of study in English and Literature departments. African literature exudes antipathy towards that which is not heterosexual through a domineering system of heterosexism. These systems of heterosexism according to Herek (2004:15) "… include beliefs about gender, morality, and danger by which homosexuality and sexual minorities are

defined as deviant, sinful and threatening. Hostility, discrimination, and violence are thereby justified as appropriate and even necessary". Early African literature polices and bore in heteronormative values into African art and recommends that culture is rigid, sexual orientation is fixed and sexuality is immutable, however, queer literature vehemently employs techniques of reading whereby the things and ideas not named are reconsidered in order to unearth the paradoxes inherent in queer narratives to proffer a domineering façade of heterosexual culture is itself a homophobic tendency in art, literature and society.

Like Ada in *Walking with Shadows*, "many Nigerians[and Africans]… believed that homosexuality was a borrowed trait and not inherent in a person's biological make-up. And where else could an African learn such a thing? (135). Available evidence shows that this is not the case as the African, like the European is not in any way immune to desire. Moreover, critiques contend that it might have been "homophobia" which is a borrowed and imported trait from colonialists and missionaries in Africa and not "homosexuality" (Ormsby, 2015:7). Still yet, Ormbsy argued that colonialism must have set the stage for African homophobia, but fails to fully explain modern enactment of homophobic laws as well as modern forms of homophobia outside the scope of criminalization.

Lately, homophobia had been analyzed to be a psychical symptom by queer theorists desperate to turn the table around from the notion that "homosexuals are disturbed people by saying that it is those who disapprove of them who are mentally unbalanced, that they are in the grips of a 'phobia'" (Dannemeyer, 1989) and undergird their pro-gay arguments by indicting heterosexuals while acquitting themselves. In *Walking with Shadows* Adrian, the protagonist says that "all men had the tendency to turn out gay; it was intrinsic to their nature. This was why many men were violent homophobes, driven by the fear that at their weakest, they too may succumb to their

inherent nature" However, this slippery assertion that homophobia is a pathology is as unfounded and claimless as earlier arguments that homosexuality is a sickness.

Africa's staunch homophobia is best understood through a religious backdrop. The mere fact that the two Abrahamic religion Christianity and Islam espouses anti-homosexual laws and see eye to eye on the matter of homosexuality by abhorring it is enough to throw fanatical religious into a wild state of frenzy and tantrum over those they deemed indifferent to the laws. Ormsby (2015) believes that

> Religion may make a considerable impact on the level of homophobia within African states because of its importance in African culture… Religions ubiquity in Sub- Saharan Africa may therefore influence the development of homophobic cultural norms that are then impressed on countries' populations and state institutions.

Africans, with a fervid embrace of religion are rabid puritans who would rather fight God's war for him as said in the Holy Books the Bible and the Koran than to see someone contradicts a sacred law. The place that religion plays in African homophobia is adequately portrayed in the narrative *Walking with Shadows*. Pastor Mathew who supposedly cures homosexuality invited Adrian over through his brother Chiedu and physically brutalized Adrian with a whip with the notion that flogging Adrian would cure him of his same- sex desire. Pastor Mathew, arguing on a Judeo-Christian backdrop says that

> Sometimes we let the devil come into our lives and rule our hearts. And it's the evil deed of Sodom and Gomorrah that made the Lord destroy the city and people of that place (174)

For Pastor Mathew, Adrian's gayness is in no way a psychical or pathological syndrome but a spiritual one which he believes that God will cure Adrian, who is to be exorcised for "[i]t is the devil that tempts [Adrian]". Adrian's queer body was battered and mangled so as to expunge

queerness; he has never been looked at as desiring an identity for he was queer, and even when he tries to escape his own body, he only ends up as a tortured self, smothering his identity until he gets swallowed in the society's ruthless heterocentrism. Pastor Mathew whipped Adrian, "stroke after stroke", until "Adrian sensed himself drifting in and out of consciousness. Sometimes he felt the pain of the whip when it licked his torso and ripped open a patch flesh" (173). All these he had to pass through just because he was found different in a society that is busy trying to "regender' and "resexualise" him.

The heterosexism inherent in African literature is reminiscent of the African society whereby homosexuals are regarded as 'failures' for their inability to bask in the heterocentrism that is upheld in the society. As such, they are regarded as clannish and dangerous, perverts, sexually obsessed and predatory bodies at odds with everything customary in a society which isn't matured enough to accommodate anything "different" and odd; hence, the violence and ostracization that non-heteronormative people live with on a daily basis. In *Walking with Shadows*, Adrian feels he has never really been part of his family (62). He is abhorred in the society--- his work place and even by his wife for having an odd sexuality. He knows that

> Every day in a gay man's life, he is constantly hurt by the people he loves the most. His family. His friends. And even the society. We [gays] have to live with rejection everyday and that hurts. We [gays] have to grin and bear it constantly so that other people are comfortable at our expense (33)

Heterosexism is the display of homophobia in the society. It creates a fascist system whereby the homosexual is unable to fit into and thus left with no space in the conventional ideal to adapt to. Heteronormativity does more harm to homosexuals than even physical homophobia; it affects the psychology of gay men and displaces their identity letting them run away from their 'selves' and thus creating a traumatized personality of psychical void--- neither belonging here nor there.

Abdul, a queer character in *Walking with Shadows* lamented the troubles queers face in heterosexism. He believes

> The heterosexuals rub their yeye sexuality in our[gay people] faces daily. It's right there when you open the glossy magazines and see all the colourful adverts for clothes, perfume, everything. It's on the billboards, the television, radio, everywhere, and no one objects, not least the gay folks. But if I were to hold hands with Femi in public, na another story be that one… (30)

Africa's heteronormativity has made it hard for the homosexual to exist in a setting whereby legislation recognizes just one sexuality, which of course is heterosexual. The society frowns at anything different and even literature and art champions a battered narrative on the queer body. Obi (2017) wishes the treatment of the queer body in literature be reconsidered, treated and recuperated in our narratives. According to Obi in his 2017 essay We *are Queer, We are Here*

> I've longed to find the queer body in Nigerian literature documented with dignity, with respect. To find the queer body portrayed as being wronged, as deserving justice. For to search for one's self in literature and not find it or to find it perpetually twisted and shunned and vilified is also violence, a different kind of violence. Nigeria's literary scene has not been fair to the queer body. It has not been fair to the queer narrative

Homophobia and heterosexism are two factors that trigger the persecution of the queer body in literature and in the society. The former does it physically while the latter socially. Homophobia tortures the presence of queer bodies and queer narratives while heterosexism bullies and overwhelms unconventional sexuality so it is relegated to the fringes of desire and culture, the nether of existence by silencing queer voices, torturing odd desire and maiming queer presences with an overshadowing convention and brutal treatment.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter A Psychoanalytical Reading of Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows* did a psychoanalytic reading of queer novel by Jude Dibia *Walking with Shadows* appraising its pathological pro-gay arguments trying to decriminalize homosexuality as a natural category of

sexuality in his queer characters. This chapter debunked Dibia's and contemporary writers' arguments for a congenital and natural homosexuality and tender that homosexuality is most likely a psychical disorder and not a pathological syndrome. This chapter also queried queer characterization in literature, pinpointing channels through which queer characters, in their fluid characterization and gender versatility can be deciphered, arguing that sexuality and biology does not guarantee a character's sexual orientation or his/ or her being male or female but performative acts and behavioural attributes would most probably designate queer characters in a certain gender category. Discourses on homophobia and African literature were also analyzed, exposing a little history of homophobia in Africa and in literature too cognizant of the stifled voices and injured queer bodies in Africa desperate to find solace in the society and in art. Arguments and instances from Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows* had been greatly introduced into this chapter to support assertions or proffer examples.

CHAPTER FIVE

READINGK. SELLO DUIKER'S *THE QUIET VIOLENCE OF DREAMS*

5. O Introduction

This chapter deploys Freudian Psychoanalytic theory and theories of psychosexual development to appraise queerness as a theme in K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams.* The characters, their stream of thoughts, diction, personality, and complex will be adequately evaluated to uncover queer figurations in its different degrees brings to fore the discourse of androgynous characterization in most queer literature, noting the contention between designating queer characters with their congenital sex or their accrued sex. The toxic masculinities in contemporary South African literature and its resulting effect of violence and traumatic experiences are appraised in relation to Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*. It will also do a queer psychotherapy by proffering psychoanalytic techniques that can reverse these mental and psychological inversions.

5.1 Psychoanalytic Interpretation of *The Quiet Violence Of Dreams*

The Quiet Violence of Dreams is one of Duiker's most animated narratives for its vigorous experiment with sexuality and gender, and the portrayal of the city as an endangered locale for toxic masculinities and urbanized violence. Duiker's treatment of homosexuality has psychological and mental connotations; after all he crafted his characters to have undergone one earlier traumatic event or the other and experienced bout of hysteria which nonetheless trigger their sexual inversion or perversion in the future. Duiker's fictional world allows for a narrative riddled with violence, psychological trauma and sexuality.

Duiker's protagonist Tshepo offers interesting complexes which calls for a psychoanalytical read. Thsepo's subconscious is clearly and extensively displayed especially through his stream of consciousness. Duiker allows the reader into the tumultuous mind of Tshepo.

> I am tired, hungry. Washed-up at twenty three, I keep thinking and force myself to do something. But I can't… I feel seconds ticking in my veins as I breathe. Minutes are outnumbering the hairs on my body. Hours are disappearing with each nail that grows… It is frightening. Time is frightening. (pg. 10)

Tshepo's mind is generally a chaotic quilt of patched-up traumatic experiences. He says he is "find[ing] it hard to explain what really happened, what was really going on in [his] life. There's a part of me that will never be the same again… I live with questions…. the answer seems more elusive…. there is enough uncertainty in my life as it is" (7). This hysterical attitude is explained later when he narrates to Mmabatho how his mother was gang raped and tragically murdered in front of him. Mmabatho says he (Tshepo) speaks "gently as if undressing a wound" and he says he can't remember most of the events that led to that tragic night. Of course Tshepo uses repression as a coping mechanism to cover up this mental "wound" which he successfully did until the effects starts shooting out of his life and affecting his personality, sexuality and even his mentality.

To undergird the earlier assertion, Freud (1905) argues that in most homosexuals it is possible that very early in their lives a sexual impression occurred which left a permanent after-effect in the shape of a tendency to homosexuality. Witnessing his mother's rape and eventual murder and also his own homosexual rape in the hands of the assailants predisposes Tshepo into a staunch abhorrence of sex. The second time that Tshepo gets raped by Chris and his two friends opens up old psychological scars and he says it makes him "feel as though [his] mother has died again" (214). This second act at brutalizing Tshepo's innocence completes his feminization and unlocks

the repressed homosexual in him. This moment frees Tshepo from the status of the uninitiated and transfigures him into a homosexual male and a feminized man. Perhaps that is why Chris (Tshepo's flat mate) views him as a feminine and passive man, ritualized into a woman based on his masculine dominance and Tshepo's timidity. After the violation, Chris calls Tshepo "poes" (a derogatory Cape Patois for Vagina", tagging Tshepo as a weaker and vulnerable man. In this case, it is not surprising that immediately after his violation; Tshepo joins the world of male prostitution at Steamy Inn and metamorphoses into his alter ego by taking up the name Angelo.

When Tshepo transitions from a heterosexual to a homosexual his sexual preference becomes apparent when he started working at Steamy Inn. He feels attracted to men like him and describes Chris as "[being] so beautiful. So furiously attractive… His eyes shimmer like jade and his lips are pink and full…" (166). The sensual reference to the masculine body did not manifests congenitally but after Tshepo must have passed through certain mental and psychological crises. He admits to enjoying heterosexual sex with his Indian girlfriend Subashnee. He said "we had lots of sex. I enjoy sex with women" (327). Thus, Tshepo falls into what Freud calls "amphigenic inverts" or "psychosexual hermaphrodites" whose sexual objects may equally well be of their own or the opposite sex. Freud sees this kind of inversion as lacking the characteristics of exclusivity just like Tshepo who says

> I'm becoming aware of myself as different types of people discover oceans of pleasure within me. I sleep with so many people mother, I must be honest (380)

There may, however be arguments for Tshepo being a situational homosexual because more often than not, he practices homosexuality for its socioeconomic value. He uses prostitution as a means to improve his economic status and not for pleasure and sensual satisfaction like

Sebastian. He muses to himself "I have plans for that money, I want to say but I don't. I have to save, to keep a nest egg. Next year I must think ahead…" (267).

Tshepo isn't even sure of his sexuality. If at all he enjoys his sexuality as a homosexual he wouldn't have referred to West's reaching for his neck and putting his tongue in Tshepo's mouth as a "strange thing" (244). Even though Tshepo let him kiss him, he said "*perhaps* I was pining for him myself' (244) (emphasis mine).

In the characters of Alex and Sebastian, Freud's definitions of an absolute invert surfaces. There is no evidence of Alex heterosexuality whatsoever in the narrative. Alex hires Tshepo as a male prostitute at Steamy Inn to take care of his emotional and physical desire. And Sebastian doesn't seem to be attracted to a woman and aroused by a woman at all. Sebastian sees his gayness as congenital. When he and Tshepo were examining the pictures of men to be sexually aroused, Sebastian encourages Tshepo to think about a woman in order to prolong the sexual pleasure. He says

> Just follow my lead. When you feel like you're going to come just hold back, visualize a woman that usually does the trick for me. (384)

The fact that they have to visualize a woman to come shows the unnaturalness of homosexuality. This fact counters the argument for a "born this way" sexuality and pathological gayness. Freud in his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905) argues that a man and a woman are always striving to unite in love. Hence, "it comes as a great surprise therefore to learn that there are men whose sexual object is a man and not a woman, and women whose sexual object is a woman and not a man. People of this kind are described as having 'contrary sexual feeling', better, as being inverts" (1465)

However, Sebastian in *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* believes his gayness is innate. He cross dresses, he is a sissy and "find[s] pleasure in men" (337). Sebastian realized from a pre-oedipal age that he is attracted to men only. He says of his attraction to Stephen:

> I was fifteen and in love with a boy called Stephen. At school in class he used to sit across from me. He would devastate me with his dimples and dark eyes. I always knew I was different. I figured out early that it was sexual, that all that latent energy inside that made me a stranger and a loner was something that made me who I was (335/6)

For Sebastian, his inversion goes beyond his consciousness and it is preordained by biological factors thereby undergirds Kolodny et al (1971) assertion that "heterosexual men had higher levels of testosterone than bisexual men whose levels were in turn higher than homosexual men" thereby arguing for a natural and pathological view of queerness. Tshepo's sexual behaviour also supports the fact that he may however be innately homosexual but sometimes playing heterosexual roles. In his encounter with a female client at Steamy Inn, he admits that "[s]he is a pretty girl. Any straight guy would die to be in bed with her. I look at her soft blue eyes and feign enthusiasm as I kiss her" (332). He has to pretend just to play the role of a heterosexual even though his self-consciousness is screaming at everything odd. But even so, Rado (1949) proposed that all human beings were biologically programmed to be heterosexual. If someone was homosexual, therefore he was— in Rado's view unconsciously heterosexual but deeply fearful of consciously acknowledging or accepting his heterosexual desire.

Mmabatho in *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* neatly falls within Freud's definition of the "contingent invert". Freud in *The Sexual Aberrations* sees the contingent invert as one who under the influence of certain external conditions which may include inaccessibility to the normal sexual object and imitation can take as sexual object someone of their own sex and derives satisfaction from sexual intercourse with them. Mmabatho as portrayed in the narrative is

free spirited and refuses social and sexual codification in the society. She dated Arne and got pregnant for him but she also takes the reader to a point in time when she experimented with her sexuality and had an affair with an Indian woman Karuna, at Ganesh. She writes: "I had an affair with her. It didn't last long. I think I was more attracted to the idea of being with a woman than liking a woman…But I know I am not a lesbian. I like men too much" (72). Mmabatho is a situational or opportunistic invert; she only turns to lesbianism when she is out of options for a heterosexual romance.

5.1.1 Identification: Oedipus complex and Pre-oedipal Development of Personality.

In Freud's view, the "biological bedrock" that is at the root of the sexual behaviour is penis envy in women and castration anxiety in men. In Freud's notion, every human being was biologically destined to be sexually attracted to the parent of the opposite sex during childhood and to identify with the parent of same sex and any "new arrival on this planet is faced by the task of mastering the Oedipus complex, anyone who fails to do so falls a victim to neurosis" (1539). Hence for a normal personality to be developed, a boy must be attracted to his mother until he finds another feminine symbol to entertain his affection and then identify with his father to learn masculine traits.

In Tshepo we see practically the Oedipus complex at work. On the day of his mother's funeral he declared that "he lost it". He tells Mmabatho emotionally "I loved my mother… maybe too much. There's nothing like having a mother. A mother's love can save you when you're about to jump, before you pull the trigger. It is difficult to ever say how much she meant to me" (75). Tshepo's intense love for his mother can only be described through the workings of the Oedipus complex and his abhorrence of his father too. The working of the Oedipus complex according to

Freud is a boy who is obsessed with his mother and despises his father for fear of castration if his incestuous feeling towards her is found. He admits that his father "worked on [his] nerves a lot. I don't think I am the kind of son he wanted. You know how you can love someone, a family member, but not like them. He didn't like me" (75). Freud captured this resentment the son feels for his father in *The Development of the Libido and their Sexual Organizations* thus

> The little man wants to have his mother all to himself, that he feels the presence of his father as a nuisance, that he is resentful if his father indulges in any signs of affection towards his mother and that he shows satisfaction when his father has gone on a journey or is absent (3399)

In the text, it is noticeable that Tshepo felt no remorse for his father's absence and calls himself an orphan when his mother dies even when his father is still alive. He admits: "I don't like to speak about him (his father), that's why I tell people he died in a car accident with my mother. I suppose I felt like an orphan the night she died" (78).

The different relationships between son and mother and son and father are mechanically set up by the Oedipus complex. Tshepo is obsessed with his mother even at death. He keeps talking and referring to her and sees himself as an orphan even when his father is still alive but distant.

Charles Socarides (1978) argues that unresolved pre-oedipal and oedipal conflicts were invariably the driving force behind homosexuality. It isn't hard to see that Tshepo's losing his mother, the object of his affection at an early age and the eventual distance with his father who he is supposed to identify with and learn masculine traits contributes abundantly in predisposing him to homosexuality. He turned out unable to learn masculine ways from a distant father and hence left direly craving and longing for that feminine affection that was cut too early. Thus, he took the place of his mother in a narcissistic way to feminize himself and feel the love that was

cut too early, thus his homosexual, weak and feminized personality. He feels his femininity and queries himself:

> I wonder why I always surround myself with women, why I can never look another man in the eye, why I won't allow my own masculinity to blossom (92)

In this case, a healthy psychological development is a boy identifying with his father (which Tshepo lacks). Homosexuality is taken as evidence of lack of such identification. Thus it is only as a result of same-sexed parental identification could normal superego be developed. A lack of this superego leads to an energetic Id.

Worthy of mention is Tshepo's half brother whom he calls "the Anti-Christ" (79) lives in Johannesburg close to his father (Tshepo's father too) in a mansion and engaging in criminal activities. These diverse personalities development in two brothers goes to show that gayness isn't biological or innate, for if it was, Tshepo's brother would have been a feminized and timid sissy too like Tshepo. Due to the fact that he has his father to himself, he identified with him and learned masculine traits and thus turned out heterosexual unlike Tshepo. Also, Irving Bieber et al (1962) argues that "[i]n the father's specific contributions to his son's psychosexual development, the father should be a male model with whom the son can identify in forming masculine patterns in a specific cultural milieu". This is what Tshepo lacks, hence his complex psychosexual and social development.

Tshepo's father confirms the validity of the Oedipus complex. Talking to Tshepo he says

> I loved your mother, no matter what you think. She was my wife before she was your mother. Maybe I was a little jealous of you sometimes. I know how you were around here but you were always my son, even if I hated you a little (401)

The hostility between father and son is unconsciously sparked having to compete for the mother's attention as Freud affirmed the dictates of any Oedipus complex in play.

Homosexual men have experienced a specially strong fixation on their mother. In Tshepo we see a fixation on his mother which makes him unable to transfer his affection to another woman. Tshepo still mourns even after his mom's death. He says

> Dear Mama, I've been thinking about you a lot lately. The nights of insomnia spent staring out the window were really spent thinking of you, wherever you are. I miss you and ache for the days when you were around to look after me (67)

Tshepo's obsession with his mother even after death practically estranges him from women. He still craves his mother and believes no other woman will take her place in his life. This subconscious fear of not being able to find love as his mother's leaves him cold and indifferent to girls and by extension heterosexuality. Worthy of mention is that, Tshepo offers himself to be penetrated by Karel and says such erotic passion causes him to think of "happy memories of childhood". Tshepo takes in Karel what he lost as a child. He sees in Karel and later Chris a substitute father which offers him the fatherly care he misses and the motherly love that was cut too early. Freud views this bonding as identifying with the mother as an outcome of the attachment, and also enabling the son to hold on to her, the first subject of his love. Freud also believes "the inclination towards a narcissistic object-choice, which in general lies readier to hand and is easier to put into effect than a move towards the other sex" (3907) often directs Tshepo towards a homosexual subject choice. All these factors contribute in forming the character of Tshepo and Duiker crafted him with these psychological perspectives in order to shed light to his development and personality. As Henson et al (1966) argues

> Close binding mothers and distant fathers might if modestly treated, have clear usefulness in the understanding of some aspects of development in some gay men.

Another noticeable Electra complex in play is in Mmabatho. She confesses to Tshepo that her father means the world to her more than her mother. She then goes further to say "[h]is approval is important" (396). Mmabatho still maintained her affection for her father and haphazardly identified with her mother to learn femininity. This unreconciled identification contributes in forming her personality in the story. She is portrayed with shrewd confidence and turgid femininity. She is radical and free spirited, showing up masculine attitudes instead of feminine. This goes to show that her overdue affection for her father and non-identification with her mother causes her to imbibe masculine traits from the former and miss feminine traits from the later.

Mmabatho still craves her father's approval even when she is not around him. She tells him she is pregnant and fears disappointing him even when he is not present there (396). This undying daughter- father affection and non-identification with the mother results in Mmabatho's experiment with lesbianism to feel the manliness she has so been accustomed to learn from her father.

5.1.2 The Tripartite Mode: Id, Ego and Super Ego and the Battle for Dominance

In *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* we see an enduring battle between the tripartite psyches to dominate personality complexes of characters. This is a constant tussle which manifests all the time in the characters' decision making, acts, behaviours, and even subconscious mind. Freud in *Two Encyclopedia Articles* argues that "the assumption that there are unconscious mental processes, the recognition of the theory of resistances and repression, the appreciation of the

importance of sexuality and of the Oedipus complex— these constitutes the principal subject matter of psychoanalysis and the foundation of its theory" (3924).

Sigmund Freud classifies mental life into three categories: id, ego and superego. The id represents the biological foundations of personality. It is the source of basic instinctual and libidinal drives which triggers hedonism. It operates according to the pleasure principle. The ego, according to Freud is a modification of the id emerging as a result of the direct influence of the external world. It regulates libidinal drive energies and cautions instinctual impulses so that satisfaction accords with the demands of reality. It is the crux of reason, conscience, and reality check and can deflect, repress, or transform the expression of unrealistic or forbidden drive energies. The superego is a consequence of the resolution of the Oedipus complex whereby the child takes on the authority of parental figures through introjections or identification. Thus, as the id pursues pleasure, the ego is governed by the reality principle; the superego bids the psychic to strive for idealistic goals and perfection. It is the reservoir of moral censorship and conscience.

This tripartite mode surfaces frequently in the narrative and characters' disposition. Tshepo transitions from a heterosexual to homosexual after he gave in to the demand of the id. Before then, the ego has been influencing his attitude until the id overwhelms him when he meets Chris. He confesses the effect meeting Chris had on him thus:

> His powerful arms and strong but elegant neck kept me guessing about the rest of his landscape. I wonder what lies under the clothes that fit him so well. I wonder how soft or rough his skin is, how gently his breath comes and goes (167)

However, this abnormal attraction to a man like him as stirred by the id is quickly arrested by the watchful ego thus:

> It is embarrassing to think about a man like this. I don't know what to do. He is so captivating (167)

Eventually, Tshepo gives in to the desire of the id. He picked a job at Steamy Inn where he massages men like him and finally fell into the lowliest demands of the id--- male prostitution. But even so, the ego creeps in stealthily, even in his subconscious to prick his conscience and uplift him from the pleasure seeking thralls of the id. He laments after having sexual intercourse with men for money "[a]fter a while a terrible feeling comes over me. It's official. You're a slut, a filthy whore, a voice inside me shouts" (243). Tshepo's conscience pricks him but the persistent id slides in to take over him again thus, he tried to vindicate his action "I had no choice, I say to myself, I don't have to feel guilty" (243). The ego calls in again struggling to encumber him in his conscience: "The excitement is taken over by what I did to make money" (243). However, Tshepo wholesomely gives in to the desire of his id and watches himself overlook his conscience, the society and even ethics. After taking up work at Steamy Inn massaging men and prostituting, he said

> I go back to the lounge with a smile on my face. The world can send me to hell if it wants. I would go if my cowboy was there. (333)

In Tshepo, we see the tripartite psyche trying desperately to control his actions and mould his personality. Thus, as the id represents passion, the ego stands in for reason, conscience and common sense.

In the characterization of Sebastian, a strong id and weak ego is evident. Sebastian is a pervert as well as a sexual deviant. He engages in homosexual sex and masturbation and has absolutely no remorse over it. He says blatantly "[a]t work I find pleasure in men… I am considered a sissy, a queen, and I revel in the blurry path I travel" (337). Sebastian is so indecent and licentious that

he always fantasizes about his principal coming in his mouth (384) and also the men he lusts after while masturbating. He agrees "It is my ritual" (335).

Mmabatho is another character who shows considerable influence of the ego and superego. Even though she battled with her id and eventually gave in to lesbianism with Karuna among others. She however makes decisions propelled by the ego and superego as well. For instance, when arguing with Arne her boyfriend over abortion, she says "I honestly don't know if I can kill my own baby… It would be a fetus not a baby… But still. I don't know if I would do it or even give it up for adoption" (195). Similarly, when she got pregnant, her superego manifests and queries her morality. In a monologue she dreads her father knowing about the pregnancy. When soliloquizing to herself, she holds her breath and addresses her absent father thus "I am pregnant… Are you disappointed?... [he] means the world to me. His approval is important" (396) In Mmabatho, we see the influence of her father in her personality. This fear has lingered with her from childhood and then finally transformed into her superego. As rightly captured by Freud, of all the psychic structures the superego is the only one to emerge as consequence of interpersonal relationships. It develops to represent the influence of family and societal institutions on the formation of personality. In the narrative, Mmabatho eventually turns from a loose, immoral and gregarious lady to a simple, responsible and reserved person while Tshepo's personality develops the other way round. In fact, Mmabatho complains about Tshepo:

> It is as if we have swapped lives. I have become him and he has become me. I used to be the one getting dressed and going out, always picking him up. He was always alone at home, shy and awkward… Now the tables have turned… (450)

Mmabatho's dream also of her grandmother is another avenue where the superego manifests to her. In the dream, her grandmother tells her to "stop using those chemicals. They are what

destroyed my hair" (309). This warning in a dream is the superego creeping into her life through the specter of her grandmother to discourage her obsession with a fake and borrowed westernized identity. In the dream the grandmother cautions her "what is wrong with kaffir hair? Are you ashamed? There is power in a spiral… Are you jealous of white women? Why won't you let them wear their long hair? Why do you crave that which distorts your beauty?" (311).

Thus, the tripartite psyche can expose itself in different forms and manner, whatever the case; it comes to leave an impact in personalities and influence actions and behaviours.

In *The Quiet Violence of Dreams,* characters like Zebron who raped his sister and calls her a "silly bitch"(43), Chris and his friends Virgil and Brendan, who raped Tshepo, Sebastian, Karel, and West are all characters who are always defeated by their id. They most a times succumb to the id's drive. While characters like Patrick, Akousia and David are portrayed as rational characters with a strong super-ego and ego influence.

5.1.3 Dreams and Personality Complex

Dreams aren't totally coincidental; they speak volumes into the personalities of characters. In fact, Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams* defines dreams as "the mental activity of the sleeper in so far as he is asleep" (517). As for Freud, dreams aren't just random images in motion in a sleeper's psyche; they are also mental processes that have profuse connection with the waking life. They are our realities carved in symbols.

In *The Quiet Violence of Dreams,* Duiker makes a lot of reference to the mental life, the phantasmal process and the dream life. Dreams as argued by Freud derive their materials from waking life. Hence, a literary critic cannot overlook them. In fact, they lead the critic into the narrative instead of disengaging him from it. Tshepo had a lot of dreams which are as significant

as his personality. His identity issues also manifest in his dreams. He dreamt of home, Soweto, he said "I haven't dreamt of it in a long time. But in the dream all my friends, all the people I grew up with, have the heads of jackals and wolves. I can recognize them from their bodies, from the way they walk" (415). Home for Tshepo is everything he wants to forget. The memories he has of home--- his mother being raped and eventually murdered and the brutal realization that his father masterminded her murder gives him enough traumas to last him a life time. Hence, he tries as much as possible to sublimate the thought of his family since his mother died into seeking for financial support and economic gains. This repressed feeling towards his family is what is resurfacing as "heads of jackals and wolves". These gory pictures symbolized his dreaded image of home that he had to run away from to somewhere far away from his resentful father and repugnant brother. As Warsan Shire said in her poem *Conversations about Home* "no one leaves home unless/ home is the mouth of a shark". Home symbolizes everything pain and penury for Tshepo, thus he goes around seeking to replenish that warmth and comfort he was denied while growing up. According to Fortuin (2015:176/7)

> *In the Quiet Violence of Dreams* we find young Tshepo drifting from disempowered space to disempowered space, seeking that sense of 'home' that was destroyed when his mother was raped and murdered at the hands of men hired by his father

Tshepo also dreams that he "died and transcended". He says

> I dreamt I died and survived the dream. I became suffused with violent gases and dust. A determined star is rising in my horizon. I'm ruled by its violence. It is like a beast which thrills me everytime (sic) it growls. (140)

This dream of dying and transcending is Tshepo's transfiguration from a heterosexual, non-commercial, monogamous identity to a homosexual, promiscuous, commercial personality. Tshepo dies and resurrects like the phoenix, but in his new gay personality and even baptizes himself with a new name "Angelo". In one of Duiker's novels *The Hidden Star*, Nolitye tells her

father “Dreams are doors to the future” (116). The “determined star rising in [his] horizon” signifies his coming to terms with his obstinate instinct and drive. Tshepo recognizes that instinctual drive and fruition to be his gay personality which he is finally coming to terms with. He says he is becoming aware of himself and answers Mmabatho when she says “[n]ow you seem to be something that you have been hiding all along” thus “I wasn’t hiding anything. Just waiting for the right time to be me” (451).

Duiker understands the place of dreams in characterization. He uses dreams to unlock certain personality complexes in characters and to probe the lives of characters. Tshepo also dreams about “meet[ing] an old man with skin so loose around his face that he looks like a mask” (415). The mask in the dream signifies Tshepo’s hidden personality coming face to face with him and the battle to find himself in his chaotic and tumultuous subconscious for he “find[s] it hard to explain what really happened, what was really going on in my life. There’s a part of me that will never be the same again…, there is enough uncertainty in my life” (7). Throughout the narrative, Tshepo is always battling to find himself and align to his personality, but he is always left shattered and unable to grasp at his identity because he keeps battling with his old and new self, battling with Tshepo and Angelo, battling with heterosexual and homosexual complexes.

Mmabatho is also another character whose dreams mean more than they denote on the surface. She sees her grandmother in a dream “…completely bald. She has several ringworms. Some of them look really bad, oozing a clear liquid and she has ugly scabs…I wanted to tell you to stop using those chemicals. They are what destroyed my hair” she says while delicately touching a spot on her head where a tuft of thin hair stubbornly grows” (309). This surreal dream isn’t just a visitation by a death grandmother, it is Mmabatho being visited by her alter ego, warning her of

ending up like her grandmother if she doesn't desist from using western chemicals on her hair to downplay her blackness. Immediately after the dream, Mmabatho says:

> I think about all the women of colour I know, our struggle with hair. It is our struggle, nobody else's. We have been swallowing too many lies about the virtues of long, straight hair. We have enslaved ourselves willingly. We complain about racism yet we are hair fascists. I cannot blame the media or white people or men. It is my own greed that I must confront (311)

Thus, it is evident how far a dream can go to conscientize a person. This goes beyond a dream and when we scratch beyond the surface it can also be a tussle between the ego and the id, or even the alter ego and the self.

The images in Tshepo's dreams are unarguably not random. They fit together to speak volumes about his personality. For instance, he dreams of seeing "bare-chested men playing soccer", then they metamorphose into "graceful centaurs with long untamed tails", then Tshepo says they are "handsome in a rugged way and are of every colour imaginable" (416). The images are so seductive that Tshepo becomes "aroused … watch[ing] this rainbow of muscular torsos" (416).The images in this dream are homoerotic. It is only natural that Tshepo's subconscious is a network of gay images and lewdness thereby leading to his dream having same quality. Dreams as Freud made us believe are not totally artificial and random. He says there is psychological process which makes it doable to interpret dreams and that every dream reveals itself as a psychical structure whose meaning can be situated in the mental activities of waking life. The "rainbow of muscular torsos" (416) that Duiker refers to is clearly a gay image which symbolizes the rainbow nation, an appellation for LGBTI persons. The "long untamed nails" can fall into Freud's phallic objects which most probably signify Tshepo's craving for a phallic or penetration

as he always does. Having this in mind, we can certainly say like Burdach (1838; 499) that dreams represent reality in symbols.

Tshepo is a mesh of personalities all fitting into his complex identity. Tshepo's rape causes him to lose touch with reality and slip into psychosis. His use of cannabis and zol (marijuana) is meant to repress his most portent desire and hide his biting trauma. His rape in the hand of Chris and his gang opens up old scars of his mother's rape by his father's cohort. Thus, for Tshepo, all relationships with men become framed with an initial feel of threatening, violent sexuality. Zebron describes Tshepo as having that "irresistible quality about him that just makes you want to abuse him" (49). This repressed stigmata of a brutalized and wounded body that Tshepo has to live with is what is showing its head in his life. For Zebron, the expression on Tshepo's face is synonymous with womanhood as victimhood. Thus, it isn't surprising that immediately after his sexual violation Tshepo decides to join the world of male prostitution at Steamy Inn.

Chris' personality shouldn't come as a surprise viewing the fact that he is an ex-convict who passed through some of the most morally reprehensible acts in the hands of other prisoners. Chris in the narrative is always eager to prove his masculinity in order to hide his vulnerability. For instance, Chris as portrayed by Duiker is habitually clutching his groin in order to emphasize his phallic power and dominance. He talks about women and boast about some of the ones he had (171), in the jail he joins a gang of homosexuals in order to express his toxic masculinity and occupies the "bigger room" in their flat while Tshepo goes for the smaller one (15). All these toxic prove of masculinity and virility that Chris is so obsessed with is to cover up for his vulnerability when he was in jail and had to play sexual object to another man. He tells Tshepo that he is glad that he is not locked up in the other cell where the man will be "chowing [his] buttocks like a woman's thighs" (184). No matter how Chris tries to cover up what happened to

him in jail it shoots out in his slips and body language. Moreover, Chris' predisposition to violence is no surprise seeing his rather sordid background. We learn that Chris grew up in Cape flats, "they are like complicated underground sewage system… The deaths, the rapes, the breaks-ins, the break-downs, they become a way of life…" (154/5). Chris is dispose to violence at a very early age and this influences his general approach to life and people. His criminal acts, eventual imprisonment, rape cases and violence are all acts he grew up with in his neighborhood which have rubbed on him and his personality.

Hence, after all it isn't hard to see that Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* contains some of the most psychologically visible inferences in characterization, theme, language and plot. These psychical dimensions are however uncovered elaborately through Freudianism. Freud left theoretical analysis for what constitutes inversion or homosexuality through circumscribing normal sexual desire and abnormal, perverted, or inverted psychosexual development. Within and out of this overlapping boundaries K. Sello Duiker's set his novel *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* to cover for varieties of personality complex and sexual identity. Thus, analyzing queerness in the narrative as discussed by Freudianism alongside other psychoanalytic theorists, it can be deduced that a gay man is a coward who fears women (Rado, 1969); he is too close to his mother or a mama's boy (Freud, 1910), he is an impotent competitor when compared to real, heterosexual men (Freud, 1923) or he very early experienced some psychic trauma with the opposite sex or with adequately resolving his oedipal complex which left him estranged from normal sexual behavior. Psychoanalysis opens up these dimensions and allows the critic to explain the growth, development and structure of the human personality

5.2 Androgynous Characterization in African Fiction

> "…the man had actually become a woman"; the prophet of Deng had been consulted and had agreed to his change of status. The prophet had decided to call on the spirits and after consultation had declared that indeed the man was a woman. Therefore, he could dress in women's clothes and behave as a woman. From that time onward, it was agreed that "he" should be called "she", and "she" was allowed to marry a husband"
>
> Brian, H. M (1972)

Lately there has been a portrayal of queer characters in African literature which left the critic at a death end of analyzing and signifying literary characterization. A fair dose of liberality is needed to adequately give life to the most complex of literary characterization. The problem of appellation and signification isn't anymore as doctrinaire as it used to before. A restructuring of characterization arises with the appearance of genderqueer characters that could either be man or woman, hermaphrodite, intersex, transgender, masculine girls, feminine boys, butchfemme, sissy boys, drag queens and all others expressing gender outside the gender binary. The bone of contention arises from the system of naming that befits these characters. Does literary characterization neatly fit into the appellation "man" and "woman" as a fixed category or does it fall into a fluid system of designation that takes cognizance of the character's present gender role play which may eventually change as the case may be?

Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* has characters that are androgynous, what Heilbrun defines as "a condition under which the characteristics of the sexes, and the human impulses expressed by men and women, are not rigidly assigned".There are characters that are anatomically male or female playing a gender role directly opposite of what s/he is being; hence a potential alternative gender role for these characters is enormously construed as key to totally grasping all sorts of role play within the ambience of literary characterization. These unique

gender roles, when occupied by characters should clearly signify a systematic departure from conventional characterization in dressing, work, body and gesture, and even a possible unorthodox sexual behaviour. Tshepo in *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* is a man who sometimes plays the opposite gender. His dual characterization and even bisexual orientation leaves him neither specifically male nor female. Looking at Tshepo penetrated like a woman, then dominated and intimidated by more masculine characters like Chris, and also his body changing so much he almost thought he was turning into a woman, leaves him unfitting into the binary of male and female for his fluid gender and sexual roles. He says:

> I am changing, I'm evolving. […] I have become sensitive to the presence of women. […] My body is changing, in very subtle ways […] I have started bleeding, like a woman. But not at the obvious place, at the other place. […] [I]t comes and goes like a cycle, a strange mutated cycle. […] Perhaps the distance between a man and a woman is not that far. (139)

With the above assertion, we can say that Tshepo, even though born male has feminized himself and even is woman enough to experience menstrual cycle. Soyinka in *The Man Died* tipped on this ambiguity of gender and sexuality in literature. He experimented with the fluidity of gender roles and hermaphroditism in literature. He says

> I made a strange discovery this morning. I'm pregnant. For a long time I looked down on the evidence, wondering how it came to be. For there it was, firmly rounded and taut… Considering my sex, it should not happen to me at all. Of course stranger things have been known to happen. Sex change could creep up slowly on a man, unnoticed in such an asexual atmosphere. First the attenuation of masculine genes, then the hermaphroditic co-existence. Battle of the hormones and survival of the weakest. Or is it the stronger? (215)

Thus, hermaphroditism and androgynous characterization in African literature is a possible threat to the critic in trying to designate what constitutes male and female. African writers, from earlier ones like the Soyinka's and the contemporaries are beginning to portray queer characterization and thereby overlapping the fixed rubric of gender binary and appellation. The critic also must

have this in mind and readjust his theoretical tools to cover this strange sexualities and genders flocking into literature in order to make any viable and dependable effort in criticism and reading literature.

Nonhlanhla (2016) argues that Tshepo's sexual transmutation and bastardized body makes him acquire an "interstitial subject that occupies the boundaries of maleness/ femaleness" therefore he can neither take up the label male nor female. Thus he finds himself in between the frames of femaleness and maleness and does not put himself in an identity box.

According to Esterman (1970), a feminine boy is basically a man who has been possessed since childhood by a spirit of the female sex, which has been drawing out of him, little by little the taste for everything that is masculine and virile. Thus, gender role versatility is a major theme in K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*. The plot has gender fluid characters that are totally at odd with their congenital gender role and even showing contrast with their innate sexualities. Queer characters such as Tshepo, Sebastian and West play with novel frame of identity creation that are configured in between the ones of maleness and femaleness and sometimes both. This, Nonhlanhla (2016) believes are ousted "binary frames of sexual preference" and "are not units of self-identification and orientation". As much as gender has very little to do with anatomy, it means that gender roles can be subverted, inverted, and even borrowed, what Judith Butler articulately captures as going to the wardrobe to don a gender of one's choice only to return it in the evening. Gender roles can be adequately simulated and played, hence queer characters have demolish the specificity of the fixed categories of male and female making them fluid and malleable.

In *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* there is no clear-cut classification of characters based on gender. There are characters that are anatomically male but gendered female. There are also characters that are anatomically female but gendered male. Tshepo is a rare case of hermaphrodism whose anatomy is even hinted as being feminized despite his masculine physical features and his gender orientation. His confessions of having strange mutated cycles like a woman and his regular and remorseless penetration through the anus complete his feminization as a woman. He crosses from one gender to the other and fits perfectly to Freud's (1920:3859) view of the mystery of homosexuality in *The Psychogenesis of a Case of Homosexuality in a Woman*as "a feminine man, bound therefore to love a man, but unhappily attached to a masculine body". Trying to *regender*these characters perceived to be accidentally born with male sexual organs and vice versa will open up ambiguity of characterization and plot in literature for it leaves the reader at a crossroad of deciding whether to analyze each queer character according to individual gender role play or in connection to his/her anatomical sex and gender. And if the latter, the presence of the hermaphrodite in literature, which is gradually becoming a norm will totally complicate the assertion that a character's congenital sex typically influences the gender he belongs. So basically, contemporary African fiction has to make space for a disparity in the kind of sex or gender that one is and the kind of sex or gender that one belongs.

Sebastian in *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* dresses in drag. He is a transvestite who wears feminine clothes and feels sensual gratification in his social role. He says "Sometimes during the day I go to town dressed as a woman. It is an art form" (337). For Sebastian, he realizes that gender roles can be tampered and subverted. His sense of clothing and style of doning clothes reverberate the argument that gender is a social practise, performed individually based on a

character's desire. Therefore, having a penis isn't enough to make a character masculine and also having a vagina isn't enough to make a woman feminine.

M. H Abrams (cited in Souza, 2016:6) argues that characterization comes in two forms:

> In showing ("the dramatic method"), the author simply presents the characters talking and acting and leaves the reader to infer the motives and dispositions that lie behind what they say and do (…). In telling, the author intervenes authoritatively in order to describe, and often to evaluate the motives and dispositional qualities of the characters.

Nonetheless, queer writers employ characterization to either attack normative sexuality, maintain the status quo of "normal" sexuality or even to deconstruct all gender and sex binaries which they achieve through different characters and their orientation— gender bending, cisgender, transvestite, drags, butchfemme, sissies and hermaphrodites. In Stanley Kenani's *Love on Trial*, the two male characters caught having sex urged people to ask "how is [it] possible" to have sex "between two men?" and "who, in the process was performing the function of the man and who was the woman" (11/12). Men and women in conventional literature have been strictly assigned different roles in social and sexual life. The man is supposed to be the "inserter" while the woman the "inserted", however a contrast in this set roles whereby another man is being inserted shows that a man cannot be reduced basically to his sexual organs. Gender isn't anymore immutable; it is an orientation that one has to feel in his head and perform that portrays him/her as either performing a masculine gender or a feminine. In this case, as rightly captured by Butler in *Gender Trouble*, "if gender is the cultural meanings that the sexed body assumes, then a gender cannot be said to follow from a sex in any one way".

Therefore, gender is a complex set of social practices that includes but not limited to sexuality and sexual behaviour. Gender is a process and a lived ritual. Hence, in literature, especially queer literature, the gender of a person cannot be ascribed grammatically through the use of pronoun.

All pronouns, in queer literature are gender neutral and gender classification only starts and ends at performing social and sexual roles. It would also be rather odd to vehemently tag a character as a "he" or a "she" prior to his/her acting out him/herself. Thus, literary characterization succeeds socialization and behavioural acts in any queer space.

5.3 Trauma and Masculinized Violence in *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*

Duiker's fictional world is one riddled with violence, psychological distress, toxic masculinities and deviant behaviors. In the city as a violent space, Duiker captures the larger frame of South African social realities on the streets of Johannesburg and Cape Town inhabited by ex-convicts, rapists, drug dealers and addicts, sexual perverts, criminals and prostitutes and their bid to survive the harsh realities of living in contemporary South Africa thereby rebuking the failures of South African nationalism.

The Quiet Violence of Dreams has characters that have experienced one sort of violence or the other and traumatized so much so that it reflects in their relationships with other characters and even their selves.

Freud and Breuer (1893:7) in their essay *On the Psychical Mechanism of Hysterical Phenomenon: Preliminary Communication* assert that "external events determine the pathology of hysteria to an extent far greater than is known and recognized". This goes to show that for an external frustration or mental health to be pathogenic, an internal frustration must have triggered it. Thereby, it isn't farfetched to assert that the rape, heartbreaks, neglect, violence and early trauma that Tshepo all too often faces aggravates his mental instability, sexual perversion and chaotic personality. Tshepo is always battling with mental issues and depression almost to the point of breaking down. The death of his mother murdered in front of him is enough

psychological traumas to destabilize his mental health thereby leaving him vulnerable to all sorts of psychological instability. In fact, Tom Odhiambo in his essay *Sociosexual Experiences of Black South African Men in K. Sello Duiker's Thirteen Cents and The Quiet Violence of Dreams* argues that

> It is the nightmare of knowing that the father arranged the death of his mother that haunts Tshepo throughout his life (86)

Tshepo is always fighting his inner feelings and battling to survive his mental health. And when he experienced his own rape which finally crumbles him at the hands of Chris and his friends he says he "feel[s] as though his mother has died again" (214). Tshepo's traumatic experiences live with him to his adulthood. He mourns the innocent boy he used to be and frowns at the "stranger who looks back in the mirror. I miss that boy terribly" (59).

All the traumas that Tshepo experiences resurfaces later in his life coming back as acute mental disorder and instability. Caruth (1995) in the preface to *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* argues that "[p]sychic trauma involves intense personal suffering, but it also involves the recognition of realities that most of us have not begun to face". In Freud's psychological model, the experience is immediately followed by a period of latency where the victim appears to be okay because the victim hasn't fully grasped the full weight of the experience. It is only much later that the effect of the experience comes rippling into the victim's life. Tshepo, after his bout of mental breakdown is diagnosed with "Cannabis Induced Psychosis", but even so, his psychological traumas and mental violence is what causes his psychic instability. He muses

> What does "cannabis induced psychosis" mean? There is more to it than that. This is what the medical profession will never understand. I'm looking for a deeper understanding of what happened to me, not an easy answer like cannabis induced psychosis. And why don't they just say it if they truly don't understand what happened? Why blame it on Cannabis? (10)

Duiker makes it clear that Tshepo is unable to cope with the events he has faced within his life. He confesses that his life is "vicious", "barely holding onto my life with my teeth". "Things were ugly. I was drowning in my own life… I had spells" (8). Tshepo is trying desperately to come to terms with his old self and new self. He wishes he can default his system and not face what he had to face as a child and even an adult. This gory scenes and horrible experiences enmesh him in bouts of depression, mental instability, chaotic relationships and hysteria. Freud however has a totally different view with Tshepo's mental instability, which of course is viable. He argues in *Studies on Hysteria* "…sexuality seems to play a principal part in the pathogenesis of hysteria as a source of psychical traumas and as a motive for defense--- that is for repressing ideas from consciousness" (3). Tshepo trying to come to terms with his sexuality and at the same time having to experience some of the horrible and brutal events typically set him out as mentally unstable.

Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* has some of the most graphic scenes of violence and exploitation. The society's jaundiced view of virile masculinity makes Chris and his cohorts to rape Tshepo thereby imposing their masculinity on his weak body. They know that Tshepo is hardly likely to report his violation for the derisive socially held view that "real men cannot be raped". Chris brutalizes Tshepo, beats him and even locks him up for the night in their shared bathroom because he believes Tshepo is untidy. Even when Chris and his jail mates rape Tshepo he expresses close identification with violated womanhood of his mother, thus merging the boundary between sexual violation and sexual orientation. Therefore, toxic masculinity is a breeding ground for physical and psychological violence in *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*.

Hyper-masculinized violence is portrayed in the character of Zebron who has a psychic pleasure in inflicting pain and injury on others. He admits to being a misanthrope (23) and feels gratified

for raping his own sister calling her a "bitch" who deserves what she got (43). Zebron also thinks about raping a woman at Valkenberg mental facility and just the mere thought of it thrills and amuses him. He says "the nurse seems like a temptress taunting me with her body. I fill my head with violence and the shrill of a woman being raped. It is music in my head and is enough to calm me down" (53).

The narrative is charged with highly violent and perverted male characters from Zebron growing up in his lethal neighborhood to Chris fresh out from jail to raping Tshepo, to Tshepo's dad running a criminal syndicate which even resulted to murdering his own wife. Violence is a major theme in the narrative, but a deeply nuanced sort of violence whereby the male characters are desperate to outwardly show their masculinity and physical strength by either inflicting injury on a character or feminizing another to prove the former's superiority and the latter's inferior status.

South Africa is a racially fragile State, and up till lately, the systems of apartheid have been enormously in place in so many aspects of the South African life. Although, times have changed and the political systems have become more benign, however the psychological scars of the brutality of apartheid is still with the victims and their grandchildren. It isn't news that in South Africa natives were subjected into the lowliest of treatments and humiliated and stripped of their masculinity. These years of feminizing the South African man has laid repressed in their subconscious and history whereby South Africans are trying to break loose from the shackles of this enforced femininity and bastardized masculinity which they tend to achieve by proving their masculinity and physical prowess. The men transform themselves into rigid and violent macho men tending to show their machismo at the slightest provocation, hence explaining for their embrace of physical violence and crimes to portray their masculine virility. In Bessie Head's *A*

Question of Power, the explanation she gave when she asked about the South African gay men and drag queens is "how can a man be a man when he is called a boy?"(45).

Thus, violence in the South African context can be explained for by the continuous feminization of the South African male through systems of apartheid and brutality he was forced to live with. Hence, he tends to cover up for his years of feminization and vulnerability through his physical prowess and also feminizing and violating another man like him as seen in the character of Chris.

Literature, therefore resurrects from the embers of history. Duiker's thematic preoccupation with masculine virility and violence is documenting a time in South Africa when men were treated like women and forced to receive some of the most humiliating and morally reprehensible acts in the name of racism and now trying to atone for those years of femininity and humiliation by toxic masculine traits and rubbing their virility on other men, moreover they must show the world that they are indeed men and physical.

5.4 Queer Psychotherapy: *Straightening* the Corporeal Body

Clinical psychologists have applied all sorts of ways to treat homosexuality but the results turn out as incongruous as the theory that homosexuality is pathological. From aversion therapy to hormone therapy, from sex change operations to gender reassignment surgery, the results turned out futile and fruitless, leaving the individual feeling more confused about his sexuality and gender than he was before and leading most into chronic depression and even suicide. However, Freud believed that you could replace homosexuality by heterosexuality through an index of successful psychoanalysis.

Psychoanalysts (Freud, Wilhelm Stekel) believe that every person is bisexual and could be engineered depending on individual personal and psychological experiences. Havelock Ellis

argued for the occurrence of the secondary and tertiary sexual characters of one sex in the opposite one. Also, Freud in *The Sexual Aberrations* asserts that "[he] has found out that all human beings are capable of making a homosexual object choice and have in fact made one in their unconscious" (1473), however, committing to the pull of inversion strictly depends on one's ability to tame his/her id and sublimate or repress instinctive desire. Therefore, homosexuality isn't the biological sexual identity of a specific few, it only comes to life, like any other perversion, in people who are unable to tame their id and have no control over their instinctual drives. Freud argues assertively that there is no justification for distinguishing a special homosexual instinct. What makes a homosexual is a peculiarity not in his instinctual life but in his choice of an object.

Thus, since we are not born with our sexual orientation but eventually have to choose according to socio-historical conventions; it is this choice that triggers Tshepo to dabble between heterosexuality and homosexuality, Mmabatho to practice lesbianism with Karuna and heterosexuality with Arne, Sebastian to be a homosexual. Therefore, literary characters aren't congenitally "sexed" but socially and mentally crafted to choose their sexuality.

In the 1960s, South Africa's psychologists were investigating the aetiology of homosexuality. Upon admission to a health facility, *patients* or (victims) went through rigorous physical examination. According to Don (1963), "[b]lood count and protein analyses, plasma and electrolytes tests, radiological examinations of the skull and chest, bone-age estimations, urine analysis and examinations of genitalia were conducted". However, health practitioners found little or nothing to undergird the claim of physical or pathological causes of homosexuality. But even so, psycho-social explanations against biological bedrocks tended to proffer causes for homosexuality. As well, Louis F. Freed (1954) who studies on "deviant behaviours" stated in his

article that “homosexuality, along with alcoholism, crime, insanity, illegitimacy, homicide, suicide, infanticide, prostitution, divorce, etc., must be regarded as one of the indices of social disorganization”. Freed argued that homosexuality is a social problem and to effectively treat it, medical, judicial and social welfare agencies needed to pay more attention to “ameliorating the evil human environment in which affected individuals have been projected, and from which they have to escape by the process of regressional sex behavior, be it homosexualism or any other form of sexual perversion”.

Therefore, it will be illogical to attempt understanding homosexuality somatically rather than the psyche. Sexual identity begins and ends in the mind and an individual develops or is habituated into his sexual orientation basically as a result of his social experiences or psychological events faced. As Freud argues in *Sexuality in the Aetiology of the Neuroses*that in childhood lies an important period of life, in which the seeds of later illness may be acquired.

Thus, sexual life and by extension orientations has more to do with social relationship between people, events and lived experiences.

Even when homosexuality is proven to arise from psychical experiences and disturbance of normal psychosexual development, Freud regrets that psychoanalysis “has not yet produced a complete explanation of the origin of inversion; nevertheless, it has discovered the psychical mechanism of its development”. Freud lists psychological bedrocks to be at the helm of factors causing homosexuality; he also listed psychological therapies that can, even if not wholly, institutionalize inverts into the normal sexual lifestyle. He agrees that

> Normality is a result of the repression of certain component instincts and constituents of the infantile disposition and of the subordination of the remaining constituents under the primacy of the genital zones in the service of the reproductive function (1581)

Therefore, an ever conscious ego will neutralize perverted instincts and sublimate them into either social life, occupation or other social gratifications that will aid in deflecting the victim's mind from such acts. Individuals have to take charge of their conscious and unconscious mind by struggling to breed a dependable conscience and superego.

Freud believes that sexuality plays a significant role in hysteria as a source for psychical traumas and for repressing ideas from consciousness. Breuer and Freud (1893), thereby found out that "individual hysterical symptom immediately and permanently disappeared when we had succeeded in bringing clearly to light the memory of the event by which it was provoked and in arousing its accompanying affect in the greatest possible detail and had put the affect into word". This method is what Mmabatho in *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* projects in Tshepo and makes him talk about his mother's murder and his rape in the hands of his father's syndicate. He relates the story in a fragmented manner, showing his trauma while Mmabatho helps him to come out of himself and face his fears, reliving the experience as he met it that day. This singular event is therapeutic to Tshepo for it has helped him to overcome the mental wound he has been nursing since his mother's death. Nevertheless, Tshepo refuses talking about his sexuality with Mmabatho trying to dodge it and dodge himself too. Mmabatho notices his veiled identity and challenges him "Now you seem to be something that you have been hiding all along" (451). Had Tshepo spoke about his sexuality, the absent father, the emotionally attached mother and the sexual violence he experienced, his sexual orientation wouldn't have turned out complicated and deviant. Freud says to heal a complex personality or trauma, "[t]he psychical process which originally took place must be repeated as vividly as possible; it must be brought back to its status nascendi and then given verbal utterance". (9)

Just like the hypnotist, taking the patient back into the state his troubles started will make him more susceptible to a therapeutic suggestion. Therefore reliving characters unresolved pre-oedipal and oedipal conflicts, reconciling with an absent father, and letting go of a mother's love will not less help in dispatching tendencies to homosexuality and same sex object choice. But even so, understanding homosexuality and "resexualizing" characters doesn't end at psychoanalysis alone, it spans a broader network, all-encompassing different disciplines and technique to have a broader view of the issue. Freud admits in *The Psychogenesis of a Case of Homosexuality* that "it is not for psychoanalysis to solve the problem of homosexuality. It must rest contain at disclosing the psychical mechanisms that resulted in determining the object choice". Thus, literary theorists and queer theorists should overlap the canvas of psychoanalysis and engage other disciplines in order to fully understand the complexities of sexuality and homosexuality. Sexuality theorist Havelock (1990:4) says

> These things concern everyone; the study of these things concerns the physiologists, the psychologist, the moralist. We want to get into possession of the actual facts, and from the investigation of the facts we want to ascertain what is normal and what is abnormal, from the point of view of physiology and psychology. What is a venial sin against nature, what is mortal sin against nature

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter "A Psychoanalytical Reading of K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams"* attempted a Freudian psychoanalytic analysis of K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* exposing the psychical traits in queer characters and queer characterization. Freudian Tripartite psyche: id, ego and superego were employed to analyze different characters and their predisposition to inversion. The subtle place of dreams in unlocking personality complexes is also introduced to help understand the subconscious process of characters. Novel discourse on

androgeneity and the queer critic in analyzing queer characterization is also engaged with and reconciled to house all sort of genderqueer, sexual variants and characters who do not fall into the gender and sexual binary in literature. This chapter also attempted a queer psychotherapy tending towards *fixing* homosexuality in characters as Freud undertook using analytical psychotherapy and hypnotic psychotherapy in his inverted patients. Arguments and ideas from *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* and Freudian Psychoanalysis had been greatly introduced to aid in inferences and empirical assertions.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.0 Introduction

This chapter summarizes and concludes the study. The works selected for the study are Chinelo Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees* (2015), Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows* (2011)and K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* (2001) which were analyzed within the context of Freudian Psychoanalytic theory. Chinelo Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees* and Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows* are both set in Nigeria to portray the presence of queer bodies and homophobia in the society while K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* is set in post-apartheid South Africa to show a queer character trying to come to terms with his sexuality the society. The three writers have all attracted extensive critical analyses with their controversial novels.

6.1 Summary

The opening chapter of this study provides the background to the study, which explains the varied reception of homosexuality by early African writers and contemporary African writers. It discusses on the disparity in the portrayal of queer themes by early African writers and contemporary writers which tend to differ in their philosophical, biological, psychological and even religious approach. The chapter also goes ahead to capture the sociological arguments for and against the presence of queer bodies in Africa. It discusses that even though some anthropological and sociological texts concur with the presence of queer bodies in Africa, they however argue against a native homosexuality and see queerness in Africa as hardly a sexual identity but as circumstantial and situational orientation by individuals confused about their

identities. In stating the problem, the researcher argues that there is a fundamental gap in the portrayal of queer characters and themes in African literature which this study tends to fill with a psychoanalytic reading of Chinelo Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees*; Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows* and K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*. This gap arises from the need to start reading queer characters and themes from a psychological perspective rather than the normal cultural and biological perspective.

The issue of Identity raised in the study is to enable the researcher study characters as unique archetypes, hence individualistic, and not as products of society and culture. Characters in the study are appraised for their unique actions, instincts, identity and orientation. The study uses inferences from queer theorists to analyse binary oppositions and characters who do not fall into this system. In Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*we seea more experimental approach to the topic whereas in Dibia's *Walking with Shadows* and Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees* the theme of the novel is circumscribed by the treatment and reception of homosexuality in the Nigerian society. Duiker's settings are locales where individuals discover their sexualities and experiment with their sexual orientation where as in Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees* and Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows*, the authors focus more on portraying the homophobia in the society, ordeals of *coming out* and issues of gender identity. The characters are not fully developed as queer characters but as struggling to identify with their sexuality as well as fight the society's homophobia. This is hardly the case in *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* which is set in a setting that is tolerant of gay cultures.

A psychoanalytic appraisal of each text reveals the motives behind homosexuality and the causal factors of such acts which tend to be psychical. This thesis deconstructs the disparity between gender and sex and proffers novel ways of reading the body to determine sex and gender

differently in order to align to queer theorists' definition of gender and sex. The study has operated from the key propositions that there is a psychological dimension to the novels studied and those dimensions come to light in view of a psychoanalytic reading of characters and themes. The effort to label characters that show signs of both genders and are sometimes gender fluid opens up the discourse on androgynous characterization in literature and this helps to foreground arguments on labeling characters as *being* male or female or *doing* male or female.

Freudian psychoanalytic theory offers concepts used to unearth characters' personality, their unconscious and repressed desire and to understand the reason behind their sexual orientations.Thus, Ijeoma in *Under the Udala Trees* is read as a character that constantly battles with her id, ego and superego. The study reveals that her inability to resolve her oedipal complex as a child is what is resurfacing as regression in her adult life. In *Walking with Shadows*, concepts from Freudian psychoanalytic theory enable us to read Adrian as a character who has been repressing his desire until it explodes in sexual inversions. Through the Oedipus complex we learn that Adrian's bindingly strong fixation to his mother and his distant father contributes in directing his sexual orientation. In Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*, the researcher uses Freud'spostulations on the tripartite mode to read characters that are frequently battling their id, ego and superego. We see the effect of Freud's castration anxiety in Adrian and how his unconscious sexual attraction to his mother and his anxiety over his father's punishment at finding out and the inability to identify with his father figure because of the father's absence leads him to chaotically resolve his oedipal complex which resurfaces as inversion in the sexual object choice in his adult life.

The study concludes with a reappraisal of major arguments in the study and a conclusion that captures the findings of the study.

6.2 Conclusion

Sexuality, especially as it relates to inversion in Chinelo Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees*, Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows* and K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* has been the focus of this study. As the analyses show, the writers demonstrate a varying treatment of homosexuality in their respective narratives which is in contrast to early African writers' portrayal of the same topic. In the process of asserting the queer inclinations in the three books, the research has proved that the novel as a genre can be used effectively to depict issues of desire and identity. The research has contributed to the available knowledge on African literature by widening the queer dimension in African literature and how writers capture and relate queer themes and characterization.

The study has established that African literature has evolved over time and writers are now portraying issues of identity, sexuality and individualism. This study has made space for varying forms of sexualities that have not been captured by early African writers and argues that sexuality in Africa isn't as clear-cut and rigid as some African texts have formerly shown.Chinelo Okaparanta and Jude Dibia portray that despite the homophobia in the Nigerian society, there is the presence of queer bodies that have been shadowed by heteronormativity.

This thesis reveals that there has been a sizable body of study by anthropologists and sociologists on homosexuality in pre-colonial Africa that revealed that African cultures had people who practiced contrary sex for social, cultural or even economic purpose. This led to the discovery that African writers also capture these inverted sex and gender variations in their text either positively or negatively depending on the writer and the society too. But even so, this study captures the various styles that early African writers and contemporary writers portray these

themes in their narratives which tend to differ. While the former is unsympathetic and bashful, the latter is tolerant and revelatory.

The selected texts discuss queerness set in different backgrounds and settings. Jude Dibia's choice of characterization and narration had significant values for literary analysis. It has proven from a literary standpoint that queerness isn't however "situational" as early African writers proved. Dibia's *Walking with Shadows*has queer characters that choose homosexuality as an identity and would rather let go of their life and family and risk societal criticism rather than let go of their gay personality. *Walking with Shadows* explains the artist's ideologies both in tone and temperament. Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees* seems to struggle against history and culture in a society that emphasizes on "Adam and Eve, not Eve and Eve". Okparanta's deeply humane arguments thrived to securely situate the queer body in Nigerian history and African literature by subverting all fixed sexual categories and allow her lesbian protagonist to conquer a deeply heteoromornative culture to align with her lesbian lover. Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* is thematically different from the other two texts. Duiker's characters are not struggling to find their sexual orientation but "living" their sexuality. Duiker created queer characters that are queer and not trying to be, characters that live fairly normal lives in post-apartheid South Africa where homosexual love is legalized. The three texts showed the influence of settings and space through the way they handled and relate the plot. While *Under the Udala Trees* and *Walking with Shadows* set in radically conservative and homophobic Nigeria has closeted gay characters and gays trying to avoid public backlash, Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* set in urban South Africa amidst the drugs, the sex and violence portrayed a relatively tolerant society with characters who are publicly acclaimed queers. These three settings are microcosm of the larger society they were set in, each revealing the politics of homosexuality in its settings.

Herein lays the disparity between early and contemporary African writers depiction of same- sex relationships. While earlier writers were deflective and concealing of homosexuality and all queer themes, contemporary writers are reflective and conveying in their texts. While earlier African writers would rather eschew a chunk of this history from their narratives, contemporary African writers are wholly regurgitating queer themes and constructing their fiction around it.

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