

**A PSYCHOANALYTICAL STUDY OF MORALITY IN JANE AUSTEN'S NOVELS  
AND CHIMAMANDA ADICHIE'S *PURPLE HIBISCUS***

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**BENIN CITY**

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRUATE STUDIES  
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**AUGUST, 2019**

**CERTIFICATION**

This is to certify that this work was carried out by **NAOMI UNUANE** in the Faculty of Arts, Department of English and Literature, University of Benin, Benin City, under my supervision.

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## **DEDICATION**

This research work is dedicated to God Almighty for His inspiration and support at all times.

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I give all glory to Almighty God, the source and giver of knowledge who spared my life throughout the course of this work.

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**NAOMI UNUANE**

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**ABSTRACT**

Coup d'état has been variously described as an aberration; the phenomenon remain a recurring decimal in Nigeria history until recently. While military regimes may have impacted positively on the socio-economic and political development of Nigeria, it also contributed in several respects to discontent, dissatisfaction and wrangling among different ethnic nations in Nigeria. For instance, between 1960-1999, Nigerian witnessed resurgence of ethnic nationalism mainly because various ethnic groups struggled to register their grievances as was the case of 1966 coup and counter coups, Gideon Orka's coup, the emergence of Odua People's Congress and the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People, respectively, before and after the annulment of June 12, 1993 presidential election.

**KEYWORDS:** Ethnicity, Coup d'état, Military, Politics, Biafra, Civil war, Nigeria.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Purpose of Study

The paper makes use of psychological criticism to examine factors responsible for the variance in behavioural patterns of selected characters in Jane Austen's texts as pertains to morality and immorality. It goes further to explore, by way of a confirmatory approach, the psychological factors observed in Jane Austen alongside those in a contemporary Nigerian text; Chimamanda Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*. By so doing, the study confirms some controversial claims of Freud regarding early/parental influences and unconscious motivations in the development of personality, and debunks his claim that moral individuals are majorly psychologically disordered. The study establishes the fact that the psyche of humans, share particular similarities, irrespective of difference in clime or era.

#### 1.2 Scope of Study

The study is a psychoanalytical criticism of morality and immorality in Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* (1814) and *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), and Chimamanda Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* (2004). The choice of these novels is informed by the marked similarities in their moral content despite the difference in time and culture. The overt gap between the authors, their cultures and their characters is a vital part of the selection process. While Jane Austen's two texts, (*Pride and Prejudice* and *Mansfield Park*) clarify and bring to limelight Freud's psychological claims, Chimamanda Adichie's text (*Purple Hibiscus*), which differs in clime and era, helps to validate the observations made in Austen. The disharmonious novels serve to test aspects of Freudian theory, which is often considered controversial and unfalsifiable, and to underscore the continued relevance of his theory in the contemporary.

### 1.3 Methodology

Our study, which seeks to investigate and examine systematically some of the claims of Freud and Adler, with the aim of gaining an understanding of underlying reasons and motivations behind behavioural patterns of selected characters, is a qualitative research. According to Robert A. Coker, “the qualitative research is exploratory [investigates and examines]. Its purpose is to discover new ideas and insight into the problem or help develop ideas or hypotheses for potential qualitative research” (9).

The research employs the confirmatory approach to data analysis. The confirmatory approach, according to Robert G. Jaegar, and Tim R. Halliday, “proceeds from a series of alternative, a priori hypotheses concerning some topic of interest, followed by the development of a research design (often experimental), to test these hypotheses, the gathering of data, analyses of the data, and ending with the researcher’s inductive inferences (S65). In making use of the confirmatory approach, aspects of Freud’s theory on the tripartite psyche will be taken as the a priori hypotheses. They will be weighed by exploring moral choices in key characters whose behavioural traits are antagonistic.

The primary data consists of Jane Austen’s *Mansfield Park* and *Pride and Prejudice* and Adichie’s *Purple Hibiscus*. The study applies a psychoanalytical approach to the primary data to analyze the thought processes of characters selected on the basis of their conspicuous morality or immorality. The characters are examined in line with Freud’s theory of the tripartite psyche and its role in moral formation. Charles Stangnor’s interpretation of Freudian theory is also used. Excerpts which highlight the moral choices of the characters are examined so as to determine the workings of the tripartite psyche in their behavioural patterns and to validate some of the claims of Freud. The

secondary data consists of library materials including textbooks, journals, articles and internet sourced materials in the fields of Literature, Sociology and Psychology.

## **1.4 Theoretical Background**

### **1.4.0 Psychoanalysis and Psychoanalytical Criticism**

The theory adopted for this study is the psychoanalytical theory of literary criticism. Psychology, which birthed psychoanalysis, is defined by Charles Stangnor as “the scientific study of mind and behaviour. The word ‘psychology’ are Greek words, “psyche” meaning life and “logos,” meaning explanation” (10). Psychology embraces different approaches to empirical and scientific research to better understand humans and animals. The psychodynamic, which “is a broader term emanating from the original psychoanalytic approach [is] founded by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)” (Igbinovia and Ugiagbe 23).

Freud states in his *Complete Works* that psychoanalysis is “a remarkable combination, for it comprises not only a method of research into the neuroses but also a method of treatment based on the aetiology thus discovered...It is the outcome of experience” (2545). Freud developed psychoanalysis as a means of therapy for neuroses. He explains that the “chief manifestations of compulsion neuroses are these: the patient is occupied by thoughts that in reality do not interest him, is moved by impulses that appear alien to him, and is impelled to actions which, to be sure, afford him no pleasure, but the performance of which he cannot possibly resist” (*General Introduction* 228). These exhibitions are products of repressions: “the state in which ideas existed before being made conscious” (*Complete Works*, 3975).

In 1895, Freud co-published *Studies in Hysteria* with Joseph Brever. The research expounded on his psychoanalytic therapies and opined that one of the causes of hysteria was unresolved and forgotten traumas from childhood. He came up with a treatment known as psychotherapy or the

“talking cure” whereby his patients got rid of repressions by talking to an analyst about dreams, childhood and relationships. According to Freud:

In psychoanalysis, nothing occurs but the interchange of words between the patient and the physician. The patient talks, tells of his past experiences and present impressions, complains, confesses his wishes and emotions. The physician listens, tries to direct the thought process of the patient, reminds him of things, forces his attention into certain channels, gives him explanations and observes the reactions of understanding or denials which he calls forth in the patient. (*General Introduction*, 11).

Just after the turn of the nineteenth century, Freud began to apply his theories and principles to religion, mythology, warfare and Literature. His submission on the workings of the artist’s psyche and Ernest Jone’s essay on Shakespeare’s Hamlet set the spring board for the development of psychoanalytic criticism. In psychoanalytic criticism, the same principles that govern the psychodynamic approach form the basis for analyzing literary texts. Employing Freudian theory, a literary critic is able to decipher the underlying or unconscious message a writer may pass across or infer.

Psychoanalytical criticism of literary texts could be approached in three major ways. It could attend to the thought processes of the reader, the author or fictional characters in the literary text. In attending to the thought processes of the reader, the critic focuses on “the creative process of the arts... and how it relates to normal mental functions of individual readers” (Kennedy and Gioia 1509). Criticism could equally be based on analysis of an artist. For example, Geoffrey Gorer, in a psychobiography of Jane Austen, examines the thought process of Jane Austen from childhood to maturity. The third approach is psychoanalyzing the character(s) of a literary text. The focus of this

essay is on the third approach, which will examine the psyche of key characters in relation to morality and immorality.

Ann Dobie, in explaining the Freudian theory, enumerates the six major concepts of Freud's theory that can be applied to literature. In her perspective, though "not all of his explanations of how the mind operates are applicable to literary criticisms, the six concepts that follow have an enormous impact on the way we understand what we read" (56). They are the unconscious, the tripartite psyche, the significance of sexuality, the importance of dreams, symbols and creativity. The primacy of the unconscious and the tripartite psyche are the concepts against which subsequent chapters of this study are explored.

#### **1.4.1 The Unconscious**

One of Freud's greatest contributions to literary analysis is his "elaborate demonstration of how much human mental process was unconscious" (Kennedy and Gioia 1508). Freud, in his nineteenth lecture on *General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, explains the role and system of the 'unconscious' and he repeatedly alternates the word 'unconscious' with 'ignorance.' He compares "the system of the unconscious to a large antechamber, in which the psychical impulses rub elbow with one another, as separate beings" (261).

Freud believes that what we apparently forget is actually stored deep or repressed in the unconscious, including painful traumatic experiences, emotional issues or memories from childhood. He opines that our actions are "the result of forces we do not recognize and therefore cannot control" (qtd. in Dobie 56). The 'unconscious' therefore, is described as a conception "of which we are not aware, but the existence of which we are nevertheless ready to admit on account of other proofs or signs" (*Freud Complete Works*, 2599). These conceptions of "which we are not aware," are what Freud

calls repressions. Repressions are “residues (reminiscences) of profoundly moving experiences, which have been withdrawn from everyday consciousness’ (2567).

Repressions in the unconscious which are kept away and censored by what Freud called the “watchman” (*General Introduction*, 261) could sometimes manoeuvre their way to the “fore conscious” where they get minimally noticed by the conscious mind. They could sometimes manifest in distorted forms in order to disguise their real motives from the conscious mind. What has been repressed in the unconscious could be made manifest through dreams, slips of tongue and symbols. This is the case with Fanny Price of Jane Austen’s *Mansfield Park*. In Fanny’s description of her parents, the repressed hatred she harbours for them as a result of their neglect is reflected in her expressive descriptions of them.

#### **1.4.2 The Tripartite Psyche**

The tripartite psyche, which is Freud’s structure of the mind, comprises of three components, viz, the id, the ego and the superego. In *Complete Works*, Freud describes the id as “the great reservoir of libido” (3991). It is “the original part or system of the personality. It is the matrix or structure within which the ego and superego becomes differentiated” (Igbinovia and Ugiagbe 58). Dobie describes the id as “lawless, asocial and amoral” (57) since it reacts instinctively to the environment and seeks the immediate gratification of pleasure. Charles Stangnor adds that the id “drives our most important motivations, including the sexual drive (libido) and the aggressive or destructive drive (Thanatos)” (621).

The ego is formed from the id. Freud describes the ego as “the coherent organization of mental processes” found in an individual (*Complete Works*, 3977). The ego, which is basically conscious, is “simply a part of the id which has been modified by the direct influence of the external environment” (3984). He goes further to argue that the ego “represents what may be called reason and common sense,

in contrast to the id which contains the passions...The ego is in the habit of transforming the id's will into action as if it were its own" (3986). Freud, in describing the responsibility of the ego, compares it to a horse rider who directs and manoeuvres with skill the energy of the horse to a safe destination. Igbinovia and Ugiagbe are of the view that the ego, which is formed through the process of socialization, "represents the society in us" (60). And Stangnor claims that the ego helps to regulate the excesses of the id because of its contact with consciousness by delaying "the gratification of our basic motivations until the appropriate time with the appropriate outlet" (621). He also explains that when the id is pressing too hard for immediate pleasure, the ego helps to correct this problem through the use of defence mechanisms- "unconscious psychological strategies used to cope with anxiety and to maintain a positive self-image" (621). These defence mechanisms are: displacement, projection, rationalization, sublimation, reaction, regression, repression and sublimation.

The superego, like the ego, is formed from the id. In Freud's teachings of the superego, compiled in *Complete Works*, he refers to the superego as also the "ego ideal" and it is considered as less "firmly connected with consciousness" (3989), than the ego. The superego is formed by the ego from the id when the ego has mastered the Oedipus complex.

Freud believes that the more powerful the Oedipus complex proves and the more difficult "it is to be repressed, under the influence of authority, religious teaching, schooling and reading, the stricter will be the domination of the superego over the ego later on in the form of conscience or perhaps of an unconscious sense of guilt" (3995). The guilt complex, which is an overwhelming dissatisfaction with one's self and a striving to live a life of perfection, is one of the signs of neuroses.

In summary, the superego frequently dominates the ego in the form of anxiety and guilt, both of which, according to Freud, are the chief causes of hysterical behaviours and neuroses. Again, this is

evident in the character of Eugene Achike in *Purple Hibiscus*. The anxiety he nurtures as regards the moral depravity of his family makes him manifest hysterical behaviours.

This study seeks to explore some behavioural traits of selected characters as pertains to morality and the workings of the tripartite psyche. It utilizes Charles Stangnor's interpretation of Freudian theory as its working definitions, that is, "psychoanalysis" is viewed as an approach to understanding human behavior that "focuses on the role of unconscious thoughts, feelings and memories" (31); the id is viewed as the unconscious force driving the "most important motivations, including the sexual drive (libido) and the aggressive or destructive drive (thanatos)" (621), and the ego is the force helping to correct this problem through the use of defence mechanisms- "unconscious psychological strategies used to cope with anxiety and to maintain a positive self-image" (621)/ helping to regulate the excesses of the id by delaying "the gratification of ... basic motivations until the appropriate time with the appropriate outlet" (621). The superego is the advocate of "the duties and obligations of society. [It] strives for perfection, [and] when we fail to live up to its demand, we feel guilty" (621).

### **Definition of Term**

**Morality:** Morality, as a key term in our research, is a complex subject since it has no psychological agreed definition. It is the major perspective from which character's behaviours are to be discussed. It deals "basically with humans and how they relate to other beings. It deals with how humans treat other beings so as to promote mutual welfare, growth, creativity, and meaning as they strive for what is good over what is bad and what is right over what is wrong." (*Nature of Morality*, 25).

Diane Sunar, before exploring five questions regarding the nature of the moral sense, the origin of conscience, the development of morality, variability in the moral sense, and the relation of morality to behaviour, examines from the point of view of four theoretical approaches

(psychoanalytical, social. Cognitive-developmental and evolutionary psychology), gives a tentative definition of morality as the “rules of conduct based on conscience or the sense of right and wrong” (3).

The definition immediately above, serving partly as our working definition, will take into consideration Sunar’s discoveries of the submissions of the psychoanalytical theory, as regards the five basic questions.

He comes up with the explanation that the knowledge of moral action, “appears to have less predictive value for behaviour than situational factors such as immediate reinforcement contingencies, the social situation (including the social visibility and expectation of others), feelings such as empathy, guilt, and self-esteem, and the cognitive salience of moral values” (10).

### **1.5 Review of Related Scholarship**

Diverse critical studies and reviews have been carried out on Austen’s works. These reviews, study her themes, narrative tools, characterization, sociological ties, feminist stance and language. For the sake of relevance and specificity, only works that are related or closely related to the study’s immediate concern will be reviewed.

Canuel Mark critically appreciates Austen’s contribution to the broader eighteenth and nineteenth century discourse on the reformed aims of punishment in modern British society. Commenting on Fanny’s perceived, undeserving position in *Mansfield Park*, he draws an analogy between two types of pains she suffered: pains of sheer exclusion and invisibility suffered in Portsmouth; and the “pain derived from the impossibility of ever escaping unrelenting public notice” (125). In *Mansfield Park*, Fanny’s preference and choice of Mansfield Park’s sense of pain, according to Mark, highlights the author’s exaltation of the latter pain which is one born of “restraint” and “reproach” (125).

Mark structures his essay into five sub-headings, where he studies the character traits and behaviour of Edmund and Fanny who are morally upright as against the immoral ones (the Crawfords especially). In his own definition of morality and the necessary component for its development or attainment, he clearly states that their moral uprightness “is because they both (Edmund and Fanny) demonstrate and embrace the correction that forms the very condition of their individuality as social beings within the world of the novel” (140), and not necessarily because they magically possessed higher forms or status of morality. In highlighting the growth process and the influence of surroundings on Fanny Price, he indirectly reaffirms Freud’s teachings of how the human psyche is influenced by external factors and the aftermath of supposed influences. However, Mark’s concentration is on pain and punishment and not explicitly Freudian.

Ashlie Flanigan, studies the essence of the concept of nature and nurture in the behavioural traits of characters in *Pride and Prejudice*. She goes further to explore the connection between those traits and “indicators of class difference known as gentility” (5). Working with Sir Francis Galton’s definition of nature and nurture, the writer carefully observes and explores the nature and surrounding of key characters to better understand whether their behavioural traits are nature or nurtured controlled. According to her, “both novelists make observations at the domestic level that inform a broader narrative” (7).

Her work, which is divided into three sub-categories, studies the effect and the nature and nurture of Longbourn, and Pemberly and how it is connected to gentility. While studying the nature and nurture process at Longbourn, Flanigan explores the personality trait of each of the Bennet’s daughters and brings to limelight the divergence of personalities. She portrays the heroine of *Pride and Prejudice* as not merely a creation of her environment but also a manifestation of her nature, especially when studied in relation to her younger siblings who were nurtured in the same environment.

Flanigan states that, “The more complex the character is in *Pride and Prejudice*, the blurrier the line between nature and nurture” (16). The origin of the sisters’ nature and nurtured acquired traits, are linked to the nature (internal) and nurture (external) influences of their parents (Mr. and Mrs. Bennet). Flanigan goes a step further to study the disparity in behavioural traits of George Wickham and Darcy. She relates the atmosphere of Darcy’s grounds at Pemberly to Darcy’s inherent good nature since it is his immediate environment. Despite being nurtured in the same environment; George Wickham turns “into a reprobate” (25). Basing her stance on textual evidence, Flanigan argues that the exhibitions and extravagance of George Wickham are traceable to an inherited nature of a spendthrift mother. Conclusively, in her use of comparison, she is able to justify her subtle claims of nature being a more powerful force than nurture. Her study relates to the present study in its rich study of the behavioural traits and patterns of characters. Her study differs in that it makes nature and nurture co-partners in the moulding of behavioural traits.

Anna Mae Duane successfully portrays Fanny’s tortured physiology in *Mansfield Park* and uses its reflections to teach on the dangers facing “both the bodies and the minds of young women who are taught that love means internalizing the desires of others as their own” (412). Duane cites instances that brings to light the protagonist’s sickly figure and all attendant health issues like anxiety, headaches and frequent ‘fatigue’ and how they have multiple resonances in the inter-related discourses of sensibility, nervousness and hysteria. She portrays the complex inter-relations between Fanny’s ill health and the restraint she exercised as a result of fear. With clear instances, she debunks the convictions of Austen’s contemporaries of a “malfunctioning body,” (404) serving as an indication that something is emotionally amiss. She compares a historical case of hysteria, of a patient named Dora, with the behavioural traits of Fanny and is able to portray that Fanny’s sickly nature is as a result of deep rooted fear.

In the latter part of her research, Duane examines the character of Fanny Price as a gothic heroine. Duane tactically explains: “Fanny’s besieged position in the Bertram’s household” and her nervousness as an offshoot of sir Bertram’s gothic qualities (405). Sir Bertram’s “power to produce considerable anxiety among underlings” (406), causes discomfort to Fanny; his “persistent and often disturbing attention to Fanny’s emerging beauty involves the threat of incest central to the gothic plot” (407).

Fanny’s discomfort, behaviour and “conflicted body” (415) condemn and bring to the limelight the evils associated with a “family system whose dependence on feminine gratitude and pliability dissolves the physical and psychological boundaries between the desires of dependents and those of their protectors” (415). Duane’s essay is strongly feminist; a major point of divergence between her approach to the characters’ psychology and the moral-based approach of the present study.-

Adili Odeh’s article sheds light on the behaviours and impacts of father figures in Jane Austen’s six novels. Odeh delves into categories of parenting style as created by the psychologist, Diana Beaurind, in the 1970’s. According to him, parenting is classified in four ways: authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive indulgent and permissive indifferent.

While establishing Mr. Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice* as a permissive indifferent parent, he brings to light his behavioural traits and how these affect his offspring. The effect of his negligence on his children is glaringly portrayed during the unpleasant business of Lydia’s elopement. Odeh’s findings on the ‘permissive indifferent fathers’, is that they “are [much] uninvolved in their children’s lives. This can come about for a variety of reasons, but the effects on the children are generally the same. The children lack self-control, are incompetent, and do not handle independence well” (36).

In drawing an analogy between the father figure in *Pride and Prejudice* and the representative father figure in *Sense and Sensibility*, and taking into deep consideration their spoken words and slips

of tongue, Odeh deduces that the kind of father figure that plays out in the texts is largely dependent and influenced by the kind of women they have in their lives. His research proclaims Sir Thomas Bertram of *Mansfield Park* as an authoritative father. The salient traits of an authoritative father or guardian are reflected in the behaviourism of Sir Thomas Bertram and Odeh's research examines and highlights how the father figure's inability to be "outwardly affectionate towards his children, coupled with his wife's indifference, cripples his children's moral and social education" (40). In depicting how a psychological accident can affect the psyche and overall development of a child, he has this to say about Sir Thomas Bertram:

Tom Bertram has become a wastrel...and Maria and Juliet are vain and idle. His banishment of Maria for eloping with Henry Crawford even though she was married and Mrs. Norris because he sees how destructive she has been to his family, coupled with his embracing of Fanny as a daughter even before she marries Edmund, shows that he is changed. He has become a moral person even if he will probably always remain an authoritative parent. (41)

Odeh's study is relevant to this study due to its explicit illustration and reflection of how the psychological manifestation of children is majorly shaped by their physical environment or those they come in contact with. The present study differs in its application of Freud's theory with an emphasis on the tripartite psyche to understand how morality and immorality are shaped.

Britansi kaKnjizainost I Kultura's article shares some similarities with that of Odeh's. Kultura carefully studies family relation and the effect of bad parenting on Austen's two heroines in *Pride and Prejudice* and *Mansfield Park* respectively. He is of the opinion that in "Jane Austen's novels, the impact of the family is felt in the social area where it affects the questions of occupation, marriage, position and relationships with others" (5). In bringing out the social impact, Kultura projects the

characteristic features of Austen's age and time by taking us down a historical lane, as he highlights England's noticeable features and practices during the authoress' time.

The writer equally highlights the ineffective handling of the heroine and her siblings by their mother. The disposition and character trait of Mrs. Bennet affects the psychology of Lydia and Mary especially. Lizzy and Jane are portrayed as the only different ones because "they were able to motivate themselves to develop..." (19). In retrospect, the reviewer is able to portray that bad parenting skills could still yield a positive aftermath since there could be positive drive and motivation born of negative experiences.

Mr. Bennet's character with its attendant indifference and ironic detachment is also significant. According to Kultural, Mr. Bennet's "indifference and ironic detachment is a defence against his frustration and grief, and his only protection against being hurt by being constantly reminded of his own error in choosing a marriage partner" (20). His physical retreat from the world is "his emotional retreat from his family and his unwillingness to change and develop" (22). The noticeable regrets and dissatisfaction of Elizabeth's parents, drives Elizabeth further away from them in terms of developing her own opinion and expectation" (23). This practically, is seen to translate into the good she becomes and also to make her worthy for the reward of a good behaviour which is a successful marriage, based on love that "endures the test of time" (11).

Fanny Price of *Mansfield Park* is portrayed by the reviewer in the same light. Fanny, has "non-existent" mothers, Mrs. Price and Mrs. Bertram, who share many personality traits and are considered as bad examples. Their parenting styles are damaging to the children with the exception of Fanny and a few others. Fanny's position as an outsider, "sharpens her sense of propriety and decorum" (28). Sir Thomas's reserve, coupled with Lady Bertram's indifference, handicaps "his children's moral

and social education” (31). His “lack of perceptiveness and his unhealthy pride” (37) renders useless his strong moral principles that would have been of service to his children.

Kultural’s paper is different from the present one in its strict exploration of the family dynamics shown in the two novels “since it is within the context of family interactions that both heroines acquire their value” (40). Kultural primarily adopts a sociological approach. The present study is psychoanalytical.

Tony Tanner, in trying to establish and explore why an ‘unpopular heroine’ like Fanny is created in one of the most profound books (*Mansfield Park*) of the nineteenth century came to the conclusion that Jane Austen, “was aware of an England that was passing away... knew about the passion which turns to lechery, the activity which becomes destructive, and the energy which results in the collapse of a world. She appreciated the value of a ‘Quiet Thing’ and knew too, the incredible moral strength required to achieve and maintain it.” (175)

He opines that *Mansfield Park* in its entirety is a book about the “difficulty of preserving true moral consciousness amidst the selfish manoeuvring and jostling of society “(175). Tony Tanner, in appreciating Austen’s moral stance in *Mansfield Park*, subtly attributes the theme of the book to the climactic transition of English history: “the eighteenth century England giving way to the nineteenth century... the world of traditional values being infiltrated and undermined by modern types – unscrupulous, ambitious, cruel, selfish and false ‘(174). In his article, he is able to demonstrate and relate how the values of a ‘quiet thing’ which are mostly moralistic are able to withstand and triumph above turbulent changes. He brings to limelight the moral undertone of Jane Austen’s writing. This study deviates from Tony Tanner’s in its use of psychological tools or procedures to explore the moral undertones of the texts.

Jenny Rebecca Rytting brings out the connection of interest in characters between Carl Jung and Jane Austen. Rytting uses Jungian personality theory to explain some of the behavioural traits exhibited by Elizabeth Bennet and Darcy Fitzwilliam in the novel, *Pride and Prejudice*. In exploring why Elizabeth Bennet and Darcy Fitzwilliam initially misunderstand each other, what they learn from each other and what makes their personality types well suited to marital union, Rytting examines the eight Jungian personality types in pairs of four categories- extraversion and introversion, sensing and intuition, thinking and feeling, and perceiving and judging.

Rytting is of the opinion that Elizabeth Bennet and Darcy Fitzwilliam share three out of four preferences: “introversion, intuition and judgment- differing only on the thinking feeling method.” Using textual evidences or excerpts to buttress her points, she is able to justify the similitude between Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet as it relates to being introverted- “inward focus of energy”, making use of intuition- “notices patterns and possibilities”; while gathering information and dealing with aftermath or interplay by judging- “suspending information gathering in order to come to a conclusion.” However, while Darcy’s introversion is highlighted in bringing to light his preference for a small circle of friends, Elizabeth’s introversion is depicted in her love for “moments of internal reflection” (Rytting).

Their discrepancy in the method of decision making, which is the crux of her research work, is inter-twined with the title of the text; *Pride and Prejudice*. Rytting conveys the differences in judgment of a thinking type (Darcy) and a feeling type (Elizabeth). Darcy is portrayed as emblematic of pride, with his judgment based on logic and “excessive reliance on logical analysis, especially one’s own analysis, [which] can be considered as a form of pride.” Elizabeth Bennet is emblematic of prejudice since she makes decisions based “on the gut reactions of feeling,” and such feelings, when “stubbornly adhered to, bear a marked resemblance to prejudice.” (Rytting). This difference is further justified in Elizabeth’s “over- reliance on her feeling-judgment, her prejudice leads her to evaluate

Darcy before she really knows him," while "Darcy's logical thinking-function originally argues against his love for Elizabeth." In his eventual acceptance of Elizabeth's worth and his readiness to love her, Rytting is of the opinion that his "thinking-judgment does not change"; what was interfered with, was his value system in the perception of Elizabeth's worth. Although feeling and thinking is said to be still important to Elizabeth and Darcy respectively, they are portrayed to have learnt the importance in "balance of perception and judgment" as it "guards against falling into either pride or prejudice."

Rytting's research work sets a solid foundation for our study in its exploration and study of the personality types of key characters in *Pride and Prejudice*. It differs majorly in its neutral stand as it relates to morality and immorality and also in its application of the Jungian theory.

In yet another beautiful article, Christel Fricke gives textual evidence of Jane Austen having gotten inspiration from the work of Adam Smith. In highlighting the similitude between the work of Jane Austen in *Pride and Prejudice*, and that of Adam Smith in "The Theory of Moral Sentiment", he examines the personalities of her characters in light of the Smithian doctrines which advocate the "importance of respectful interaction for moral learning, about the importance of sympathy and of equal respect" (19).

Fricke, taking into consideration the title of the text, *Pride and Prejudice*, explains the dialectic of pride that gave way to prejudice. He is of the opinion that "if there was no essential interest in the need for moral propriety and social harmony in human nature, people would just go round in circles of Pride and Prejudice" (7). Taking instances from Adam Smith's work, Fricke explores and studies human behaviour and examines the Smithian belief of "humans as being by nature social and disposed to become moral agents" (qtd. in Fricke 1).

Elizabeth, the heroine of *Pride and Prejudice*, and her sister Jane are portrayed as very reasonable and morally upright. While investigating the possible background of their behaviour, Fricke

is of the opinion that it springs from their “natural disposition and their interaction” (4). Explicitly concentrating on one of the stages of moral education (where people interact as peers), he differentiates moral propriety from politeness, reiterates the importance of equality in morality, and examines the role of social and cultural prejudices as acquired in the process of socialization. He goes further to analyse the character and personality of Mr. Darcy and the effect and process of moral education.

According to Fricke, in *Pride and Prejudice* Jane Austen illustrates that, “a person’s ability to know herself as moral agent, to critically judge her own moral performance, to develop moral conscience and to become an impartial spectator both of herself and other people depends on her encounter with critical feedback from her peers” (14).

An aspect of the above reviewed works is reflected in a contemporary Nigerian text, *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Adichie. Ogaga Okuyade explores the growth process and coming of age story of the protagonist in a totalitarian environment, which was authoritatively governed by her father. He is able to connect the developmental process of the protagonist to the Nigerian society.

Although sociologically inclined, Okuyade explores the psychological when he unravels and succinctly portrays the unfavourable childhood story of Jaja and Kambili and how it affected them. Okuyade is of the opinion that the stifling and mechanical “over-zealous attitude and clipped religious tones” of Eugene, their father, “reduces the members of his family to the size of midgets” (247) and this in its own way, brings about a silence that becomes very symbolical throughout the course of the novel.

In analyzing the feminist thrust of the novel, he is able to elucidate the psychological aftermath of silence and the “helplessness of the traditional African woman” (249) in a male dominated society. While using the analogy of Kambili’s growth process and struggle with silence, Okuyade is able to explain and draw a clear picture of the Nigerian society and how its people have been affected

psychologically and drawn into silence because of the physical and mental torture they have been exposed to.

Okuyade contrasts the suffocating rituals of moralistic upbringing in the protagonist's home with the freedom associated with growth and development in aunty Ifeoma's house. While analyzing Kambili's character, he has this to say: "these enthusiasms with which discourses are introduced and sustained is not only mind boggling to Kambili, but also causes consternation in her psyche" (252).

In another illuminating article, Florence Onyebuchi Orabueze descriptively analyses the different causes, forms and consequences of dispossession in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*. Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic approach is used to explain and account for the tension and psychological traumas present within selected dispossessed characters. Orabueze's very detailed work explores different forms of dispossession with all its traceable psychological aftermath, but her views on psychological dispossession on *Purple Hibiscus* are particularly relevant.

While making use of Sigmund Freud's theory, Florence Onyebuchi Orabueze carefully analyses the character of Eugene Achike and goes some steps further to criticize the causes of his dispossession, consequences and effects on other characters. She is of the opinion that "Eugene's perfections and obsessive preoccupations with the doctrines and dogmas of the catholic church are a consequence of his diversion and of his repressed sexual desire into a more acceptable channel" (65).

The 'rough beast,' which is said to be one of the effects of a dispossessed mind, is connected to earlier Nigerian novels and W. B. Yeats; "The Second Coming." In highlighting the characteristic features of the rough beast, the character of Eugene Achike is highlighted since it bears semblance with the "rough beast" (94). Achike is later poisoned when "violence meets violence" (94) and his family could tolerate his tyranny no more.

The causes of Eugene's psychological imbalance are critically explored under the sub-heading; "Nature or Nurture as Causal Factors of Dispossession". Orabueze indicates that "nurture or environment is implicated as the cause of psychic, economic/political and cultural dispossession of characters in both novels" (99). While exploring some aspects of his physical disposition, Orabueze is of the opinion that part of the story which Kambili is scarcely privy to have been the "repressed traumatic experience of natural and unconscious sexual desire at the oedipal stage of his psychosexual development" (103). The writer goes deeper when she re-echoes aunty Ifeoma's belief of Eugene Achike's nature of pride and being judgmental as one of the moulders of his character/behavioural traits.

In chapter six, Orabueze critically analyses the plight of the dispossessed. She is of the opinion that "the trauma establishes in the dispossessed abnormal behaviour" (217). Abnormal behaviour, which is said to be a symptom of an underlying disease, is carefully reflected in the activities of Eugene Achike and succinctly portrayed in the excerpt below: "As a rough beast, he is harmful, destructive and predatory towards others around him. He neither suffers guilt nor anxiety nor emotion nor apologizes for his behaviour. As an anti-social character, he is intelligent and rationalizes his actions" (219).

In her analysis of Beatrice Achike's character, Kambili and Jaja and how Eugene, their father affected their psychology, Orabueze is able to establish and defend her views of the dispossessed being an agent of dispossession to others, and also to show that the "victim of the beast may return violence for violence" (220). Orabueze's study bears more resemblance to the present review than that of Okuyade since she concentrates on the nature/nurture theme and on aspects of psychological trauma. Nonetheless, areas where the present work deviates are in its comparative approach, its stress on moral conduct, and its aim of validating certain of Freud's teachings.

Sadiya Abubakar examines the causes of trauma for African women, especially Nigerian women. Using Alamenda County Trauma Informed Care's definition of trauma as "experiences that are

emotionally painful and distressing and that overwhelm an individual's capacity to cope" (qtd. in Abubakar 8); Abubakar brings to light the traumatic experiences of women in Nigeria and compares it to India. According to her, "women in Nigeria are exposed to the risk of getting traumatized through situations like: domestic violence, limited social or religious sanctions, lack of social support and most importantly, cultural norms" (4).

She studies cases of trauma under domestic violence by using the character of Beatrice. Abubakar describes Beatrice as "calm, reserved and of repressive nature" (5) and this inadvertently fosters the oppressive tendencies of her husband. While exploring trauma under social forces, Abubakar examines the character of Aunty Ifeoma. Abubakar describes Aunty Ifeoma's trauma as "repressed and veiled" (6) since she (Aunty Ifeoma) is able to withstand and occupy herself with more important matters. Beatrice, who suffers the most, has been denied the opportunity to live out her dreams and all these culminate in the "trauma of repressed emotions" (7). Beatrice repressed emotions as a result of external influences "accumulate and form a permanent scar in her mind which further triggers her trauma" (8) and leads her to commit murder.

From the reviews discussed, it is evident that scholars have written materially on the behavioural traits and patterns of most of Adichie's characters but not much has been done on the analysis of characters while making use of Freud's theory, especially as it pertains to morality. This study contributes to knowledge by affirming the universality of some of Freud's theory as it pertains to the creation of characters in specific texts by Austen and Adichie.

## 1.6 Thesis Statement

The conduct of selected characters in Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* and *Pride and Prejudice*, and Chimamanda Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* affirms Freud's and Adler's theory that early/parental influences and unconscious motivations affect personality development, and also debunks Freud's claims that moral individuals are psychologically disordered.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

Morality in connection with early/parental influences is the basis on which the psychology of the characters is to be explored in this chapter.

The symbols of morality in *Mansfield Park* and *Pride and Prejudice* are Fanny Price and Elizabeth Bennet respectively. Mary Crawford and Lydia Bennet are symbols of immorality in the respective texts. Aunty Ifeoma and Eugene Achike in *Purple Hibiscus* are symbols of morality and immorality respectively. The moral or immoral behavior of each of these characters will be used to confirm the hypotheses of Freud.

### **2.1. Early/Parental Influences and Morality: Fanny Price and Elizabeth Bennet**

*Mansfield Park* and *Pride and Prejudice* are henceforth abbreviated as *Mansfield* and *Pride* respectively.

Alfred Adler (1870 – 1937), who developed a theory of psychoanalysis he called the “individual psychology”, posits that “we cannot judge a human being except by using the concept of the social feeling as a standard and measuring his thoughts and actions through it” (140). The social feeling includes the early and parental influences that may unconsciously motivate moral choices. Adler believes that every child is prone to have a feeling of inferiority since children see themselves as most times dependent and weak. This could lead to the development of an inferiority complex when there are instances of neglect or negligence on the part of the parents, and this causes the children to become “involved at an early age in a bitter struggle for existence which results only too often in the strangulation of the social feelings” (65). Stangnor interprets Adler by saying that “children who are either overly nurtured or overly neglected by their parents are later likely to develop an inferiority complex” (626). This is confirmed in the character development of Fanny Price.

Fanny leaves Portsmouth for Mansfield Park in Northampton when she is ten. She is described as “exceedingly timid and shy and shrinking from notice” (*Mansfield* 10). Her timidity and natural reserve, which aid her climb to the apex of morality, can partly be attributed to the neglect she suffers from her parents and the ensuing inferiority complex.

Even after some years of leaving Portsmouth for Mansfield Park, Fanny, in returning home for a brief reunion, silently hopes that she would “find a warm and affectionate friend in the mama who had certainly shown no remarkable fondness for her formerly” (332). Fanny’s feelings of inferiority are compounded by her father’s actions. His actions of negligence reinforce her insecurity and she recalls that her father had never gotten close “to tenderness in his former treatment of herself. There had remained only a general impression of roughness and loudness; and now he scarcely ever noticed her, but to make her the object of a coarse joke” (348-349).

Although the character of Fanny Price is portrayed in a positive light, her description of her parents and her preference of Mansfield Park over her childhood home is a pointer to the hatred she harbours for her parents for their neglect. She later describes her father as: “more negligent of his family, his habits were worse and his manners coarser than she had prepared for...he swore and drank, he was dirty and gross” (345). And her mother she paints as a “partial ill-judging parent, a dawdle, a slattern, who neither taught nor restrained her children, whose house was the scene of mismanagement and discomfort from beginning to end and who had no talent, no conversation, no affection towards herself, no curiosity to know her better, no desire of her friendship and no inclination of her company that could lessen her sense of such feelings” (350).

Fanny’s parents’ indifference towards her affects her thought processes and attributes to the inferiority complex she develops. She translates her parents’ neglect and indifference towards her to the world’s hatred for her. This assumption she carries of the world’s hatred for her is in consonance with

Adler's hypotheses of the aftermath of a "bitter struggle for existence which results only too well in the strangulation of the social feelings" (66). Fanny becomes an introverted person who is "afraid of everybody, ashamed of herself" (11) and "often retreating towards her own chamber to cry" (12). She avoids people since her deep feelings of inferiority prompt her into being overly self-reliant and independent.

It is quite unfortunate that Fanny experiences isolation even in Mansfield Park despite Edmund's love and care. Adler believes that isolation threatens "children who grew up under the pressure of an education marked by great strictness" (Adler 40). Fanny is almost always accountable to Sir Bertram and Mrs. Norris. Mrs. Norris corrects and teaches her by way of nagging while Sir Bertram admonishes by way of scolding. All these culminate in a personality that becomes "tolerant of all difficulties" and responds to "sorrows in a humble way" (Adler, 41). For instance, when Mrs. Norris nags Fanny for "idling away all evening upon a sofa" (*Mansfield* 64), in spite of the fact that Fanny has worked herself out, Fanny, without uttering a word in her defense, quickly returns to her seat at the table and immediately engages herself. Her education, which is marked by strictness, forces on her tolerance, humility and suppression, and this translates to the "good" person she becomes.

Fanny makes the right choices in that she strives for what is good over what is bad, and what is right over what is wrong, but a guilt complex, in addition to an inferiority complex, is at the foundation of her morality. Fanny suffers from a guilt complex which makes her neurotic. Often times, she becomes psychologically distraught and feels bad about things not worth feeling bad about. For instance, when Sir Thomas Bertram, her guardian is to go to Antigua, Fanny who is happy to miss his presence is nudged by her 'guilt complex' and we are told that a "more tender nature suggested that her feelings were ungrateful

and she really grieved because she could not grieve..." (*Mansfield* 25). Fanny's guilt complex is yet seen when she cries over her uncle's casual remark of being "at sixteen in some respect too much like ten" (29)

Her guilt is also clearly projected during the eve of her parting from the Bertram's estate (*Mansfield Park*). Fanny, who had so wanted to travel with her beloved William to see her family who she left long time ago, still finds something to be sorry about. The unnecessary ritual she involves herself in, which is a result of her guilt complex, is captured in the excerpt below:

...the last evening at Mansfield Park must still be wretchedness. Her heart was completely sad at parting. She had tears for every room in the house, much more for every beloved inhabitant. She clung to her aunt, because she would miss her; she kissed the hand of her uncle with struggling sobs, because she had displeased him; and as for Edmund, she could neither speak, nor look, nor think when the last moment came with him; and it was not until it was over that she knew he was giving her the affectionate farewell of a brother. (335)

Unlike Fanny Price, Elizabeth Bennet is surrounded with healthy people who give her just the right dose of love and care. Elizabeth Bennet who is her Father's favorite, is a "dear Lizzy" (*Pride* 13) to her sister Jane, an "intimate friend to Charlotte" (16), and the "love" (239) of Mrs. Gardiner especially. Elizabeth is surrounded by genuine love and care; the people who formed a circle of love around her are those with "mind improved, manners captivating...and respectability" (*Pride* 235). With love, care and genuine kindness strengthening her, Elizabeth Bennet turns out to be very confident. Their opinion of her does her a great service in enabling her to maintain a positive self-image.

Elizabeth Bennet, unlike Fanny Price always has ready companions to talk to; people who she pours her heart to without fear of condemnation. When her friend, Charlotte, marries the man whose proposal she rejects, she is taken aback and is somewhat affected but instead of suppressing her feelings

and becoming hostile to her environment, as Adler would put it, or acting on her “aggressive or destructive drive (thanatos)” (Stangor 621), she employs Freud’s defence mechanism termed sublimation. Elizabeth Bennet is able to retain her cool by channeling “unacceptable sexual or aggressive desires into acceptable activities” (Stangnor 623). Her action of talking by to her sister, Jane Bennet who admonishes her not to “give way to such feelings as... they will ruin your happiness” (*Pride* 135) is a case in point. From the outset of the narrative to the end, Elizabeth Bennet is seen always communicating her feelings to very close and sensible friends. Instead of yielding to the drive that suggests hostility, Elizabeth engages in the “talking cure” and this helps her to unwind and remain healthy by discharging such negative feelings.

Since there is really no conflict or “imbalance among the motivations of [her] id, ego and superego.’ (Stangnor 622), there is really no issue of a psychological disorder. Unlike Fanny Price, there are no records of isolation, inferiority complex or unnecessary feelings of guilt. In admonishing Darcy to disband his feelings of guilt and regret, Elizabeth projects her personality by saying that: “you must learn some of my philosophy. Think only of the past as its remembrance gives you pleasure.” (368). In doing those things that she is certain will be applauded by those who mean the world to her, Elizabeth Bennet practically walks the path of her mentors and this translates to a moral personality which is also a healthy personality, striving to promote mutual welfare and growth.

## **2.2 Early and Parental Influences and Immorality: Mary Crawford and Lydia Bennet**

Mary Crawford and Lydia Bennet manifest immoral behaviours in *Mansfield Park* and *Pride and Prejudice* respectively. The character development, thought process and personality of Mary Crawford are traceable to early/parental influences from her childhood home. Not much is said of Mary Crawford’s birth parent except the fact that she lost her mother and moves in with her father’s brother, the admiral and his wife. They are a loveless childless couple and the narrator tells us that, this couple,

“agreeing in nothing else, were united in affection for these children” (*Mansfield* 35). Even less is said of Miss Crawford’s father who is negligent of his duties towards his children. Miss Crawford’s guardian, the Admiral, is described as a man of “vicious conduct” (35). We can only infer that Miss Crawford’s father is as irresponsible as his brother. Just as the Admiral goes ahead to bring his mistress under his own roof rather than retaining his niece and nephew, Mary Crawford’s father may have done something similar when she lost her mother to death.

Mary Crawford never had a stable childhood in a loving home. Her observance of her parent’s marriage, which could be as disastrous as that of her uncle’s, forms her ideology about marriage. Mary’s use of the adjective “poor” in describing her aunt’s goes a long way to tell us who the victim of the so-called marriage is. In one of her letters to Fanny and in describing her aunt’s health condition, she goes on to say: “My poor aunt always felt affected if within ten miles of the sea, which the Admiral of course never believed, but I know it was so” (373).

Also, in evaluating the marriage of her close friend, the Frazers, she arrives at the conclusion that the Frazers are as “unhappy as most married people” (323). All the marriages she comes in contact with from her childhood before moving into Mansfield Park are shams. This she buries in her unconscious and it directly affects what she says and does.

When she describes the institution of marriage as a “transaction, the one in which people expect most from others, and are least honest themselves” (41), her half-sister and later guardian, Mrs. Grant is taken aback. Mary is able to portray what has been repressed in her unconscious about the institution of marriage. She goes further to talk about her aunt and still uses the adjective “poor” when she says;

My poor aunt had certainly little to love the state; but however, speaking from my own observation, it is a maneuvering business. I know so many who have married in the full expectation and confidence of some one particular advantage

in the connexion or accomplishment, or good quality in the person, who have found themselves entirely deceived, and been obliged to put up with exactly the reverse... (41).

From her words, one can deduce that she hates the institution of marriage. Since she has to get married to play along with societal norms, she has to consider it a transaction and vows to be “staunch...to save [her] many a heart ache” (41).

Her contact with her uncle, her friends the Frazers and the Stornaways, whose husbands are no longer in love with them and Mr. Frazer particularly who “wants a young woman, a beautiful young woman of five and twenty...” (323) preaches volumes to her and forms her ideology about marriage.

Although Lydia Bennet is fortunate to be groomed in a stable home where love partially reigned supreme, her position in the Bennet’s family, as the last of all the children, is a huge disservice to her since she becomes her mother’s favourite, and her mother sets her a bad example. The father, Mr. Bennet, who is indifferent towards her, considers her and Catherine as “two of the silliest girls in the country” (27) and their mom “who is far from right” (212) and entirely insensible of the evil that Lydia could become, unfortunately becomes Lydia’s instructor. Lydia Bennet is described as having a “vacant” (27) mind. She is unfortunately surrounded by people as vacant as herself; chief of who is her mom, who is described as “a woman of mean understanding, little information and uncertain temper.” (1). Her immediate elder sister, Catherine who is described as “vain, ignorant, idle and absolutely uncontrolled”, follows “wherever Lydia leads” (230). Although not much is said of the character of Mr. and Mrs. Philips, we can infer that they are a bad influence and are rather irresponsible, especially Mrs. Philips; her role in acting as an agent of unrestrained pleasure, one who amuses “their morning hours and furnish conversation for the evening” (27) is pointer to the possible fact that she is an idle neighbourhood gossip, who is not a healthy role model for a child of fifteen.

Lydia is nonchalant towards her father and his criticisms. When she and Catherine are referred to as “two of the silliest girls in the country” (212), Catherine is said to be “disconcerted” but Lydia keeps chattering on and with “perfect indifference, continued to express her admiration of captain carter, and her hopes of seeing him in the course of the day” (27), Unconsciously, Lydia despises her father for his neglect and open display of favouritism for the elder Bennets, especially Elizabeth. This translates to her defiance and open disregards for authority, norms and traditions in general.

### **2.3 Early/ Parental Influences: Eugene Achike and Aunty Ifeoma in *Purple Hibiscus***

The Characters of Eugene Achike and Aunty Ifeoma are representative of morality and immorality respectively. Although Siblings, Eugene Achike and Aunty Ifeoma are united in a brand of Christianity which is Catholicism. Their individual understanding of the religion they profess and how this religion was handed to them and by whom, is a major trigger in the development of their personality. Early/parental influences and unconscious motivation play a role in their personality development which verifies Austen’s characterization and reconfirms the psychological claims of Freud’s and Stangor’s.

The character and personality development of Eugene Achike share some similarities with that of Fanny Price of *Mansfield Park*. Eugene Achike just like Fanny Price leaves home at the core stage of his developmental process. His separation from his father affects his thought process throughout the course of the narrative.

When he leaves home, Eugene Achike symbolically abandons and rids himself of anything that is connected to his root; the priest whom he moves in with, takes the role of a father figure. Nothing is said of the time and age he moves to the priest’s house, we can only infer that he moves there at the formative stage of his psychosexual development since he attends “elementary School”

(*Purple Hibiscus* 55) there. In recounting his experiences of hardship or the difficulty he suffers as a child, he reiterates by way of contrast his expectations from his children who to him are much more privileged than himself. According to him; “I was a houseboy for the parish priest for two years. Yes, a houseboy. Nobody dropped me off at school. I walked eight miles every day to Nimo until I finished elementary school. I was a gardener for the priest while I attended Gregory’s secondary school (*Purple Hibiscus* 55). All these are part of his thought process which makes him become extra-hard on his children whenever he notices a lapse in their academic and spiritual life. His deep feeling of inferiority as a result of the neglect he feels he suffered makes him to compensate by working extra hard to get to the top. According to Adler, human emotions such as anger and inferiority have a relationship with the striving for power: "the striving for power is built upon the foundation of their feeling of inferiority complex" (231). The method of compensation Eugene adopts, which is borne of a life of struggling for superiority, affects his children since he takes extreme measures to make certain they live the perfect and superior life he envisages.

For instance, when the narrator, Kambili, his only daughter disappoints him by coming second place in class, she narrates his ordeal thus: “His eyes were sad. Deep and sad.... There were stories in his eyes that I would never know.” (*Purple Hibiscus* 49). Those stories, which we can safely infer are mostly unpalatable, culminate in the obsessive compulsive disorder he becomes so prone to. Whenever those around him fall in his expectations, he unleashes the beast in him.

Eugene Achike is unfortunately not lucky enough to experience love in his new home. Unlike Fanny Price, he is brought up in a more abusive environment where there is no proper development of the feeling of tenderness. Adler posits that it is “difficult to mobilize a child who has grown up in a family where there has never been a proper development of the feeling of tenderness...his whole

attitude in life will be a gesture of escape an evasion of all love and all tenderness” (37). Eugene Achike’s unfortunate position of being trained by persons who aren’t his birth parents and who also expects so much from him account materially for his deformed state of mind. For instance, in being made to walk “eight miles every day” (*Purple Hibiscus* 55) to his place of study and also being grossly punished when he yields to the biological and natural instinct of his id when he is said to have “Committed a sin against his own body” (*Purple Hibiscus* 203), Eugene starts repressing all of his genuine and tender feelings; this translates to him becoming very tactless of other people’s feeling. His Compulsive infliction of pains on his wife and children is a case in point.

The narrator, for instance, portrays Eugene’s repressed state when she notes that the only act that portrays affection between him (Eugene Achike) and his wife, is the picture of “them exchanging the sign of peace at mass,” (*Purple Hibiscus* 13). In other words, the normal romantic utterances that trigger intimacy amongst couples are evaded by Eugene Achike. His repressed nature which continually makes him prone to violence is a way of reliving the trauma of his childhood abuse of having his hands soaked in hot water. When he beats up his wife, we are told “his eyes were swollen and red,” (*Purple Hibiscus* 42); when he punishes his whole family for allowing Kambili break the Eucharistic fast, we are told that his “face crumpled; his eyelids sagged.” By sharing in the pains he inflicts on them, he relives his traumatic experiences. As a result of the nurturing of his immediate environment and the actions of his guardian, the priest, who occupies the place of a father in his life, Eugene Achike becomes an agent of pain and suffering to those around him.

Eugene’s hatred for his father is triggered by the neglect he suffers from him. His continuous emphasis on how “he learnt things he never would have learned from his father” (*Purple Hibiscus* 55), unveils his animosity towards his father for the negligence he suffered. In also emphasizing the fact that

he worked hard to become what he is, he abhors his father for not making life easier for him by way of providing the necessities that would have made an easier life possible. Even after he succeeds in life, the connection that was broken between him and his father at a tender age could not be rebuilt, hence he becomes unfeeling by treating his father as an outcast and all those who are remotely connected to him. Eugene is a complicated character, “moral” in the society but “immoral” at home. We are told he “pays the school fees...of hundreds of persons” (*Purple Hibiscus* 225) and so many persons were alive because of him. In this respect he is definitely doing well. But his morality is like that of Fanny Price – bedded in childhood guilt and fear and a hidden inferiority complex.

Nothing explicit is said of Auntie Ifeoma’s early upbringing. There are no records of Auntie Ifeoma moving out of her father’s house at a tender age and there are also no records of violence or an abusive relationship. From the relationship that exists between auntie Ifeoma and her father, Papa Nnukwu, we can safely infer that she was nurtured in his home. Judging from the deep jokes shared between Auntie Ifeoma and Papa Nnukwu, and her feelings of anxiety when he was sick, it is plain that she enjoys a stable relationship with her father and this, she transfers to her children. According to the narrator, “Amaka was a thinner, teenage copy of her mother” (*Purple Hibiscus* 86); the physical resemblance of mother and child is also symbolical of a behavioural resemblance. The way she brings up her children without un-necessary restraint, is evident in the narrator’s words: “laughter floated over my head. Words spurted from everyone, often not seeking and not getting any response” (*Purple Hibiscus* 128). Her early introduction to both the traditional and modern form of worship encourages her liberalism. She becomes very tolerant and understanding of people’s choices. When she, in a “mild, forgiving way” observed that Eugene “was too much of a colonial product” (*Purple Hibiscus* 10), she portrays a deep understanding of the problems of her brother and how she herself was lucky enough to have escaped those dehumanizing experiences.

In contrast to restraint and animosity, freedom is exuded in the relationship between papa Nnukwu and Auntie Ifeoma. When Papa Nnukwu chatters continuously during the drive to see the “Mmuo”, Auntie Ifeoma cautions him playfully. Her subtle command in the utterance, “it is enough, close your mouth and rest” (*Purple Hibiscus* 92) is a pointer of the relationship of freedom she enjoys with Papa Nnukwu, one which allows her a voice and an opinion. She transfers this to all those around her and this freedom she exudes and allows others enjoy translates to the good she becomes.

From the close ties she enjoys at home, without having her affection shared with any other child, Auntie Ifeoma grows up to be a compassionate person and this is manifested in her utmost love and care for her father and the people around him; the exact opposite of Eugene’s contempt for Papa Nnukwu and the people around him. The love she receives she in turn gives to society and this propels the “laughter, (which) always rang out” (*Purple Hibiscus* 148) in her house. In transferring this love to her children and the freedom that comes with it, Auntie Ifeoma’s children end up a better version of Eugene’s children.

## CHAPTER THREE

### UNCONSCIOUS MOTIVATIONS

#### 3.1 Suppression of the Id and the Role of “Fear”- Fanny Price and Elizabeth Bennet (Moral Characters)

Psychoanalysis approaches human behaviour by focusing “on the role of the unconscious thoughts, feelings and memories” (Stangnor 31). Based on the thoughts and memories that the narrative reveals, the character formation and development of Fanny Price and Elizabeth Bennet are triggered by motivations that developed as a result of a suppressed libido. Suppression, according to Sigmund Freud, occurs when an impulse cannot “get past the watchman [the ego] from the system of the unconscious [the id] to that of the fore conscious [superego].” (*General Introduction* 260). It is the act of consciously not indulging or focusing on conscious thoughts, emotions and actions for a supposed period of time. Stangnor describes the ego as the component of the human psyche which delays “the gratification of our basic motivations until the appropriate time with the appropriate outlet” (621); the id as the component which is entirely unconscious and “drives our most important motivations, including sexual drive (libido) and the aggressive or destructive drive (thanatos)” (621); and the superego as that which “represents our sense of morality and oughts”. Suppression of the id by the ego influences the moral path of both Fanny Price and Elizabeth Bennet, but the process is kinder to Elizabeth than to Fanny.

Fanny’s and Elizabeth’s id are suppressed by their ego through the motivations of the superego. Fanny for instance is surrounded by different sources of the superego. Her nagging aunt Norris, who is the chief unhealthy source of her superego, we are told keeps entreating and admonishing her on the right attitude to exhibit. In the narrator’s words; “Mrs. Norris had been talking to her the whole way from Northampton of her wonderful good fortune and the extra-ordinary degree of gratitude and good

behavior it ought to produce” (*Mansfield* 11). Even before Fanny Price steps into Mansfield Park, she has been given an invisible benchmark of unattainable morality.

Apart from Aunt Norris constant admonitions by way of nagging, Fanny is “disheartened by lady Bertram’s silence, awed by Sir Thomas’ grave looks” (12) and taken aback by Edmund’s cool and quiet spirit. These paved way for the harsh and relentless demands of the superego on her ego

Fanny, who wants to live the perfect life as pressured by her superego, becomes very sensitive of her minor flaws and weaknesses; she even considers her true feelings evil when they are most beneficial to her. Her feelings are hemmed in by the superego as a result of the admonitions she has been privy to, and punished by guilt when they run contrary to the superego’s demands. In the eyes of the world, Fanny Price is morally upright; her ability to feel and become emotional over little matters makes others sees her as an emblem of “gratitude and devotion” (*Mansfield* 262). However, from intense study and scrutiny, one can infer that excessive suppression of her id by her ego’s interpretation of the demands of her superego makes her a neurotic.

According to Freud, general anxiety may be “closely connected with certain processes in sexual life, let us say with certain types of libido.... When suppression has occurred, the emotion accompanying the normal process has been replaced by fear, regardless of its original quality.” (*General Introduction* 352). The suppression of Fanny’s id brings about abhorrence for anything sexual. Since her excess libido is not channeled into appropriate channels by the ego, because of the ego’s intense scrutiny by the outside world, she exercises restraint and caution to especially pleasurable situations. For instance, when she refuses accepting the offer of Tom Bertram to take a part in a play which she considers imprudent, she spends a considerable amount of time, trying to decipher her decision. In the narrator’s voice: “her doubts were increasing, was she right in refusing what was so warmly asked, so strongly wished for...what might be so essential to a scheme on which some of those to whom she owed the greatest

complaisance had set their hearts” (*Mansfield* 138). She exercises caution in every situation and is not rash in making decisions because of the superego’s critical censoring on her ego.

It is significant that Fanny experiences a panic attack when Sir Bertram comes back home from Antigua. Although she isn’t a part of the play and is exempted from whatever dissatisfaction Sir Bertram may feel, yet “her agitation and alarm exceeded all that was endured by the rest, by the right of a disposition which not even innocence could keep from suffering. She was nearly fainting” (158). Fanny’s libido is largely unemployed and she suffers from a striking amount of fear which is a characteristic feature of “anxiety neurosis” (Freud, *General Introduction* 348). Fanny’s libido is suppressed from its normal use and through the harsh treatment of the superego on the ego, the impulse is diverted and released as anxiety. According to Freud, “sexual constraint goes hand in hand with a certain caution, while fearlessness and bold daring arise from free gratification of sexual desires” (*General Introduction* 345). This truth is evident in the behaviour of Fanny Price; since her libido is suppressed, there is sexual restraint which triggers a certain caution.

The interaction and conflicts amongst Fanny’s id, ego and superego “create personality” (Stangor 621). Due to the unsuccessful negotiation of the components of Fanny’s psyche, she becomes a disordered personality, living her life to get the approval of men. In suppressing her feelings, she is seen as being reserved and decent in the eyes of the world. But unconsciously, Fanny envies characters like Mary Crawford. Her repressed desires to act like them and enjoy the freedom they enjoy brings about envy and this translates into her seeming and secret condemnation of their character.

Elizabeth Bennet is surrounded by healthier sources of the superego as seen in the previous chapter. As earlier pointed, there are no records of the manifestation of unnecessary guilt in the personality of Elizabeth Bennet. Unlike Fanny Price, although Elizabeth’s id is suppressed, her ego did not experience the severity Fanny’s ego experienced, which is constantly being subdued in a “cruel

fashion". Nevertheless, for both Fanny and Elizabeth, as a result of a suppressed id, there is caution or sexual restraint in their behavioural manifestations. In other words, deep rooted fear acts as an unconscious motivation for both Fanny and Elizabeth's caution and sexual restraint, but in the former case it breeds sexual aversion and in the latter it is released in alternative positive forms. Elizabeth's effort in being very observant and assuming of the situations around her could be said to be as a result of a more positive "expectant fear" (*General Introduction* 348), since she "ascribes a dreadful meaning to all uncertainty" (348). In trying to get the intentions of Mr. Darcy as he listens to her conversation with Colonel Forster, she concludes that with his "satirical eye" (*Pride* 22), he listens so he can censure her. Elizabeth Bennet's excess libido makes her sensitive in a constructive manner. She foresees the doom and family embarrassment which Lydia Bennet is bent on bringing on her and the family. When she insists that her father speak and help curtail the excesses of Lydia Bennet before she gets "beyond the reach of amendment" (230), she exercises expectant fear and this brings a certain prudent caution in all aspects of her life. In her rejection of William Collins' marriage offer and her initial rejection of Darcy's offer, her caution again comes to bear. Elizabeth Bennet's fear, which is warranted, can be described as her "ego's instinct of self-preservation" (*General Introduction* 359). Elizabeth would possibly have ended a neurotic, just like Fanny Price, but for her ego, which is supported by healthy external influences. She remains in that stage between sexual restraint and general anxiety. By that, the desires of her id and superego are properly negotiated by her ego.

Freud claims the "neurotic disposition reveals itself by a decided tendency to real fear;" (*General Introduction* 354). What this implies is that neuroses may develop when an individual does not take proactive measures to curb it. In the case of Elizabeth Bennet, although the strength of her ego nourishes her with confidence, she still takes a 'decided' step in fighting against fear, unlike Fanny Price. For instance, when she comes in contact with the demeaning air Darcy Fitzwilliam exudes, she takes a

decided step to curb her fears of him by being impertinent as she declares; “if I do not begin by being impertinent myself, I shall soon grow afraid of him” (*Pride* 22). She also acknowledges a stubbornness about her “that never can bear to be frightened at the will of others.” (174). The development of what would have been said to be ‘anxiety neuroses’ is arrested as fast as the symptom develops, and by this she escapes the suffering of Fanny.

With the “expectant fear,” Elizabeth Bennet exercises caution in situations as she becomes very sensitive or conscious of the moral demands of her world. Her libido, which is denied of satisfactory relief and is partly accounted for by sublimation, brings about her “lively playful disposition which delights in anything ridiculous” (10). She channels her sexual energy into profitable relationships and activities.

### **3.2 The Feeble Superego and the Rise of “Bold Daring”- Mary Crawford and Elizabeth Bennet (Immoral Characters)**

As with Fanny Price and Elizabeth Bennet, the character formation and development of Mary Crawford and Lydia Bennet is traceable to the motivations deep within their unconscious. But unlike Fanny and Elizabeth, Mary Crawford and Lydia Bennet do not have the required impact of an active superego (representing their sense of “morality and oughts” (Stangnor) to suppress their ids through an interaction with the ego.

The components of Mary Crawford’s psyche are not successfully negotiated since the desires of her id are left unrepressed. Before moving to Mansfield Park, Mary’s home, London, is a decadent world. It influences and damages anything that comes in contact with it. In Tony Tanner’s words, “it is a world of glamour, excitement, activity, amusement and all the attractions of worldly wit and casual relationships; but we can also infer that it is a world of endlessly false appearances, a world in which

manner substitute for monarch, a world given over to cold deception, manipulation and exploration” (150).

From Fanny’s reserved point of view, “the influence of London [is] much at war with all respectable attachments. She saw the proof of it in Miss Crawford as well as in her cousins” (*Mansfield* 388). This coupled with the influence of Mary’s guardians, especially the admiral, who is described as a man of “vicious conduct” (35) affects Mary’s psyche since there is no superego to exercise moral censorship over the demands of her id through the ego. Since her id is largely left unsuppressed, Mary becomes immoral to the extent that she is not preoccupied with promoting the general welfare or making an effort to attain what is good.

The unsuppressed id of Mary Crawford and Lydia Bennet is largely behind their unconscious, unethical motivations. According to Freud, as previously cited, “sexual constraint goes hand in hand with a certain anxiety while fearlessness and bold daring arise from free gratification of sexual desires” (*General Introduction* 352). Lydia and Mary enjoy, to some measure, gratification of sexual desire and the accompanying fearlessness and daring arise in their conduct. Lydia Bennet for instance, is described with adjectives that paint the picture of one whom is bold, uncouth and fearless. She is described as having “high animal spirit and a sort of natural self-consequence” (*Pride* 44). In affirming the hopes of her mother that she becomes the first person the much revered Mr. Bingley dances with, she stoutly says: “I am not afraid; for though I am the youngest, I’m the tallest” (6); her inner conviction of being superior to her sisters is made manifest through this slip of tongue. Her boldness, daring nature and indifference to the dictates and norms of the society are an offshoot of relative “gratification of [her] sexual desires” (*General Introduction* 352). Her passionate love for men “in scarlet coat” (63) is symbolic. Red, which is a symbol of passion clearly reflects and portrays her untamed and unbridled id.

Without listening to the feeble voices of her superego, which sometimes comes in hushed criticisms from her father, or in the self-dignity of her two eldest sisters whose minds are more improved, Lydia Bennet runs wild in her desperation to satisfy the cravings of her id and this brings about her vitality, fearlessness and thoughtlessness. This invariably translates to the “bad” she becomes.

Mary just like Lydia is bold and fearless. She is lively and is always seen engaging in pleasurable activities. As she rightly states, she is not “born to sit and do nothing” (*Mansfield* 217). The narrator, in contrasting Mary’s liveliness to Fanny’s dullness, has this to say about the week which passed so quietly and peaceably at the great house in Mansfield Park: while it was “tediousness and vexation to Mary”, it was “tranquility and comfort to Fanny” (256).

Mary does not exercise caution or restraint to especially pleasurable situations like her moral counterparts. When about to relinquish Fanny’s horse to her, which she has used for exercise, Mary absolves Edmund of his fears of fatigue when she says: “No part of it fatigues me but getting off this horse, I assure you, I am very strong. Nothing ever fatigues me but doing what I do not like” (*Pride* 62). From her statement, we can infer that she has been allowed to act, talk and do the things she likes without fear of reprisal. Her superego is dormant or inactive and this brings about her vitality and fearlessness.

Mary Crawford is celebrated by the Miss Bertrams as being “gifted by nature with strength and courage,” (62). Her courage in dishing out her opinions even when uncalled for and in not being cautious at all is reflected in her hasty judgment over her brother, Henry Crawford’s sexual escapade with a married woman, Mrs. Rushworth. But for the marginal cooperation between her id and ego, Mary would have been as corrupt as her brother. Her ego regulates her id by way of displacement, that is, “the substitution of an unconscious object of desire by one that is acceptable to the conscious mind” (Abrams and Harpham 321). As we are told, Mary is an accomplished harpist; the harp is replete with sexual

desire since its shape represents the male or phallic symbol. To legalize that part of her id, which is the repository of her libido, she diverts her sexual desires to the harp; this is manifested when she consistently tells the Bertram's boys about the harp and also plays it when she is alone with Edmund especially. In diverting her sexual drives into a socially acceptable action, Mary Crawford's id is partly regulated by her ego.

Since her superego is largely inactive, and it is the morality principle, something close to the conscience, Mary Crawford ends up a conscienceless person. Even when Edmund walks out on her and makes it clear that he abhors her philosophy about life, all she does is smile and to Edmund, "it [is] a smile ill-suited to the conversation that has passed" (*Mansfield* 411). She ends up a symbol of moral decadence in the eyes of her world.

### **3.3 The Oppressive and the Liberal Superego – *Purple Hibiscus***

We can safely infer that the id of Eugene Achike is totally suppressed; his unfortunate position of being far away from home and in custody of a staunch abusive priest activates a judgmental superego which cruelly deals with the id through the tension it releases on the ego. Aunty Ifeoma on the other hand, whose character is a sharp contrast to that of Eugene Achike is very similar to Amaka, her daughter; just as Amaka is properly nurtured by Aunty Ifeoma, Aunty Ifeoma is lucky to have all the stability and balance the components of her psyche require. Aunty Ifeoma although catholic, is not a fanatical one; her willingness to go to a "heathen festival" (*Purple Hibiscus* 82), wear clothes that are most times considered sinful and become liberal to most issues of life already resonates with her balanced psyche.

The present characters are a little different from the previous characters studied. The character of Eugene Achike, which shares so many developmental processes with our previous moral characters, is also surprisingly immoral. Just like Fanny Price and Elizabeth Bennet, Eugene Achike's id is basically

suppressed by the superego, but the sources of his superego are chiefly cruel. The only form of punishment Eugene Achike talks about is one marked with abuse or violence.

Due to the demands of the id and the counter demands of the superego, there is tension between Eugene Achike's ego and the superego thereby causing the same unconscious sense of guilt as experienced by Fanny Price. Freud is of the notion that "as a child grows up, the role of the father is carried on by teachers and others in authority; their injunctions and prohibitions remain powerful in the ego ideal [superego] and continue in the form of conscience to exercise the moral censorship" (*Complete Works* 3123). Since Eugene leaves home at an early age, the priest he lives with occupies the place of a father figure in his life. The catholic teachings we are very certain he is privy to remains powerful in his ego ideal. His daughter, Kambili still remembers vividly how he had always talked about being taught things by the "Reverend Sisters and Priests...he would never have learned from his idol worshipping father" (*Purple Hibiscus* 55). All these created a very cruel superego whose "tension between the demands of the conscience and the actual performances of the ego is experienced as a sense of guilt" (*Complete Works* 3998).

Due to the harsh demands of Eugene's superego, he experiences a deep sense of guilt that propels him into violent actions as a way of assuaging it. According to the findings of June Tangney and her colleagues Jeffrey Stewig and Andres Martinez, "when people feel guilt about a specific behavior, they experience tension and regret...and this regret typically motivates reparative action – confessing, apologizing, or somehow repairing the damage done" (qtd. In Martinez 5). One could say that Eugene Achike chooses the latter. Since his superego is majorly influenced by religious teachings, his sense of guilt emerges when he is unable to get those around him to meet up with his religious obligations and when this happens, he almost always seeks a redress or looks for a way to make them pay for their sins.

This sense of guilt pushes him to take the place of God in his family affairs; he punishes violently all those who do not uphold his brand and level of catholic fanaticism. For instance, when his wife, Beatrice Achike expresses her preference of staying back in the car instead of fulfilling one of his rituals of visiting the catholic priest after mass, he gets irritated. Even after she obliges him and goes, despite the fact that she isn't feeling so well, he still carries out his violent act of beating her until she loses her baby. His sense of guilt, which is so strong still prompts him to "recite sixteen different novenas" (*Purple Hibiscus* 45) for someone who suffers from his brutality. The unwarranted beating of his wife is a reaction to his guilt complex of having sexual intercourse with her.

Eugene usually becomes sad after inflicting pains on his family. He cries, "tears streaming down his face" (*Purple Hibiscus* 201), when he relives his trauma by inflicting similar pains on his daughter. When he beats Kambili, to the state of being unconscious, just after pouring hot water on her feet, his guilt makes him cry and speak at the same time when he visits her at the hospital. His continuous violence towards his family, aside from being a way of appeasing his conscience, is also a way of reducing his sense of oppression. Freud, who added that most victims of guilt commit crime to mitigate their sense of oppression, captures the character of Eugene Achike; by committing his crime, "his sense of guilt was at least attached to something" (*Complete Works* 332). Since he sees himself as the head of his home according to the biblical injunction whose other demands he holds supreme, a mistake on the part of those whom he is priest over triggers his guilt, and this propels him into actions which he feels helps repair or make insignificant the damage that is done.

Stangnor hypothesized that "people who were abused in childhood are more likely to be anxious than those who had normal childhood" (685). Eugene Achike who had an abusive childhood suppresses his id as result of the harsh sources of the superego and this makes him suffer from anxiety disorder.

Anxiety disorder which is “marked by irrational fears, often of everyday objects and situations” (Stangnor 685) is a characteristic feature of Eugene Achike’s personality. His fear, which stems from the religion he has become so used to, is a fear of condemnation from the fires of hell. For instance, when he prays for his father, Papa Nnukwu, that he be saved from hell, he spent a considerable amount of time describing hell as though God “did not know that the flames were eternal and raging and fierce” (*Purple Hibiscus* 69). Throughout the course of the narrative, the only short time Eugene is pictured as very happy and relieved, “smiling, his eyes bright, his hand gently drumming the steering wheel” (*Purple Hibiscus* 115) is the time himself and his family went for confession. His joy could not be contained, he talked loudly about being “spotless” (*Purple Hibiscus* 115) and how they were “going straight to Heaven” (*Purple Hibiscus* 115) should God call them.

The fear of hell which loads his ego with anxiety triggers a disorder. When this disorder comes face to face with the daily stress he undergoes, he resorts to violence. His compulsive act of violence provides relief for him from his tormenting thoughts and fears. Stangnor also stated that people who suffer from anxiety develop compulsive behaviour because such acts “provide relief from the torment of anxious thoughts”. Aside from being compulsively violent, he embraces perfectionism and engages in unnecessary rituals he feels will increase his standing with God.

Aunty Ifeoma on the other hand is psychologically balanced. As earlier examined on the section on parental and early influences, Aunty Ifeoma’s superego’s censoring is not as cruel and demanding as that of Eugene Achike. The tension that triggers un-necessary guilt is non-existent and this results in the unrestrained “laughter” (*Purple Hibiscus* 99) which becomes her trade mark throughout the course of the narrative.

Aunty Ifeoma's parental and early influence comes also to bear on the negotiation and stability of the components of her tripartite psyche experiences. From all inferences, Aunty Ifeoma is the favourite of Papa Nnukwu. Papa Nnukwu, in expressing his gratitude towards her asks a rhetorical question: "where would I be today if my chi had not given me a daughter?" (*Purple Hibiscus* 91). When she says "you do not kill a husband you love" (*Purple Hibiscus* 82), we can also infer that she enjoyed a lovable relationship with her husband while he was alive. Possibly she sublimates the desires of her id through her pursuance of education. When Papa Nnukwu prays that his chi sends her a man, she quickly intones: "let your spirit ask chukwu to hasten my promotion to senior lecturer; that is all I ask" (*Purple Hibiscus* 91). Since the vitality of her id is channeled into acceptable channels, and the sources of the superego are just right, Aunty Ifeoma turns out healthily moral, spreading laughter and joy wherever she goes.

## CHAPTER FOUR

## ANXIETY NEUROSIS AND MORAL FEELINGS

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section will explore and explain the processes and clinical symptoms of anxiety neurosis. It will go a step further in confirming the clinical symptomology of anxiety neurosis in relevant characters. The second section will explore the validity of Freud's claims of anxiety, guilt and shame, being moral feelings. The difference between punishment and moral anxiety will be established and the inconsistencies or discrepancies in Freud's moral theory or hypotheses, brought to light.

### 4.1 Symptomatology of Anxiety Neurosis

Stangor defines anxiety as, "the nervousness or agitation that we sometimes experience, often about something that is going to happen" (676). He goes on to define anxiety disorder as "psychological disturbances marked by irrational fears, often of everyday objects and situations" (676).

Fanny Price of *Mansfield Park* and Eugene Achike of *Purple Hibiscus*, manifest glaring symptoms of anxiety neurosis. The character of Eugene Achike, which we've concluded to be a complex character, exhibits feelings of guilt, anxiety and shame. He ends up performing largely the works of immorality because there happens to be a weak connection between his moral reasoning and behavioural manifestations.

Freud, in explaining anxiety, posits that we have three species of anxiety and they are; realistic, neurotic and moral. He explains that these species of anxiety, "can be so easily connected with the ego's three dependent relations- to the external world, to the id and to the superego" (4720). Freud talks about different symptoms of anxiety neurosis, but we are going to take a look at two of these symptoms and how it is manifested in the behaviourism of relevant characters.

#### 4.1.1 General Irritability

General irritability, according to Freud, is the “accumulation or excitation or an inability to tolerate such an accumulation- that is, to an absolute or a relative accumulation of excitation” (*Complete Works* 339). It is a feeling of agitation, with a deep way of manifesting such feelings. For instance, Fanny Price manifests this symptom of general irritability when she moves into Mansfield Park: even after spending one week in her cousin’s house, “Fanny still sobs herself to sleep” (*Mansfield* 12). Aside that, whatever she touches in her cousins’ house, “she expected to injure, and she crept about in constant terror or something, or other, often retreating towards her own chamber to cry” (12). This excessive and pathological response to stimuli has been classified as a disorder by Freud.

Eugene Achike, who our study reveals as rather pathological, also suffers from an intense form of general irritability. Eugene who inflicts emotional, physical and psychological pains on his immediate family members, due to an uncontrolled anger which is triggered by his moral sensitivity, is a symptom of anxiety neurosis. The “swift, heavy thuds” (*Purple Hibiscus* 41) of violence his children have become so used to, are as a result of his lack of self-control. He also manifests general irritability when his children, Jaja and Kambili, are to go to Onitsha to visit their aunt. His intense anxiety of what would be the outcome of his children’s morality, causes his whole body to vibrate as a result of excitation. According to the narrator, as he waves them off, “his hands were shaking and [he] was crying” (*Purple Hibiscus* 117).

Elizabeth Bennet, who our study confirms as healthily moral, is free from general irritability. Although sensitive, her sensitivity was majorly triggered by an external relatable object. She experiences realistic anxiety, which is a reaction that “seemed intelligible to us, to a danger – that is, to an expected injury from outside” (Freud, *Complete Works* 4716). This realistic anxiety which she uses positively,

helps her in avoiding issues or problems that would have compounded and destroyed her life, as shown by our study. She is in control of herself and her emotions and is not induced to take unnecessary or excessive actions.

#### 4.1.2 Anxious Expectations

It is a “tendency to take a pessimistic view of things; but at every opportunity, it goes beyond a plausible anxiousness of this kind, and it is frequently recognized by the patient himself, as a kind of compulsion” (Freud, *Complete Works* 339). Freud goes further to explain that anxious expectation is also evident in the “inclination to moral anxiety, to scrupulousness and pedantry – an inclination which is so often present in people with more than the usual amount of moral sensitiveness and which likewise varies from the normal to an exaggerated form of doubting mania” (330).

In *Mansfield Park*, Fanny Price experiences anxious expectation during Bertram’s family’s visit to the Rushworths. She watched the growing attachment between Miss Bertram and Henry Crawford with anxious expectation. Her anxiety and negative expectation is captured in a symbolic expression that foreshadows what is to happen to Maria Bertram. When Maria Bertram eagerly follows Henry Crawford to the knoll, round the edge of the gate, without the key, Fanny who feels this is wrong as nudged by her ego, which is the seat of anxiety, shouts: “You will hurt yourself, Miss Bertram’...you will certainly hurt yourself against those spikes: you will tear your gown; you will be in danger of slipping into the ha – ha. You had better not go” (*Mansfield* 90).

Another instance of Fanny’s anxious expectation is captured in her regretful expressions, when she is being forced to feature in the theatrical play, “*Lover’s Vow*”. In reprimanding herself for not heeding to her instinct’s anxious expectations, by coming to watch the play, she laments thus: “why had

not she rather gone to her own room, as she had felt to be the safest, instead of attending the rehearsals at all? She had known that it would irritate and distress her; she had known it her duty to keep away” (156).

Eugene Achike in *Purple Hibiscus* manifests a serious form of anxious expectation. The violence Eugene Achike metes out on his family with impunity is a symptom of anxiety neuroses. His anxiety as regards their moral upbringing makes him exercise staunch and disciplinary actions on them, whenever he remotely thinks that they are going astray.

Elizabeth Bennet, in *Pride and Prejudice*, also experiences a rudimentary level of anxious expectation. Her anxiety, which is realistic, is connected to the external world, which helps in self-preservation and the preservation of those around her. For instance, when Mr. Bingley left Herfordshire for London, Elizabeth Bennet, who is so much aware of the growing attachment between him and her favourite sister, Janet Bennet, begins to entertain fear of the loss of such beautiful and healthy relationship. Her anxious expectations are not unfounded; she feared that, “the united efforts of his two unfeeling sisters and his over-powering friend, assisted by the attractions of Miss Darcy and the amusements of London” (*Pride* 131) might be too much for the strength of his attraction towards her sister. Her fears, which are not so frequent, find attachment with cogent reasons, as it relates to the environment she finds herself.

#### **4.2 Morality and Moral Feelings**

Sigmund Freud, during the course of his research work, focused partly on the feelings of anxiety, guilt and shame, and how these are the hallmark of moral feelings. In interpreting Freud’s works on

anxiety, Paul Alfred Hazard believes that Freud considers “guilt [as] a specie of anxiety and shame [as] a result of anxiety” (234).

Freud believes that moral individuals, are those who have suppressed their innate feelings to the point of being abnormal or experiencing anxiety neurosis. The superego, which is the morality principle, dominates the ego in the form of anxiety and guilt, and this, according to Freud, is the chief cause of hysterical behavior and neuroses. Freud states that “the tension between the demands of conscience and the actual performances of the ego is experienced as a sense of guilt” (*Complete Works* 3998); this tension between the conscience and the manifestation of the ego is ‘anxiety’. In the examination of the behaviourism and psychological manifestations of our moral characters, we discovered that at the foundation of their morality was not necessarily Freud’s moral feelings of guilt, shame and anxiety. In other words, there is necessarily no correlation between what Freud termed moral feelings and moral behaviours or manifestations.

The character of Fanny Price of *Mansfield Park* and Eugene Achike of *Purple Hibiscus*, share some striking similarities especially as it relates to their early/parental influences. While Fanny Price is lucky enough to get needed support and is able to use Freud’s idea of moral feelings of anxiety, guilt and shame to her advantage. Eugene Achike becomes a victim of his own feelings, becoming a pain in the neck, to his family and loved ones. There is basically no connection between his moral feelings and his manifestations.

Elizabeth Bennet and Aunty Ifeoma, on the other hand, who have minimal or no characteristics of Freud’s moral feelings, are able, to surprisingly draw a deep connection between their knowledge of moral values and their behaviour, without necessarily suffering from moral anxiety or having Freud’s moral feelings.

The fear of the superego is referred to as moral anxiety by Freud. This fear of the superego, shows the ego's dependent relationship on the superego and this fear, Freud insists, "should normally never cease, since in the form of moral anxiety, it is indispensable in social relations, and only in the rarest cases can an individual become independent of human society" (4723); here, Freud reiterates the need for moral anxiety in the development or focus of morality.

The character of Elizabeth Bennet and Auntie Ifeoma, debunk Freud's hypothesis of a deep connection between the severity of moral conscience and neurotism. He states that:

Something of this is present in every moral person. It is remarkable fact that the more moral he is, the more sensitive is his conscience. It is just as though we could say that the healthier a man is, the more liable he is contagions and to the effects of injuries. This is no doubt because conscience is itself a reaction-formation against the evil that is perceived in the id. The more the latter is suppressed, the more active the conscience (*Complete Works* 3967).

This 'active conscience', which Freud believes is the 'reaction-formation' of being moral is lacking in the character of Auntie Ifeoma and Elizabeth Bennet. Their ability to be clear headed in mastering their emotions as it relates to their activities and manifestations of morality is a pointer to their 'moral sincerity' and 'good conscience'.

David H. Jones, who did an eye-opening exploration of the discrepancies and ambiguity of Freud's hypotheses, especially as it relates to the development of morality and the work of the superego, is of the opinion that Freud's ambiguous use of moral terminology "is responsible for the erroneous interpretation of his theory of the superego" (35). He goes further to state that when Freud, talked about "the unconscious feeling of guilt and the need for punishment, it becomes clear that he was discussing

the anxiety due to the operation of the superego” (48). He believes that Freud was discussing anxiety, which to him is more of a ‘security feeling’ and not a ‘moral feeling’. From our studied characters, who largely do not support Freud’s hypothesis of a relationship between morality and the severity of conscience, we could agree partly with Jones that there are probably discrepancies in his theory of the superego and the development of morality.

Eugene Achike, for instance, who suffers great punishment from childhood, with a conscience so severe, is surprisingly unable to connect his moral values to his behaviour; Aunty Ifeoma and Elizabeth Bennet, whose conscience are not so severe, are able to project healthy moral behaviours.

The striking difference between the upbringing of Fanny Price and Eugene Achike, as against Elizabeth Bennet, and Aunty Ifeoma is severe punishment and fear induced teachings. Aside from the neglect Fanny and Eugene experienced, the latter suffered from severe punishment while the former from verbal abuse and intense intimidation; we can say that the feelings of anxiety, guilt and shame they developed was as result of a punishment anxiety as opposed to Freud’s perspective of a moral anxiety. Charlie Kurth, in differentiating moral anxiety from punishment anxiety, states that the former “concerns uncertainty about the correctness of a moral decision that you are contemplating,” while the latter, is simply the “uncertainty about whether you will be punished for a wrong you have done” (11).

Freud’s idea of moral anxiety is linked to fear of violating our own moral or societal codes. Moral anxiety, he suggested, manifests itself as guilt or shame. Gilbert Harman, in his evaluation of Freud’s insistence of morality, being a foundation for guilt or shame, is of the opinion that a ‘good moral person’ is one who is not necessarily susceptible to guilt. His evaluation on the healthy motivation for real morality is one which has a connection with the subject’s parental influences; according to him, in

bringing up morally good children, ones who are not susceptible to guilt, “it is enough for loving parents to refrain from punishment while helping children develop sympathy and empathy for others” (11).

Freud’s idea of moral anxiety resonates with Kurth’s definition of punishment anxiety; Harman’s insistence of a guiltless morality, illuminates Kurth’s definition of moral anxiety. For in the concerns and uncertainty about the correctness of a moral decision, guilt and shame are hardly related. Harman insists that “good moral” individuals could feel regret when they are unable to go through with their moral decisions but certainly not intense guilt, shame and anxiety that becomes a bane to an individual’s mental health. In retrospect, only severe punishment can lead to neurotism and not morality.

We may infer that Eugene Achike and Fanny Price are victims of punishment anxiety and this could be said to be an unhealthy morality. The trauma Eugene Achike experiences in the hands of the priest, the frequent teachings he is exposed to, as regards the fiery fires of hell, make him develop a forced morality, which is founded on the foundation of the fear of punishment. His inability to establish a connection between his moral values and behaviour, is as a result of the neurotism he suffers from the paralyzing effect of fear. Fanny Price, although sharing some similarities with Eugene Achike, is treated in a kinder way. The presence of Edmund in her life becomes enough motivation for a connection between her feelings and her moral behaviour.

Aunty Ifeoma and Elizabeth Bennet are the real moral characters. Their influences are based on moral values that are not coerced or forced and this makes them do the right thing, basically, “out of concern for principle [and not] because [they] would feel bad for not doing what is right” (Harman 26).

Yosi Yaffe, in his research on the relationship between corporal punishment and the development of anxieties, states that; “while high level of corporal punishment is harmful, moderate corporal punishment may be harmless to children in specific parental contexts” (1). He goes further to

expatiate on his observation that children who experienced high level of corporal punishment were more anxious.

Yaffe's truth is evident in the mannerisms of Fanny Price and Eugene Achike; the latter's experiences of gross negligence and physical abuse caused a damage in his mental health. The former narrowly escapes from what would have been a disaster because she experiences a lesser evil, when compared to that of her counterpart.

From our study, we can infer that guilt, shame and anxiety are not necessarily moral feelings. They are more 'reaction-formation' to severe or traumatic punishment inflicted on a growing child.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION**

A confirmatory analysis of the conduct of selected characters in Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* and *Pride and Prejudice*, and Chimamanda Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* affirms Freud's and Adler's theory that early/parental influences and unconscious motivations affect personality development, and

also debunks Freud's claims that moral individuals are psychologically disordered. The crux of this research work has been the exploration and confirmation of some aspects of the psychoanalytical theory. The first two chapters of the paper, demonstrate that the conduct of the characters under study affirm Freud's claims that intense early/parental influences on the id or superego and unconscious motivations such as the suppression or liberality of the id, and the interactions amongst the components of the tripartite psyche, affect personality development. The paper also confirms Adler's claims that early/parental influence of negligence produce a disordered personality.

In chapter four, we focus on anxiety neurosis and moral feelings. The chapter, which is divided into two segments, focuses on the clinical symptom of anxiety neurosis and the validity of Freud's claims of anxiety, guilt and shame, being the apex of morality.

Our study reveals that our unhealthy symbol of morality (Fanny Price), shares some similarities with one of our symbols of immorality (Eugene Achike). The influences which order Eugene Achike's behavioural pattern, are quite similar to Fanny's. It is however surprising that Eugene Achike is unable to establish a connection between his moral reasoning and behavioural manifestations. Our findings revealed that the harsh, punitive, physical abuse, suffered by Eugene Achike, makes all the difference.

Our study also reveals that Fanny Price and Eugene Achike suffer from Freud's moral feelings of guilt and anxiety. The claims of Freud of the hallmark of morality or true moral feelings, being the manifestation of shame, guilt and anxiety are not confirmed in the behavioural manifestations of our healthy symbols of morality.

Our healthy moral characters, Elizabeth Bennet and Aunty Ifeoma, whose upbringing is marked by a certain level of autonomy, rewarded with a balanced interaction amongst the components of the tripartite psyche have no confirmed manifestations or experiences of Freud's moral feelings. Since the

validity of Freud's moral feelings and how it affects moral characters wasn't confirmed, the difference between punishment anxiety and moral feelings, is further established.

From observation, we discovered that Eugene Achike, who is unable to establish a connection between his moral reasoning and behavioural manifestation, is a victim of harsh punishment and this is manifested in his disordered personality. The views of critics and researchers on differentiating moral anxiety from punishment anxiety, and bringing to limelight Freud's discrepancies and ambiguity in his theory of the development of morality, were considered. It is then safe to infer that victims of harsh, punitive physical abuse or cruel sources of the superego are the exhibitors of the feelings of shame, guilt and anxiety.

The study establishes a fact that the thinking faculties or psyche of humans, share some similarities, irrespective of difference in clime or era. Its further findings debunk Freud's claims that, moral individuals are psychologically disordered. The study brings vividly to the open the fact that Freud's moral feelings of guilt, shame and anxiety, are in actuality punishment anxiety or feelings and not moral feelings.

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