



Ambiguities and Contradictions of Queer Representations in E. E. Sule's *Makwala*

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Abstract. This study examines representations of queer realities in E. E. Sule's *Makwala*, highlighting ambiguities and contradictions in queer narratives. The paper argues that in the process of looking for a compromise in the conflict between the traditional past and the technological present in the representation of the queer experience, several ambiguities and contradictions are unearthed. The paper utilises Queer Theory and qualitative, literary analytical method, to show how the duality of sexual orientation has created contradictions as evident in Nigerian queer narratives. The analysis of the primary text, Sule's *Makwala*, reveals motifs that create contradictory situations such as gender and identity, birth and death, fight and acceptance, tradition and modernity, nature and nurture. The narrator's ambiguity in accommodating these contradictions helps to pave the way for the ironical portrayal of events and queer identities. Through the techniques of flashback, symbolism, surrealism, and foreboding, the narrator is able to capture the crisis that accompanies the ambiguities created by the conflicting bid to merge the global experience with that of the indigenous traditional and spiritual heritage in terms of sexual orientations. The paper concludes that the representation of contradictory issues surrounding queer realities and the ambiguity of the narrator in the novel is part of the process of the struggle in the choice for a better path to modernity in indigenous societies.

Keywords: Queer narratives, Gender studies, Narrative ambiguities, Postcolonial studies

1. Introduction

Nigerian literature reflects the interface between modernity and traditionality, a reflection of postcolonial realities that also manifests in sexual orientations. Cultural productions in Nigeria, including conventional literature and popular culture,

recreate the realities in the Nigerian 'hybrid postcolonial space' (Kekeghe, Iloilo and Akuburunwa, 2025, p. 1). This paper argues that the representation of the queer ideology and identity in contemporary Nigerian novels is ambiguous and contradictory. In portraying the African experience in their narratives, contemporary Nigerian writers have crossed the threshold to incorporate hitherto issues that were deemed "untouchable". Among these issues is that of queer representation. Just like the traditional Nigerian society, the Nigerian literary space has been fraught with adverse reception for the portrayal of experiences that are not heteronormative. This is not surprising since the heteronormativity is the accepted norm in both the traditional religion and the dominant foreign ones. Thus, both individuals and societies are receptive to the portrayal of heteronormative narratives as basis for the expression of love and sex, same with the African experience in the literary space. In this vein, the choice of a natural binary of sex as the basis for love and affection entails that any representation of queer experience is an unwelcome depiction of the absurd. This has been the benchmark for the fictional narratives of the Nigerian romance with the novel genre in its inception.

But this does not imply that there is a total lack of the expression of the gay affection and a leaning towards same sex love in both the Nigerian society and the literary space. Instead, at its inception, the Nigerian novel exhibited a conscious effort to digress from the portrayal of love and sex. This aversion is captured by Osofisan (2009) when he says that "the exploration of romantic love or sex as a theme is remarkably rare in the output of writers. Virtually, no literary work dared venture, except the deflated language of metaphor or refrainment echo, in the contentions area of carnal experience" (p.31). The implication of Osofisan's statement is reflective of the Nigerian society's aversion to the public portrayal of issues bordering on

love and sex especially if the medium is exposed to access by the young ones. However, this does not capture the exact picture of the happenings in the society. It is then realisable that the literary space of the earliest novels of contemporary Nigerian writers do not reflect the real-time experience of the happenings in the society. As such, the issue of queer behaviour and same sex identities may have been left out in the representation of the African experience in the novels of first generation of Nigerian writers especially as the issue of queer identity is considered a taboo in traditional Nigerian societies. In its place, there is an avalanche of writings on the accepted norm of male female relationship.

However, as the years go by, so also the Nigerian novel begin to shift its course in the representation of the queer experience. In some of such literary representations, there is a moralizing posture which attests to the didactic and transformative nature of Nigerian literature. Literature is transformative and rehabilitative (Kekeghe, 2022), and it heals society in different forms. In the earliest of the portrayal of the queer experience in contemporary novels of writers like Wole Soyinka's *Interpreters*, there is a noticeable reference to queer culture but it is still treated as an acknowledgement of its presence in the society and not an acceptance of the discourse of the queer experience. The shifting discourse of the issue of queer experience in contemporary Nigerian novel is reminiscent of the changing global connectivity. This is what Collins (2010) describes when he opines that "unlike the frustrating effort of their predecessors to straddle cultural and ideological imperatives and the creative impulse, the new voices are basking in the warm glow of worldwide approbation as they attempt to rewrite the African story" (p. xiv). As the pressure from globalisation and the modernisation of communication channels impacts on the literary space, so also, the Nigerian writers develop the boldness to represent what has been consciously underrepresented in the Nigerian novel. In so doing, the issues of queer and same sex become some of the most contentious of the themes of contemporary Nigerian literary space not because they are new motifs but because they are most of the suppressed and underrepresented issues in Nigerian literature. This is the crux of this paper; this paper leans on the queer theory to argue that the representation of the queer ideology, characters and same sex identity in E. E. Sule's *Makwala* is ambiguous and contradictory. The paper draws illustrations from the novel for analysis.

Queer theory in literature has to do with the analysis and the deconstruction of sex and sexuality as realised in the society vis-a-vis the literary space. As sexuality

is captured mainly as heterosexual, queer theory examines the other side of sexuality as a means of representing the marginalised section of the society who see sex and sexuality as more than the standard that society proffers. Queer theory has developed over the years with the crystallisation of the ideas of several theorists like Foucault (1976) who is of the view that sexuality is a means of social construction and not an irreplaceable truth. As for Rubin (1984), the acceptance of heterosexuality as the standard in any society negates and marginalise those who have a different orientation. In her contribution to the development of queer theory, Sedgwick (1990) explains that society establishes sexuality by the appropriation of the attraction of the opposite sex; that a person sexual orientation is judge by the kind of sex he or she is attracted to. Butler (1990) adds that sexuality is performative and not naturally established. However, it is Teresa de Lauretis who coined the term, "queer theory" in 1990 to mean the portrayal of sexuality different from heterosexuality and the fact that sexuality is not necessarily heteronormative, a term coined by Michael Warner in the early 1990s where he argues that society tends to view heterosexuality as the norm and superior to other sexual orientation. In literature, queer theory provides a theoretical framework for challenging the standard for the discourse of sexuality and identity. The use of queer theory will enable this paper explore the ambiguities and contradictions in the representation of the queer identities of characters.

Sule's *Makwala* (2018) is the story of the inhabitants of Makwala, a fictitious neighbourhood close to the city of Kano in northern Nigeria. The events of the story are particularly centred on two young boys called Ende and Jackson. The story explores the challenges of growing up in a pre-sharia settlement where the lives of the poor inhabitants revolve around work, alcohol and sex. Though some of the people dwelling in Makwala tend to be reformative and exhibit a desire to move the settlement towards a better social trajectory, the hypocrisy of the leaders and followers make these twinkle of reforms ineffective. As the settlement degenerates into anarchy, the introduction of sharia law effectively moves both the society and people into a tragedy that consumes the notable members of the settlement. At the same time, the lives of Jackson and Ende is inevitably changed and the outcome at time is tragic and unsavoury. Ambiguity and Contradictions in the Construction of Queer Identity Sule's *Makwala*

The issue of ambiguity in the representation of the queer characters in Sule's novel, *Makwala*, follows the projection of both the themes of love and hate. The

binary of love and hate reflects the portrayal of the identity of the major queer character and protagonist of the novel, Jackson. In the novel, the construction of the identity of Jackson is undertaken in a tripod pattern. The first is the biological identity of Jackson. Jackson is a biological creation of a prostitute and a murderer. Jackson's mother, Martha, has a notorious story in the novel. But she does not start her life as a prostitute. Instead, like every other child in an underdeveloped part of the country, Martha was born into poverty. In one of her reminiscences, Martha has narrated that "she had dropped out of JSS3 because her parents had no money to register her for the Junior WAEC" (43). With education out of the way, Martha is subject to the vulnerabilities of the underprivileged. So, when one woman from village gave her an option to travel to Kano in the northern part of Nigeria for what Martha thinks will be a better avenue to redirect her life, she readily follows Madam Veteran, as the woman is called in Kano. But in Kano, Martha is gang-raped and initiated in a life of prostitution. It is in the line of duty as a prostitute that she met the man who is later to become the father of Jackson.

In the slum of Makwala, Jackson is popularly called Lebanese Pikin. This is because, the father is a Lebanese; one of the expatriate staff working in numerous cottage industries in Kano. However, there is a twist in the identity of Jackson's father as according to Mama Maria, one of the notable inhabitants of Makwala, "Mohammed na correct hire-killer! Correct hiore-killer, you hear. We know am wella for makwala here" (p.225). So, the identities of the biological parents of Jackson are a "hired-killer" and a prostitute. This background condemns to a life where the stigma of being born to a notorious union becomes one of the flashpoints in Jackson's life that pushes him deeper into despair. Later after the birth of Jackson, the father disappeared and the mother has to do with the glimpses of the past where her union with Mohammed is a period of bliss and a momentous one. In one her reminiscences, Martha says of Jackson's father that "never lived to see the child. But he wanted to take me away. He was deciding: Lebanon, Turkey, Israel, Egypt. I wanted the West. He hated the West. He was what the West would describe as a terrorist" (p.78).

The description of the physique of Mohammed creates a level of ambiguity. In one of her chatty moods, Martha tells Ndula that "he was tall, big broad-chested. He liked safari and suits, expensive ones. Handsome and suave, he was every lady's delight" (p.187), Ndula is one of the important member of Makwala's inhabitants and father of Ende, who later becomes a close friend of Jackson, in her praise of

Mohammed, she portrays Mohammed as a generous person who "took her to his expensive apartment, his richly furnished rooms, and often left her there and travelled, which he did very frequently" (p.187). At the end, Martha concludes that Mohammed "was an international businessman" (p.187). The point being made here is that while the inhabitants of Makwala sees Mohammed as a "hired-killer" and terrorist, Martha, his girlfriend, sees him as a handsome, generous and hardworking. Therein lies the ambiguity. On the one hand, Jackson's father, as a terrorists and killer, is one of the worst humanity can produce while on the other hand, he is portrayed as a responsible. The dual identity of Mohammed creates confusion in the mind of the reader and it is this confusion that produced Jackson.

Moreover, in the space of love and affection between Mohammed and Martha, there is an observable ambiguity. In her relations with Mohammed, Martha updates the reader that "Mohammed was a God-send...he doted on her openly. Took her to Tahir Hotel where in hidden lounges Mohammed introduce her to wealthy Lebanese and Pakistan men who owned factories and large businesses" (p.188). This shows the extent of the love of Mohammed for Martha. However, as Martha falls deeply in love and in a moment of infectious affection, she sells the idea of marriage to Mohammed. Instead of the positive that Martha expects based on the level of affection Mohammed has for her, Mohammed replies that "Marriage? No, no, no, no. I'm forbidden to marry. Okay? My baby, no marriage" (p.188). The firm but negative response of Mohammed sums up the recurring ambiguities in life. These hover between the binaries of love and hate and attractiveness and repugnance respectively. These ambiguities in the life of Mohammed and Martha, the biological parents of Jackson, are reflected in the biological make of Jackson. At one time, Jackson has "the sweetest smile from a handsome face accentuated by large, bright and sparkling eyes" and he is very "lovely boy until something broke his spirit" (p.117). Though physically Jackson is handsome like his father and he is often called "Lebanese Pikin" in reference to his mulatto skin, the internal chemistry of Jackson is filled with anger and hate.

The implication of the biological make-up of Jackson is that he becomes a lovely and attractive handsome boy. This level of beauty becomes the magnet that pulls others towards him. But as usual, an ambiguity also arises. This is the fact that instead of funneling the attraction towards Jackson along the heteronormative line, the both sexes become attracted to Jackson. There is the case of Kemi, one of the young girls in Makwala, who is attracted to Jackson appealing to Jackson at a

point: “You know say I love you. I love you very much” (p.101). The irony is that Jackson is not interested in establishing a relationship with her. Therefore, “Kemi had avoided him when he slapped her. He had threatened to beat her up if she didn’t leave him alone” (p.184). Then, there is the case of “one of the men selling *suya*” who approached Jackson and Ende and says that “I thought you would like to eat some meat. Have it. For you, he pointed at Jackson who suddenly turned sullen. “I like you. Fine boy” (p.35). In contrast to the violent repelling of Kemi, who is an opposite sex telling her that “I have no time for any girl. They are bitches” (p.61), Jackson is reluctant but eventually accepts the gift from a same sex person. This attraction from the same sex persons is aptly portrayed by the narrator of an incident that occurred some time ago in Jackson’s life. According to the narrator, Jackson recalls when his Geography teacher “had stared at him a long while and then winked at him”. The man had pulled out a twenty naira note from his pocket and stretched his hand towards Jackson. “Here, get something for yourself” (p.35). What these different approaches from sexes mean is that it becomes unclear where the sexual orientation of Jackson lies.

Apart from the biological ambiguities that conditioned Jackson, there is also the social and environmental motifs that contribute in the nurture of Jackson. One of these is violence. Though violence is a daily occurrence in the streets of Makwala, Jackson’s exposure to violence is both physical, emotional and psychological. On the physical side, one frequent area that shapes the undercurrent of Jackson’s life is the impact of the profession of his mother. As I note earlier, Martha is a prostitute. This means that as Jackson grows up, he is exposed to adults who abuse his mother sexually and sometimes he is involved in the assault. One case is that of the altercation between Martha and a soldier who demands anal sex from her. Her resistance degenerates into a physical assault. As the event unfolds, Jackson remains at alert while watching the soldier’s antics with “recalcitrance of defiance”. According to the narrator, the soldier “launched a slap that sent the boy tumbling down from the slim bed” (p.79). “Jackson remained impassive” and this violence becomes part of the ugly events that shaped his consciousness.

The issue of rape is another ambiguous idea that shaped the social construction of the identity of Jackson, the queer protagonist of the novel. The rape of Jackson affects him physically and psychologically, and alters his reasoning and conducts in the play. Literature expresses physical and mental wounds (Iloilo, 2022, p. 123). As the novelist constructs the identity of Jackson, the exposure of Jackson to the

physical sexual abuse by boys and not sex because an ambiguity difficult for the reader to process. Hitherto, Jackson had been admired by the “female adults who paid attention to him wanted something that has to do with his penis and protruding buttocks” (p.75). So, the expectation of the reader is that if there is going to be any sexual abuse of Jackson, it is going to be carried by the female folk. But at the end, the reverse is the case. It is three boys that raped Jackson. Narrating the ugly incident, the narrator says that Jackson “was pushed roughly and turned on his belly, legs pushed apart. He felt two palms gripping his buttocks, opening them. Something sticky was roughly rubbed in, and then the hardness of a penis stabbed right at his anus, so harsh, so rough. His body stiffen and began to jerk” (p.64). Jackson is raped, not by the opposite sex, but his same sex. This is the beginning of Jackson’s journey as a queer; he is not initiated into the queer brotherhood by a sane orientation. Instead, the novelist constructs Jackson’s queer identity with a stroke of physical and violent method. The question that arises is that: why will the novelist push Jackson through this painful route in order to shape his identity as a queer? This is the ambiguity difficult for the reader to unravel.

As the life of Jackson moves alternately between the reality of the suffering and poverty in Makwala and the difficulty in accepting his background as the son of a prostitute, Jackson passes the difficult phase of becoming a fugitive after he intentionally murders his mother. In his run from the law, Jackson is taken in by the duo of Yohana and Ado, two queer men. Ado was the *suya* man who had expressed his liking to Jackson through the offer of free *suya* earlier. Ado takes Jackson into hiding. He gangs up with his friend, Yohana, to drug and rape Jackson repeatedly. Describing the pains he is passing through, Jackson laments that “they did to me at Makwala Layout. They came after me, dragged me into a room, hit me as much as they could and raped me. Now they have raped me again. Is this how I will continue to suffer from the desires of wicked people” (p.234). It becomes unclear how to place the suffering of Jackson in the hands of the storyteller. Why will the storyteller allow Jackson through this phase of life just to construct a queer identity for him. This is an ambiguity. Reflecting on this ambiguity, Jackson brings the reader to speed when he reminiscences that “it had never occurred to Jackson, now a teenager “that he could be raped, not be women who constantly ogled him, but by men, men like himself, whose overflowing kind words about his looks, about his physique, he had never really bothered to give deeper thought” (p.75). This is the irony of the con of the identity of Jackson as a queer protagonist.

The implication of the biological and social background of Jackson produced a queer individual with an ambiguous psychological make-up. The existence of the binaries of love and hate and quietness and anger in Jackson created a psychological turbulence that does not augur well for Jackson and the society of Makwala. The display of anger is evidenced in the way Jackson handled her mother when she visits him to give him some money. As Jackson refuses to collect the money from his mother, Martha exclaimed that "You're my son. You can't be doing this to me, to yourself" (p.119). Then Martha tries to embrace the son but he pushes her away again and again till she fell. The anger in Jackson knows no bound. Martha surmised the attitude of Jackson in these words: "I'm faced with a monster of a son "who is increasingly becoming a stranger to me" (p.122). The pains and suffering Jackson experiences produces a psychological hate in him. Delving into his subconscious, the storyteller reveals the thoughts circling in him this way:

His weak body was not without desire. Suppose I just spring up now, and pounce on this bastard of a man. Suppose I just spread my fingers around his neck and strangle him to death. Suppose I stand and reach out to that knife, inside a handsome scabbard, hanging on the wall and use it to cut the throat of this monster. Suppose I drive my fingers into his eyes and pluck out his eyeballs. (p.235).

Despite these thoughts of violence, when Yohana later tells him not to step out of the house, "Jackson didn't say anything" and he "lowered himself and sat on the mat, his leg stretched in front of him" in submission. This act of yielding to his tormentor's instructions baffles the reader and constitutes further ambiguities in the psychological construction of Jackson's queer identity.

2. Contradictions and Implication of an Ambiguous Queer Identity in the Novel

The ambiguities in the biological, social and psychological construction of Jackson's queer identity leaves behind a trail of tragic consequences with contradictory binaries. In the area of biological relationship, the storyteller projects Jackson as a bastard. His longing to know his father creates a void between him and the mother. Martha has tried her best to raise up Jackson with love even with the circumstances she is. Rhetorically, Martha asks: "What have I not done for him as a mother?" (p.117). Others in Makwala have also shown love to Jackson as he grows up. There is Udula who takes him into his house when his son, Ende, suggests they do so. In the home of Udula, through Udula's motivation, Jackson starts to fall in love with books. He also becomes a

good artist who expresses his pains in pictures. But in the midst of the love shown to Jackson by Udula and Ende, Udula noticed that Jackson "was a boy of unpredictable manners" (p.71). Also, there is the case of Kemi, a girl in the neighbourhood who is in love with Jackson. But Jackson always hit her. Kemi also tries to get Jackson to attend church with her. At a time, Jackson is even agreeable to this suggestion. According to the narrator, he had also felt something tugging at his mind about attending church ever since the day Kemi came "with joy that she had found a church that would make them think positively, a church that would liberate them from the gutter of sin" (p.112).

But in all the love shown to Jackson, his response is that "they won't let me live the way I want. They don't like me. They always want to use, to hurt me. I won't let her. I will resist them" (p.110). Jackson's words above are contradictory to the actual events in the life of Jackson. Jackson is being loved and protected by the group comprising Jackson's mother, Udula, Ende, Kemi and some women like Mama Maria and Jacinta. Then, there is the opposing group comprising of the *yan dabba* or the rapists, Nasir, the queer man and food seller, Ado and Yohana the homo-rapist. The contradiction is that instead of Jackson embracing the love of those who wish him well, he is running to those who harm him. An instance of this argument is seen in the activities of the boys that raped and beat Jackson. In the first instance, the narrator says that Jackson:

heard fast-moving footsteps. He turned. Four boys were suddenly upon him. They all looked older than him from what he could see in the half-light. They were in jeans and T-shirts...the tallest and lankiest among them gave Jackson a devastating slap. Immediately a kick from another got Jackson's hip. He collapsed on the ground. He felt something like a thick cloth clamping over his face, muffling his voice, tightening at the back of his head. It blinded him totally. He was lifted by hands. (pp.63-64)

This event is supposed to have scared Jackson from mingling with the boys again in his life because it leads to his being raped by the four boys. But the reverse is the case.

In the other instance, at a time, Jackson is sitting on a log in a shade when three boys approached him saying that "O boy, we be your friend. We wan be your friend" (p.113). The narrator goes on to narrate that "the three of them sat on the log. Jackson still regarded them for a while before he joined them. One of them brought out a packet of cheap cigarettes. Each of them pulled one" Occasionally, "Jackson simpered at their jokes" (p.113). Later, he had an altercation with the boys when their discussion veered off to the topic of prostitutes. Jackson asked them to move to another

topic but one of the boy called Peter says that “I know wetin dey eat our friend. You no notice say he e no dey like to talk about ashie? Na ashie oikin him be, no be oyinbo pikin? Him mama Jackson’s blow got Peter’s forehead, with such a force that Peter staggered back and fell” (p.165). In West African Pidgin, “ashie” means prostitute. The ensuing violence leads to the merciless beating of Jackson by the trio of his friends. It is this same attraction to those who want to take advantage of him that leads him to Ado and Yohana who rape him severally. Therefore, it becomes contradictory and absurd that the protagonist of the story who the narrator wants to make a queer character should be made to pass through the pains of being raped twice and beaten by the same sex the narrator wants him to hang out with.

This contradictory mode is also activated when Jackson murders his mother. Jackson has been complaining bitterly about the mother’s occupation as a prostitute. This is not surprising since in the moralist side, prostitution is a sin against the norms of the society. Therefore, as the storyteller projects Jackson towards the queer side of relationship, the reader is not surprised when Jackson becomes antagonistic towards heteronormative relationship. This is glimpsed from his attack on Kemi. Then, there is another incident that defines Jackson as an anti-heteronormative character. This is the event of the attempted rape of Nelly. Jackson hates his three friends who beat him up because they promised to have sex with Jackson’s mother. He tries to dissuade his mother from agreeing to have sex for money with the three friends but he could not open his mouth to tell the mother. So, he starts to stalk the three boys. Nelly, a female classmate of Jackson, was walking home one night when “iron fingers clamp over her mouth, over her eyes” (p.192). Unknowingly to them, Jackson is at the scene and the strike from him killed one of the boys while the other boys scamper to safety. Nelly luckily escaped leaving behind “a limp figure on the floor” (p.193). Jackson kills the heteronormative boy.

Reeling from his first murder, Jackson goes to his mother’s house and in the night when she is asleep murders her. According to the narrator, “in less than three hours he had dealt fatal blows to two l” (p.196); two heteronormative characters. The fact that Jackson kills these two heteronormative characters is not the issue; though it becomes abnormal for the storyteller to eliminate only heteronormative characters through Jackson. The contradiction in this theme of murder has to do with the killing of his Your Excellency by Jackson. The narrator has prodded Jackson towards the same sex characters in the story. So, it is not surprising when in the course of his hiding from the

law, he is taken in by Ado and Yohana, two of the major same sex characters in the story. In their house, they drugged Jackson and raped him severally. It is absurd that Jackson who has been introduced drug is now suffering from repeated rape under the influence of drug. Through threat and intimidation, Jackson yielded to the love making by the two queer men. It is this loyalty that made Yohana takes Jackson to meet the Your Excellency in Abuja, the capital of Nigeria. There in Abuja, Yohana leaves Jackson behind as a “mistress” of Your Excellency. In the hotel with Your Excellency, Jackson murders him and escaped back to Makwala. Why will Jackson murder a same-sex characters that the storyteller has made the reader to believe is the side that Jackson belongs? So, where does the reader place the sexual identity of Jackson, heteronormative or a same-sex character?

Lastly, in the conclusion of the story of Jackson, there is a contradiction at the end on both sides of the sexual identity. Udula, who represents the heteronormative group survives all the hardship, loss and pains of the story of Makwala. Also, Jackson survived the fugitive life after killing three characters in the story. His same-sex friends, Nasir, Ado and Yohana, also survived. It becomes contradictory for the reader as Martha and the boy that Jackson killed, who are heteronormative persons, along with Your Excellency, who is a same-sex character, are eliminated from the story. However, Udula, an active and abnormal heteronormative and Jackson, who is a murderer and a same-sex character including Ado and Yohana, survived. The question that arises is the criteria used by the storyteller to eliminate characters in the story. It becomes contradictory that both heteronormative and same-sex characters are eliminated and at the same time preserve in the story. It becomes difficult to understand the sexual orientation that is accepted by the narrator; a sense of ambiguity and contradiction becomes the order of the day.

3. Conclusion

This paper has highlighted the absurdities in the projection of the queer characters and ideas in the Sule’s *Makwala*. Through the binaries of beauty and moral bankruptcy, love and hate, heteronormative and same-sex and violence and warmth, hypocrisy and openness and death and survival, the paper has laid bare the ambiguities and contradictions inherent in the quest of the narrator to portray the continuous struggle between heteronormative and queer ideologies and orientations. Though there is the existence of cultural inhibitions in the acceptance of same-sex practices in the society, the practice is not non-existence. Therefore, the representation of the queer ideology in

contemporary Nigerian novel reflects the problems associated with the practice in the society the novel mirrors. As such, the ambiguities and contradictions that are inherent in the novel is part of the challenges of documenting the prohibited practice in the society. Nevertheless, contemporary Nigerian queer novelists will continue to unveil the existence of the queer ideology and how the society grapples with the manner it hopes to curtail it or deny its existence. In whatever the case, ambiguities and contradictions will continue to trail the queer stories in contemporary Nigeria fiction.

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