

REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
FIRAT UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
PROGRAMME OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE



A PSYCHOANALYTIC READING OF *BORN ON*
***A TUESDAY* BY ELNATHAN JOHN**
MASTER'S THESIS

Hassan Musa MUHAMMAD

NOVEMBER – 2022

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NOVEMBER
ELAZIG – 2022

DECLARATION

I have stated that all the information in my PhD Thesis titled " A PSYCHOANALYTIC READING OF *BORN ON A TUESDAY* BY ELNATHAN JOHN" which I prepared in accordance with the thesis writing rules of the Firat University Social Sciences Institute, is correct, that I have complied with the scientific ethical rules in the production and presentation of the information, and that I have cited all the sources I have used, I declare that I have specified all institutions/organizations and individuals with moral and moral support, and that I have never used the data and information I have presented here for the purpose of obtaining a title.

Hassan Musa MUHAMMAD



PREFACE

First of all, I would like to say Alhamdulillah. Allah has converted my fuzzy dream of earning a master's degree into a concrete reality. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my mentor-supervisor, Associate Professor Seda ARIKAN, who has supported me with her profound academic competence and professional expertise while writing this thesis. Her selfless, motherly attitude is valuable for the younger generation aspiring to be in academia. In addition to my supervisor, I feel indebted to the rest of the faculty members whose hospitality will forever remain green in my memory.

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My friends at home back in Nigeria, my coursemates at Firat University, and my colleagues at work have all contributed in one way or another to the realisation of my academic dreams. To all of you, I say thank you! Dr. Salis Adam (National Orthopaedic Hospital, Dala, Kano State – Nigeria), I am obliged to you.

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ÖZET

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Elnathan John'un *Bir Salı Günü Doğdu* Adlı Romanına Psikanalitik Bir Okuma

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Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları Anabilim Dalı

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, Elnathan John'un *Bir Salı Günü Doğdu* (2016) adlı romanına psikanalitik bir okuma sunmaktır. Nijerya'nın en ölümcül terörist grubu olan Boko Haram'ın amansız gaddarlığı, küresel toplumun dikkatini Batı Afrika alt kıtasındaki İslami aşırıcılığın yükselişine çekmiş ve sosyal bilimlerdeki bilim adamlarını İslami köktencilığa ve özelliklerine kulak vermeye zorlamıştır. *Bir Salı Günü Doğdu*, İslami köktencilığın bu özel versiyonunda yer alan sayısız dini, siyasi, ekonomik, sosyal ve psikolojik gücün karmaşık bir ağını tasvir ettiği için Boko Haram terörizminin mükemmellik fenomeninin edebi bir yorumudur. Bu çalışmada, *Bir Salı Günü Doğdu*'yu eleştirel bir şekilde incelemek ve hem özgün hem de aydınlatıcı bir bulgu ortaya çıkarmak adına edebiyat araştırmalarında psikanalizin kuram ve ilkelerinden yararlanan bir okuma yöntemi olan psikanalitik eleştiri kullanılmıştır.

Oedipus kompleksi ve savunma mekanizmaları teorisi gibi Freudyen psikanalitik kavramların ışığında bu çalışma, *Bir Salı Günü Doğdu*'daki karakterlerin davranışlarını inceleyerek şu soruya yanıt aramaktadır: Nijerya bağlamında İslami aşırıcılığın başlıca nedenleri nelerdir? Bu çalışma, etki etmekte olan diğer faktörlerin varlığını inkar etmese de çalışmanın bulguları İslami aşırıcılığın ana kaynağının insan psikolojisi olduğunu belirlemektedir. Son olarak bu çalışma, psikanalitik eleştirinin hem edebi metinlerin hem de yeterince anlaşılmayan toplumsal terör olgusunun başka bir şekilde erişilemeyecek köklerini ve anlamlarını ortaya çıkarmadaki büyük önemini bir kez daha göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Elnathan John, *Bir Salı Günü Doğdu*, psikanalitik eleştiri, Oedipus kompleksi, savunma mekanizması, İslami aşırıcılık, bilinçdışı.

ABSTRACT

Master Thesis

A Psychoanalytic Reading of *Born on a Tuesday* by Elnathan John

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Programme of English Language and Literature

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This study aims to offer a psychoanalytic reading of Elnathan John's novel *Born on a Tuesday* (2016). The relentless ferocity of Boko Haram, the Nigerian most deadly terrorist group, has drawn the attention of the global community to the rise of Islamic extremism in the West African sub-continent and compelled scholars in the social sciences to pay attention to the nature of Islamic fundamentalism in the African continent and its peculiarities. *Born on a Tuesday* is a literary interpretation of the phenomena of Boko Haram terrorism per excellence as the novel depicts a complex web of the numerous religious, political, economic, social and psychological forces involved in this particular version of Islamic fundamentalism. Psychoanalytic criticism, an insightful method of reading which utilises the theories and principles of psychoanalysis in studying literature, has been used in this study in order to analyse *Born on a Tuesday* critically and come up with a finding that is both original and revealing.

By examining the behaviours of the characters in *Born on a Tuesday* under the light of the Freudian psychoanalytic concepts such as the Oedipus complex and the theory of defence mechanisms, this study attempts to answer the question: what are the major causes of Islamic extremism in Nigerian context? Even though this study does not negate the existence of other contributing factors, its findings establish the psychology of the people (the governments inclusive) as the principal source of Islamic extremism. Finally, the study also re-affirms the paramount importance of psychoanalytic criticism in revealing the otherwise inaccessible roots and meanings of both literary texts and the poorly understood social phenomenon of terrorism.

Keywords: *Elnathan John, Born on a Tuesday, psychoanalytic criticism, Oedipus complex, defence mechanism, Islamic extremism, the unconscious.*

1. INTRODUCTION

For more than a century, psychoanalytic criticism remains a highly effective means for dissecting literary texts as it provides critics with a set of rare, invaluable tools. By using Freudian psychoanalytic concepts and theories such as the dream work, the Oedipus complex, and the theory of the unconscious, critics could examine not only the characters featured in the text but also the hidden motives of the author and the unconscious of the text itself (Barry 2009). The effectiveness of psychoanalytic criticism has been testified by the unrivalled acclaim with which the pioneering works written by Freud and the remaining theorists such as Dr. Ernest Jones were – and still are being – greeted. For example, by applying the theory of the unconscious to Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*, building on Freud's idea, Dr. Ernest Jones (1922) did challenge the traditional, mainstream interpretations of the play as well as offering an entirely original psychological/psychoanalytic perspective which was as intoxicatingly refreshing as it was incredibly illuminating. He attributed Hamlet's frustrating delay in carrying out revenge on his uncle Claudius to the former's unresolved Oedipus complex. According to Ann B. Dobie, the first work of psychoanalytic criticism was Freud's "Delusions and Dreams in Jensen's *Gradiva*," which he wrote in 1907. He also "wrote monographs on Dostoyevsky, Shakespeare, Leonardo da Vinci, Goethe, and others" (2012: 56).

The unique insight brought on board by the pioneer psychoanalytic critics made it impossible for literary theorists to ignore the invaluable contributions of psychoanalysis in widening the horizon of both reader/critic and writers of literary texts. Thus, psychoanalytic criticism had inevitably become a part of literary theory, and psychoanalysis became "a theory of the mind that can serve as an explanatory model for literature" (Mollinger, 1981:30).

Robert N. Mollinger comments:

In literature, perhaps more than in the sciences, psychoanalysis has found a discipline congenial to its own spirit. Literature and psychoanalysis are human-centered studies, exploring and expressing the depth of human character and the complexity of human relationships. In performing this task both focus on individuals—the particular patient or protagonist. (1981: i)

In the same manner, as an analyst cannot interfere in the patient's narration and has to, as required by ethics, listen patiently to the latter's story, a literary critic has to *listen* patiently to the characters as they *talk* about their experiences. S/he is expected to examine the ways in which the characters interact with one another in order to unearth the *real* motivations for their actions and inactions. In psychoanalytic criticism, characters' actions/inactions and reactions, attitudes and behaviours are subjected to a rigorously careful and technically pedantic analysis very similar to what a psychoanalytic practitioner applies to his patients in real life situations. No statement (joke, slip of the tongue etc.) is irrelevant as no story is ever considered extra. Without an iota of exaggeration, psychoanalytic critics seem to offer their characters the liberty to engage in *free association* at a higher extent than one can ever imagine in a clinical setting. Unless we are ready to allow the characters to voice out whatever occurs in their mind (especially related to their past i.e. childhood) without any shame, censoring or inhibition, will we then be able to achieve an authentic Freudian reading? Charles E. Bessler informs us about how Freud used to treat his patients stating that:

During psychoanalysis, Freud would have his patients talk freely in a patient-analyst setting about their early childhood experiences and dreams. When we apply the same methods

to our interpretations of works of literature, we engage in psychoanalytic criticism. (Bressler, 2011: 71)

Non-interference is an interesting peculiar feature of psychoanalytic criticism which is achieved through the use of free association. It makes psychoanalytic criticism an appropriate method to be used in reading Elnathan John's *Born on a Tuesday* (2016) for the protagonist of the novel – Dantala – takes to sharing his most personal childhood experiences and dreams with the reader, and he never censors or cares to rationalize his thoughts. "Listening to what people say, which is more or less what psychoanalysis consists of, should be a reminder of fellow feeling" (Phillips, 2001: xiv) and, in the case of literary characters, *listening* to them with an attentive ear of an experienced psychoanalyst practitioner is an indispensable tool for making psychoanalytic criticism. Thus, any of the conclusions arrived in this thesis has its genesis either directly derived from the characters' expressions, behaviours, or from their (re)actions.

To aid this study attain one of its ultimate goals – i.e. to bring the key reflections of Freudian theories found in the novel to the limelight, the protagonist-narrator is given the most accessible hand to indulge himself in saying whatever pleases him without the slightest effort of interference. He narrates to the reader the best, the worst, and the ugliest thoughts as they creep into the darkest corner of his unconscious mind. Dantala, the protagonist-narrator, never hides a thought, no matter how weird or immoral it is. He speaks with a similar passion to a neurotic patient who has been given a chance to use the Freudian free association. When he gets sexually aroused by Malam Abdul-Nur, he is not ashamed of telling the reader what happened. He goes beyond the cultural border which marks matters related to sex and homosexuality as taboo topics and he narrates his experience as follows:

The feeling was worse than what I feel when I need to shit and there is someone in the toilet—you have to walk over five minutes to reach the nearest bush outside the motor park. When he finally finished his speech and let go of my shoulder, I walked away quickly. I felt dirty as I sat on the far edge of the culvert near the taps in front of the mosque. I struggled to block out all the images flying through my head: good thoughts clashing with bad thoughts clashing with guilty thoughts, chasing each other until I felt dizzy. My balls felt swollen and painful. I wished I could just cut off the whole damn thing. Allah, forgive my thoughts, but I wondered at that moment why Allah put this thing in our bodies; I wished I was a woman. (Born 55)

It is not uncommon to find psychoanalytic criticism being labelled as an overly simplistic approach to literature which tends to offer sexually-oriented explanations for all of the complex human behaviours. This kind of attitude towards psychoanalytic literary criticism came into being, largely, as a result of the overuse and abuse of the paramount importance attached to the use of symbolism in Freud's pioneering works in both criticism and psychoanalysis. While this criticism has everything to do with numerous Freudian readings which were overloaded with sexual undertones and which tended to see the phallus in every pointing object/symbol in the text, it has nothing to do with the competency of this insightful method of reading literature. In fact, as Peter Barry puts it, "rather than being highly simplistic, [i]n reality, Freudian interpretation is a highly ingenious" way of doing literary criticism (2009: 94). It is with a view to avoiding any inclination towards this hackneyed form of Freudian criticism that this thesis casts aside all of the otherwise effective symbolisms found in *Born on a Tuesday*.

Even though it is counted as a weakness of psychoanalytic criticism that it treats characters as if they were real people, in actual practice, this should be one of its strengths because the entirety of literature's value lies in its intriguing relationship with reality. Most literary critics (regardless of their school or philosophy) tend to view characters as somewhat real for if they do not have the *privilege* to exist in our mundane reality, they do exist in the most priceless segment of our being—our imagination. The fact of the latter being an integral part of the former cannot be doubted by anybody who has been blessed with the slightest glimpse of the perplexing phenomenon of the humans' faculty of imagination.

For a psychoanalytic critic, it is not enough to merely describe how youths' unemployment could bring about insurgency or terrorism, or how the short-sighted government's policies could cause the former. The psychoanalytic critic goes deeper *into* the minds of both the youths and the governments and investigate their psychological motivations and thus, taking the question a step further from *how does unemployment results into aggression* to *why do the governments create artificial poverty through unemployment? Or why do the youth prefer violence to using numerous alternative means at their disposal?* In this sense, this thesis aims to analyze the individual psychoanalytic tendencies in terms of social and political issues.

Chapter One serves as a theoretical foundation of the whole thesis. It sheds light on psychoanalysis as a scientific discipline concerned with the workings of the human psyche as well as the psychoanalytic criticism from its inception discussing some of the key theories of psychoanalysis such as the dream work theory in which Freud began to rear the seedlings of the mutually beneficial relationship between literature and psychoanalysis. This chapter carries out a short survey into the birth of psychoanalytic criticism. Extremely influential and squarely pivotal is Oedipus complex in psychoanalysis, so the opening chapter of this thesis briefly traces the Oedipus complex to its Greek mythological origin as depicted by Sophocles in his classical *Oedipus Rex* and relates how Freud adopts and adapts it into psychoanalysis as well as how he later applies it unto the works of literature in particular and the art in general. It describes how Freud became not only the father of psychoanalysis but also the father of applied psychoanalysis in which psychoanalytic literary criticism remains a major branch in literary criticism. To achieve this, the intriguing nature of Oedipus complex entanglement with literature and the fact of its burgeoning from and withering in literature are both investigated.

Another crucial psychoanalytic concept highlighted in this chapter is the theory of the unconscious. Freudian theory of the unconscious argues that our psyche has two major parts: the conscious and the unconscious. Literary works, or more broadly the artistic creations, as Freud would have us believe, are the products of the unconscious mind. Perhaps nowhere Freud expressed the influence of the unconscious in relation to the creative writer than in *Creative Writers and Daydreaming* (Holland, 1990) where he postulates that child's play, daydream, and the literary work originate from the same source, i.e., the unconscious mind. They all have the same underlying cause and share the same ultimate goal of fulfilling the repressed wishes and desires. It is imperative for a psychoanalytic critic to put emphasis on the theory of the unconscious because “[o]nly through its effects do we come to know the unconscious” (Wright, 2003: 2). So, whatever a Freudian psychoanalytic critic achieves comes as a result of her/his success at exploring and examining those salient effects of the unconscious in the text. In a very systematic fashion and at every relevant juncture, throughout the course of this study, I aim to tie the text to the unconscious and its sister-theories. In other words, by discussing the theory of the unconscious, my unflinching effort to *weigh*

the novel on the scales of Freudian psychoanalysis is made viable. This approach has been complemented by the fact that *Born on a Tuesday* falls in the category of novels Freud describes as follows:

One feature above all cannot fail to strike us about the creations of these story-writers: each of them has a hero who is the centre of interest, for whom the writer tries to win our sympathy by every possible means and whom he seems to place under the protection of a special Providence. If, at the end of one chapter of my story, I leave the hero unconscious and bleeding from severe wounds, I am sure to find him at the beginning of the next being carefully nursed and on the way to recovery; and if the first volume closes with the ship he is in going down in a storm at sea, I am certain, at the opening of the second volume, to read of his miraculous rescue – a rescue without which the story could not proceed. The feeling of security with which I follow the hero through his perilous adventures is the same as the feeling with which a hero in real life throws himself into the water to save a drowning man or exposes himself to the enemy's fire in order to storm a battery. It is the true heroic feeling, which one of our best writers has expressed in an inimitable phrase: 'Nothing can happen to me!' seems to me, however, that through this 1 revealing characteristic of invulnerability we can immediately recognize His Majesty the Ego, the hero alike of every day-dream and of every story. (Freud, 2013: 9-10)

The protagonist of *Born on a Tuesday* has gone through the hell of all experiences; sometimes he emerges as the only survivor as he does when he comes out from military custody. Dantala, the protagonist of the novel perfectly fits the above description of an invincible hero whose unconscious directs his deeds. He is more or less the ambassador for the unconscious. To understand the analysis part in which the characters' unconscious motivations are discussed, this chapter concludes with Freudian views on three crucial aspects of a literary work, namely, the text, the author, and the reader.

The second chapter of this thesis explores the socio-cultural, economic and political, academic and professional background of the novelist. The chapter also attempts to enquire into the source(s) of the ideas in *Born on a Tuesday* while contextualizing the novel among the rest of the author's works. Because psychoanalytic criticism does presume the existence of both intrapersonal (psychological) and interpersonal (social) forces which exert some powerful influence on the text, it is imperative to carry out some investigations into the author's background. Take, for example, the fact that when we discuss the author's professional background as a writer, we get to know Elnathan John not only as a contemporary Nigerian novelist but also as a satirist who, as he puts it in the acknowledgement of his other book *Be(com)ing Nigerian: A Guide*, has been "in an abusive relationship" with Nigeria (2019: 5). It is scarcely possible, if not impractical, to appreciate an author's talents if you detach his works from its contexts or treat a particular work of his in isolation without positioning it in its due place amongst the rest of his oeuvres.

The subjects, which an artist portrays, and the ways in which he chooses to present them, are often determined by his patrons and by the conventions of his time. But they are also bound to reflect something of his own personality and personal history, although he himself may be unaware of any such connection. (Storr, 1989: 100)

Based on the foregoing, exploring the (con)textual backgrounds of the novel, studying the socio-political forces which did play both implicit and explicit roles in shaping the author's perception as well as serving as his source of inspiration can never be an irrelevant adventure.

In Chapter Three the novel's critical analysis begins. Here, as the chapter unravels, one of the most important theories of psychoanalysis, the Oedipus complex is explored with ample attention to its key elements. The Oedipus complex does not occur in a vacuum; it is an heir of a set of other psychological phenomena experienced by the child in the earlier stages of his development. The pleasure principle, for example, takes place as early as the infancy stage (Akthar, 2009: 212). To keep to the same sequence, the analysis begins by revealing the reflections of those behaviours which are characteristic of the pleasure principle before delving into the Oedipus complex in detail.

The pleasure principle is juxtaposed with the reality principle, and it is only through the implementation of the latter's demands and acting according to its dictates that the child is able to resolve the follies of the former and gets his ego well developed (Freud, 1920: 342). If the child is stuck (fixated) in the pleasure principle, he cannot progress well in his mastery of the reality principle. In other words, one's failure to adapt to the reality principle gives an unmistakable insight into one's poor performance in the pleasure principle. As for the question of how vital the two principles are in relation to the Oedipus complex, the answer is simple. The entire resolution of the Oedipus complex relies solely upon the child's aptness to embrace the reality principle: his ability to quit wishing for his mother as a romantic partner and his father as a rival, his ability to tame his emotions in the cage of reason and abide by the cultural/social orders. The aspects of the Oedipus complex explored in this chapter include hatred of and rebellion against the father (and constituted authorities by extension); love of the mother and mother fixation including its causes; and father-son feud as depicted in the novel *Born on a Tuesday*. Moreover, sound arguments have been outlined in order to establish all of the above-mentioned (aspects of the Oedipus complex) as clear manifestations of an unresolved Oedipus complex stemming from woeful mishaps in terms of coping with and acting in accordance with the reality principle. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the less well-known theory of Laius complex, which is both the opposite and partner of the Oedipus complex. If not viewed under the light of the Laius complex, the inimical attitude of the governments in *Born on a Tuesday* could not be psychologically contextualized and sufficiently captured.

Unlike Chapter Three, which attempts to excavate the elements of the Oedipus complex in the novel, Chapter Four continues the analysis in a more encompassing way by placing *Born on a Tuesday* in a broader context of psychoanalytic criticism. This is achieved by examining the novel once again in light of the Freudian theory of defence mechanisms. Since Chapter Three succeeds in establishing the 'fact' that Dantala, (the protagonist and a reasonable number of other characters in the novel) had had miscarriages in terms of his/their successful resolution of the Oedipus complex, it will not be illogical to ask the following question: how does he (and/or do they) cope with the harsh realities of life? In other words, on the backdrop of their proven failures to scale through the most important stage of human psychological development, how do they approach life and how do they paddle their way through the turbulent river of life. As far as psychoanalysis is concerned, the only option at their disposal is to resort to the use of defence mechanisms. It is based on this assumption that Chapter Four proceeds to analyze the novel by examining the various ways in which the major characters shield themselves from reality through the use of a variety of defence mechanisms.

In this thesis, I would like to demonstrate how the psychic conditions of the characters (in Elnathan John's *Born on a Tuesday*) direct, influence, and control their behaviours in both peace

and war, religious and secular lives. In other words, through the psychoanalytic reading of the novel *Born on a Tuesday*, this study examines the subtle psychological causes of Islamic fundamentalism in the Nigerian context as well as the reasons why the governments respond the way they do. The study argues that even though the roles of the tangible socio-economic factors in compounding the situation are significant, and are mainly brought to the front burner by commentators, the actual wellspring of the fundamentalist ideology lies in the psychology of the people in the novel – the terrorists, the security agents as well as the governments. This is achieved by exploring some of the key theories of Freudian psychoanalysis (such as the theories of defence mechanisms, the unconscious and the Oedipus complex) as deployed in the novel. This is simply true because “[t]he study of literature is,” as Freud puts it, “no longer – if it ever was – simply the study and evaluation of poems, novels and plays; it is also the study of the ideas, issues, and difficulties which arise in any literary text and in its interpretation” (qtd. in Thurschwell 2001: 9).



2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. The Emergence Of Psychoanalysis

The mind of human being is the greatest mystery of the universe. Without the former, the latter could not have been *brought into* existence, at least, as far as human being is concerned, because we are only capable of *knowing* – reality – that there is something *out there* owing to the fact that we have minds. The marvels of the human mind, how it works, what are its components and how those components relate to one another on the one hand, and how the mind as a whole relates to the body on the other hand, have always been an intrigue to philosophers, poets and scientists from the ancient times to our day.

In 1896, an Austrian physician, Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) launched an ambitious intellectual inquiry into this realm to develop a scientific discipline called psychoanalysis, a theory of the mind which could explain the entire mysteries surrounding the nature of the mind: its components, how they relate to one another and where each of them stands concerning – an individual's life in particular and the society in general – reality (Mollinger 1945: 32). In his *International Dictionary of Psychoanalysis*, Alain De Mijolla informs us that:

Sigmund Freud himself provided the most complete, and now the most classical definition for his invention, psychoanalysis: “Psycho-analysis is the name (1) of a procedure for investigating mental processes which are almost inaccessible in any other way, (2) of a method (based upon that investigation) for the treatment of neurotic disorders and (3) of a collection of psychological information obtained along those lines, which is gradually being accumulated into a new scientific discipline” (1923a [1922], p.235). This definition, intended for the Encyclopedia Britannica, is still widely used today by many psychoanalytic training institutes. (2005:1362)

Freud's ambition of developing psychoanalysis into a coherent scientific theory, as seen in the above excerpt, has a strong bearing on our aim in this part of the chapter. It has a direct significance on our modest attempt to trace the emergence of psychoanalysis. Unarguably, psychoanalysis started as an enthusiastic scientific discipline which aimed at mapping out the fundamental structure of the human psyche and unraveling the insidious relationship existing between the mental processes and psychopathological conditions such as *anxiety*, *neurosis*, *psychosis*, *hysteria*—the importance of the last condition, hysteria, can never be overemphasized concerning psychoanalysis as some scholars believe that it was “hysteria [which] led to the discovery of psychoanalysis” (De Mijolla, 2005: 772). Akthar states that “hysteria formed the focus of Sigmund Freud's earliest investigations” (2009: 135).

Freud “wrote that the best way to understand psychoanalysis was to study its history” (De Mijolla, 2005: 1362). This explicates the importance of studying the emergence and development of psychoanalysis as a prerequisite for having a good mastery of the theory. Our attempt at having a modest understanding of psychoanalysis by examining its emergence is ideally in line with Freud's recommendation. *Studies in Hysteria* (1895) – a book Freud co-authored with a fellow Viennese physician, Josef Breuer, who served to Freud both as a mentor and collaborator – was an extremely influential work, a pioneering text in psychoanalysis in which Freud asserts that the symptoms of hysteria are the result of unresolved but forgotten traumas from childhood.

Moreover, the justification for Freud's zeal to establish psychoanalysis as a science – an ambition that won Freud a score of sworn enemies among his contemporary medical practitioners in particular and the scientific/intellectual community in general – was to be found in both his academic and professional backgrounds. Trained as a neurologist, Freud could not have invested his invaluable talent into developing any theory outside the sacred dictates of modern positivist science. The “origins [of psychoanalysis] could be traced to the young Viennese doctor's medical practice who frequently treated nervous patients, for the most part described as suffering from hysteria,” De Mijolla ties back psychoanalysis to Freud's medical background (2005: 1362).

Before we steer our discussion into the key concepts/theories of psychoanalysis, it will do us some good service if we could examine some authoritative definitions of psychoanalysis in addition to those given by Freud, which are closer to the goals of ours in this thesis because, unlike both the students of psychoanalysis who are receiving training to become professional practitioners in the field and the actual practising psychoanalysts, our aim in this discussion is not the nitty-gritty, meticulous explanation of psychoneurotic symptoms nor is it a pedantic exploration of the best way of handling the analysands. To us literary critics, psychoanalysis is an invaluable instrument, a tool for dissecting the literary text because “[d]espite the charge that Freudian concepts cannot be applied outside the framework of the treatment and notwithstanding the superficial way they have indeed too often sometimes been used,” De Mijolla explains and goes on: “the fact is that *applied psychoanalysis* has profoundly modified our view of literature and the fine arts, of biography, and of sociological and political realities” (2005: 1364). Roberts N. Mollinger offers three apt definitions for psychoanalysis:

First, it refers to a theory of the mind and mental processes, how they have developed, and why people do what they do. *Second*, it is an application of that theory to the treatment of patients. *Finally*, it is the use of that theory to explain occurrences usually studied by other fields of enquiry, such as sociology, anthropology, and art. [...] My concern is primarily with the first and the third aspects of psychoanalysis, that is, with psychoanalysis as a theory of the mind that can serve as an explanatory model for literature. (1945:32, emphasis mine)

This thesis has shared the same concern with Mollinger as quoted above: we are inclined to the psychoanalytic discoveries not due to their (pseudo)scientific appeal but due to their incredibly illuminating insights into the nature of the human mind, the nature of language whether spoken or written (both literary and ordinary usages), and the nature of the literary works—their origin as well as their ultimate function in relation to the author and his/her society. Every theory, every philosophy, and every worldview has, as a matter of necessity, its key concepts and fundamental assumptions which define it and set it apart from others and which give it its peculiarities as a unique intellectual stance. Psychoanalysis is not an exception. Having explained, though very briefly, the emergence of psychoanalysis, we ought to say something about its key assumptions. So, we now set out to examine the key concepts/theories of psychoanalysis, especially those that are indispensable to understanding the metaphorical marriage between literature and psychoanalysis—psychoanalytic literary criticism.

2.2. Key Concepts/Theories of Psychoanalysis

Having had a solid foundation in the medical sciences, Freud was tireless in his attempt at conceptualizing ideas and developing theories which, as he believed, would provide the newly

invented science of the mind with all the necessary scientific demeanors not only to help psychoanalysis earn intellectual respect in the scientific community but also to elucidate some essential concepts for the professional practitioners (the analysts), the academia and the inquisitive general public. It is, therefore, very imperative for us here to shed some light on the most fundamental concepts/theories of psychoanalysis because, as Gregory Castle and Robert Eagleton put it, “Freudian psychoanalysis remains a powerful tool of literary and cultural theory” (2009: 201).

2.2.1. The Theory of the Unconscious

The theory of the unconscious is probably the most vital concept in psychoanalysis. It is the heartbeat of not only the Freudian model but also most of the significant alternative schools of psychoanalysis such as the Lacanian and Jungian. Whoever has an average knowledge of what Lacanian psychoanalysis is all about, knows the heavy theoretical weight which Jacques Lacan bestowed on language and its crucial roles in “creating” the subject and yet, for Lacan to achieve such an incredibly lofty height, he had to exploit the Freudian concept of the unconscious. That ‘*The unconscious is structured like a language*’, is among Lacan’s most well-known axioms. On the other hand, for Carl Jung’s concept of the *collective unconscious* appeared with an indelible influence to remind people of the Freudian unconscious. Then, what is the unconscious?

Freud’s essay “On the Unconscious,” published in 1915, became the first and undeniably the most, serious intellectual cogitation attempting to offer a scientific, or at least, a highly cogent explanation of the existence of *the unconscious*. The human mind, Freud would argue, consists of two segments: the unconscious part which is unimaginably huge and, its relatively tiny counterpart, the conscious mind. To lucidly illustrate this proportional relation between the two divisions of the psyche, Freud came up with the *iceberg metaphor* in which he likened the conscious mind to that tiny tip of the iceberg seen above the ocean while equating the unconscious mind with the gigantic, massive part of the iceberg lying deep beneath the sea. However, this division is not sharp nor did Freud ever try to suggest the presence of a finely drawn border between the two. In fact, a closer reading of Freud’s conceptualization of the unconscious will entirely undo the assumption of having the conscious/unconscious divisions in a static material fashion. Freud explains:

We will compare the system of the unconscious to a large ante-chamber, in which the psychic impulses rub elbows with one another, as separate beings. There opens out of this ante-chamber another, a smaller room, a sort of parlor, which consciousness occupies ... on the threshold between the two rooms there stands a watchman. (Freud, 1920: 282-283)

But for better or worse, this *watchman* is – just like the majority of the Freudian concepts – subject to a number of many different interpretations, even by Freud himself, so for the psychoanalytic commentators. In the book, *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, Freud paraded the *watchman* as a psychological phenomenon of *resistance*; whereas, somewhere else when explaining what lies between the conscious and the unconscious minds, Freud refers to the watchman as *preconscious*. There are more names and more descriptions of this barrier but what matters for us now is establishing the fact that the conscious and the unconscious are not purely distinctive in their compositions or utterly independent in their operations. The fact that is worth stressing here is that pieces of thought and bits of feelings and “the psychic impulses rub elbows with one another” (Freud, 1920: 282) in the psychic cosmos of the human mind, and Freud never

relents to draw our attention that even the phenomena of “the consciousness or unconsciousness of a psychic process [is] only one of its attributes, an attribute which is, moreover, not necessarily unequivocal” (Freud, 1920: 282). Moreover, “[b]ecause the conscious mind is not aware of its submerged counterpart it may mistake the real causes of behavior. An individual may be unable to tell the difference between what is happening and what she thinks is happening” (Dobie, 2012: 52).

Although the existence of the unconscious cannot be firmly established using material scientific methods, the unconscious does not cease to constantly pop its head out in our daily experiences, including the most sensitive times such as on the battlegrounds and in the most cordial and relaxed settings like familial conversations at the dining table.

A criticism of the theory of the unconscious is that libidinal instincts, repressed deep in the unconscious, are accepted as the main motives of human beings. This is very unsettling for the whole project of human refinement because every single civilization is presumed to be founded on the superiority of human reasoning and, our conscious reasonable actions, which set humans as *superior* to all other species on this planet. Consequently, it is very understandable that no one, or more properly, only a tiny percentage of human beings would like to admit that their conscious actions are being governed by their unconscious thoughts and feelings. According to Freud, even the denial of the influence of the unconscious is itself a clear manifestation of the unconquerable power of *the unconscious*. Freud argues convincingly:

Let anyone in the world account for these facts in a more correct scientific manner, and we will gladly withdraw completely our assumption of unconscious psychological processes. Until then, however, we shall continue to use this assumption, and when anyone wants to bring forward the objection that the unconscious can have no reality for science and is a mere makeshift, (*unefaçon de parler*), we must simply shrug our shoulders and reject his incomprehensible statement resignedly. (1920: 264)

The most important thing here, therefore, is not giving up the theory merely because it cannot be said to exist in the same manner as does the Newtonian theory of gravity; rather, the most important thing for us is to keep on digging deep into our psyche and subject our findings to the rigorous scientific methods till we are able to accurately establish the existence of the unconscious “in a more correct scientific manner” (Freud, 1920: 264). One of the many reasons which make many people uncomfortable concerning the theory of the unconscious is to be found in answer to the following question: What is the content of the unconscious?

When defining psychoanalysis, Gregory Castle and Robert Eagleton write, it is “a school of thought and a psychotherapeutic method that assumes a division in the mind between the conscious and the unconscious, which Freud conceived of as a realm of repressed memory, desire, and instinct” (2009: 197). If the unconscious houses the infantile sexual desires and repressed horrible, anti-social thoughts and wishes, then it is not surprising to find many people –even among the intellectuals – struggling to come to terms with the reality of the unconscious. However, that vehement denial is nothing but an effective means of shielding oneself from the dreadful attack waged by – the abominable thoughts, ideas and feelings contained in – the very phenomena of the unconscious. Here lies what could be called the paradox of the unconscious: the unconscious is always unconsciously denied. Jose Luis Valls captures this point brilliantly as follows:

The unconscious is one of Freud’s crucial discoveries, perhaps the most important. Although it is a concept mentioned in philosophy, it had never been conceptualized with Freud’s scientific precision. We could say that it gave birth to metapsychology, a field of

psychology that includes the unconscious within its conception of psychical phenomena, and a theoretical branch of psychoanalysis. Unconscious has several meanings. As a noun, it is a place in the psychical apparatus described by Freud in his first topic, a place nearly limited at that theoretical moment to repressed wishes and the hereditary, ruled by primary process and the pleasure principle. [...] has its own mechanisms, forms of functioning, and its own laws (primary process ruled by the pleasure principle, mechanisms of condensation and displacement of libido among thing-presentations in order to reach perceptual identity rapidly). (Valls, 2019: 358)

Thus, according to Freudian theory of the unconscious, our conscious actions (as well as reactions) are the result of the forces we are neither aware of nor are we intellectually, and mostly, strong enough to admit their existence when they are revealed to us via the help of an analyst. In other words, according to Freud, our unconscious mind has an extremely greater sway of influence on our decisions, behaviours, actions and reactions than the conscious mind.

2.2.2. The Theory and the Concept of Dreamwork

Despite all the incredible breakthroughs in medical and natural sciences, in the face of all the marvellous advances in astrophysics, neuroscience, nano-technology and information and communication technology, the human being remains weak at some points in respect of establishing – with absolute certainty – the facts surrounding a simple, normal and ordinary daily phenomenon of the dream. “Dreams are”, according to Freud, “the removal of sleep-disturbing psychic stimuli by way of hallucinated satisfaction” (Hall, 1920: 127). The ideas about dreams are as old as the human species. This led to the emergence of a plethora of theories with each trying to offer valid explanations of why we dream. Among many theories of dreams, three stand out not just as the most popular, but as the most plausible. These are as follows: (1) *The Dreams-for-Survival Theory* (based on Darwinism); (2) *The Activation-synthesis Theory* (based on Neuroscience) and (3) *The Unconscious Wish Fulfillment Theory* (based on Freudian psychoanalysis) (Feldman, 2019: 272). Our thrust will be thrown entirely on the last one, i.e. the Unconscious Wish Fulfillment Theory developed by Sigmund Freud in 1900.

In the Freudian theory of the human psyche, our mind is composed of three parts, namely: the conscious, the pre-conscious, and the unconscious. The conscious mind is the most familiar aspect of our being among the three psychic quarters. Freud describes it as the “core part” of the “ego,” it is our social self and the aspect of our mental life that we readily acknowledge (Valls, 2019: 72); the pre-conscious, which is “born together with language acquisition” serves as a sort of “mediator” between the conscious and unconscious and its crucial role is to provide inhibitory support for both and protect a direct encounter between the two (Valls, 2019: 247); whereas, the unconscious, despite it’s being “one of Freud’s crucial discoveries, perhaps the most important (Valls, 2019: 357), is a notoriously hidden *place*, full of dark desires and repressed wishes, infantile and incestuous sexual feelings. According to Freud’s favourite *iceberg metaphor*, the vast majority of our psyche lies in the unconscious region. Because it operates on *the pleasure principle*, the unconscious is, as Freud puts it, the seat of the Id.

If “the unconscious is the realm of repressed memories and emotions” (MacIntyre, 2004: 50), then the importance of the unconscious in the *Wish Fulfillment Theory of Dreams* (and in psychoanalysis generally) cannot be over-emphasized. As we have seen above, the contents of the

unconscious include repressed wishes and desires, infantile sexual feelings and loathsome attitudes towards the parents. The unconscious is a mongrel pot of anything – such as thoughts, feelings, wishes, and desires – abominable. It is this type of wild and repressed wishes that fill up our unconscious, and that we *release* in the dreams with the single aim of getting satisfaction and fulfillment. In other words, according to the *Wish Fulfillment Theory of Dreams*, dreams occur as a result of our incomprehensible and uncontrollable unconscious desire to satisfy our repressed wishes which are found in *the unconscious*. Freud also believes that “all dreams have meanings that are accessible through the application of the psychoanalytic technique [i.e. dream-work]. This is the essence of Freud’s dream theory”, (Blass, 2002: 107).

We have seen what a dream is according to psychoanalysis, but what is a dream-work? To answer this question effectively, we must dismantle the dream and see its compositions. Every dream contains two major components namely *the latent content* and *manifest content*. Those occurrences and events that we can vividly recall and narrate after waking up belong to *manifest content*, whereas, the others that we can barely say anything about fall under *the latent content*. However, it is worth noting that the content of the dream is not shared equally between *the latent and manifest contents*. The manifest content is extremely minute when contrasted with the latent content (Hall, 1920: 161). This could explain why we dream (as we all know that, naturally, dreams always come in form of a cluster, a mass of fragmentary visions) and wake up in the morning, and remember just a scene or nothing at all. We even care less about remembering our dream because forgetting them is the easiest thing to do (Freud, 1955: 75).

Dream-work is an unconscious operation that has to do with “decoding” and “encoding”, “ciphering” and “deciphering” that constantly takes place in our psyche simultaneously as we dream as well as during the process of its narration (Valls, 2019: 85). Dream work involves all of the mental processes through which the dream contents get sifted from the latent content to the manifest content. Therefore, dream-work is “responsible for the transformation of the thoughts underlying the dream into the dream itself” (Blass, 2002: 103). Freud sums up the foregoing aptly thus: “Dream-work is a process of a very peculiar sort, the like of which has hitherto not been discovered in psychic life” (qtd. in Hall, 1920: 172). Freud considers dream-work a phenomenon to be analyzed, “which richly repays our efforts in the field of psychoanalysis” (qtd. in Hall, 1920: 172). Dream-work is one of the reasons why psychoanalysis is still considered important today (Castle et al., 2011).

As we have seen in the preceding discussion of the dream-work, the dream content is always divided into two: the latent content and the manifest content. The manifest content or the manifest dream (which is an extremely tiny portion of the entire content of the dream) is a product of dream work “consisting of condensation, displacement, symbolism and secondary revision” (Akthar, 2009: 164). Although the analyst relies on the dreamer’s oral account of what happened in the dream, she does not take every bit of it for granted because, despite its contribution in providing some crucial hints, it does not offer a precise description of the events in the dream. A very small but significant exception here is “the appearance of the early childhood trauma in undisguised form [...] in the manifest dream” (Akthar, 2009: 164).

The latent content has the lion’s share of the dream content. Although it is considered the “original” idea of the dream thought, the latent content is not easily accessed without the help of a professional psychoanalyst/dream interpreter. Even after giving a dream a rigorous professional psychoanalytic interpretation, the latent content should not be assumed to have been exhausted (or

that the dream has been fully understood) because such an exercise is never feasible (Akthar, 2009: 84). In other words, no matter how hard we attempt to analyse *the latent content*, we will never achieve the final – the absolute and complete – analysis because dreams are, as Freud is popularly quoted to have remarked, a royal way to the unconscious.

Besides the manifest and latent contents of the dream-work, the process of it is also explained by Freud. Plentiful processes are involved, many mechanisms are put together and a series of psychological schemes are responsible for dream-work. It is advisable to limit our discussion to the fundamental four which are as follows: (1) *condensation*, (2) *displacement*; (3) *symbolism*, and (4) *secondary revision*. The first three “condensation, displacement, and universal symbolism are the pillars of dream work” (Valls, 2019: 85).

Just as the dream content is divided into two: the latent and the manifest contents, so the dream-work involves the use of two primary mechanisms *condensation* and *displacement*. In *The International Dictionary of Psychoanalysis*, Alain de Mijolla states that: “In displacement, one assigns to link A in a chain of associations the intensity initially associated with link B. Condensation, in contrast, operates by bringing intensities together” (2005: 324). In linguistic terms, *condensation* has always been equated with *metaphor* whilst *displacement* is taken to be *metonymy*. These two mechanisms are essential and the entire thrust of the dream-work relies on them. This analogy is excellent because when a metaphor is used, a significant number of qualities/features are condensed and, upon unraveling those condensed characteristics not only do the links between the two persons/things become more evident they also become stronger. But, a metonymy simply discharges an enormous wit by displacing one thing/part with another. Freud mentions three types of condensation as follows:

Condensation occurs in the following ways: (1) Certain latent elements are entirely omitted; (2) only a fragment of the many complexes of the latent dream is carried over into the manifest dream; (3) latent elements that have something in common are collected for the manifest dream and are fused into a whole. (Hall, 1920: 162)

On the other hand, Salman Akthar in his *Comprehensive Dictionary of Psychoanalysis* defines *displacement* as a “psychic energy [which] can be redirected from one idea to another...[it] underlies the formation of symbols, symptoms, and the manifest content of dreams.” Akthar explains further that “displacement subsumes four types of unconscious shifts: (1) ideational displacement; (2) relational displacement; (3) affective displacement and (4) temporal displacement” (2009: 82).

Throughout Akthar’s page-long explanation of *displacement*, with all its types and forms as elucidated by the classical Freudian scholars, a single fact remains intact: there is always a substitution of one thing for another. This makes displacement a primary mechanism/process, a part and parcel of the dream-work. For example, symbolism is so essential that it is impossible to attempt interpreting a dream (whether as a professional or just as a layman) without paying a special attention to the symbols which appeared in the dream. The symbols in dreams largely work through displacement; displacement also plays active roles in both *dream distortion* and *dream censorship*. In fact, even the mechanism of *sublimation* is seen by many scholars as a by-product of *displacement* (Rycroft, 1995: 69).

Symbolism refers to the use of one thing to represent another. Psychoanalysis makes intensive use of symbols both from within and without the dream work. However, what makes

symbolism all the more critical in dream-work is the visual nature of the dream, as symbols are exclusively visual too. Charles Rycroft writes that:

The two cardinal characteristics of symbolism in this strict [psychoanalytic] sense are (1) that the process is completely unconscious ... and (2) that the affect investing the symbolized idea has not, in so far as the symbolism is concerned, proved capable of that modification in quality denoted by the term "sublimation". (1995: 209)

In *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* (a collection of Freud's lectures), Freud does dedicate a whole chapter/lecture (10) to the discussion of symbolism in a dream. An excerpt from the lecture reads as follows:

The number of things that find symbolic representation in the dream is not great—the human body as a whole, parents, children, brothers and sisters, birth, death, nakedness and a few others. The only typical, that is, regular representation of the human person as a whole is in the form of a house, as was recognized by Scherner who, indeed, wished to credit this symbol with an overwhelming significance which it does not deserve. It occurs in dreams that a person, now lustful, now frightened, climbs down the fronts of houses. Those with entirely smooth walls are men; but those which are provided with projections and balconies to which one can hold on, are women. Parents appear in the dream as king and queen, or other persons highly respected. The dream in this instance is very pious. It treats children, and brothers and sisters, less tenderly; they are symbolized as little animals or vermin. Birth is almost regularly represented by some reference to water; either one plunges into the water or climbs out of it, or rescues someone from the water, or is himself rescued from it, i.e., there is a mother relation to the person. Death is replaced in the dream by taking a journey, riding in a train; being dead, by various darksome, timid suggestions; nakedness, by clothes and uniforms. You see here how the lines between symbolic and suggestive representation merge one into another. (Hall, 1920: 144)

There are too many dream symbols and their potentials explained in that chapter. For example, when Freud discusses the symbols used for the genital organs of both sexes, as the list gets lengthier, the items get bewildering and even paradoxical at times. But for our immediate goal, the above at least give an idea about how Freud perceives symbolism and its unparalleled significance in dream-work.

Secondary revision is the last mechanism of the dream work according to Freud's wish fulfillment theory of dreams. It does some sort of unconscious pruning to the entire dream thought. The latent content, after undergoing all series of condensations, and displacements, after getting the intra-psycho symbolism that takes place in the vaguest cellar of the dreamer's unconscious poured out to her consciousness, a very systematic mental revision invariably happens in order to reduce the mass of all of these psychic phenomena into what could be comprehended by the dreamer's consciousness first, for him/her to be able to communicate it to the analyst later. Without the aid of the secondary revision, we will not be able to get that well-patterned thought to be narrated after waking up from sleep. Put more plainly, without the aid of the *secondary revision*, we will not get the *manifest content*.

The significance of the secondary revision in dream-work will be appreciated if its crucial role of transforming ideas from the latent content into the manifest content is properly acknowledged. It is through the secondary revision that the "dream facade is improved to provide a plausible meaning" (de Mijolla, 2005: 437) as it does some necessary unconscious pruning rearranging the thoughts into a format that could be managed by the conscious mind. Because it is only through secondary revision that the dreamer's mind is able to absorb and generate the manifest

content, and interpretation/analysis of dream cannot be realised without the manifest content (if the dreamer cannot remember anything, then there is nothing to interpret). It is safe to conclude that the secondary revision a crucial pillar of dream-work theory.

2.2.3. The Oedipus Complex

Before the advent of psychoanalysis, “Oedipus” used to be a mythical hero in the ancient Greek culture based on the *Riddle of Sphinx*. The ancient Greek playwright, Sophocles, popularized the myth in his classical play *Oedipus Rex* (5th Century BC). In the play, King Laius’s wife, Queen Jocasta, gives birth to a baby boy whose destiny, according to an oracle, was to kill his own father and marry his own mother. In order to avert this horrendous fate, King Laius ordered that the infant be taken to the bush, to be killed there. The servant did not carry out the King’s order because he kept the baby Oedipus in the jungle to be rescued by a hunter. The hunter named the baby Oedipus. Despite all of their endeavours to ward off the prophesized calamity, as the play reaches its climax, the oracle’s prophecy comes out. Oedipus murders his father, King Laius, and marries his mother, Jocasta. That is the play – *Oedipus Rex* – through which the Greek playwright Sophocles immortalised the Greek myth of King Oedipus.

Freud’s theory of the Oedipus complex was heavily influenced by Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* (Castle et al., 2011: 405). However, in psychoanalysis, the Oedipus complex (*kernkomplex*) is a more technical concept as it encompasses all of the ambivalent psychological phenomena experienced by a child in relation to the parents: a boy, Freud believes, tends to harbour a sexual desire for his mother while hating and fearing his father for being a dangerous and more powerful rival, but a girl directs her hatred towards her mother while being covetous of her father’s love and attention; however, Freud later modified his views in respect of the girls (Ellmann, 1994: 12). It is vital here to stress that in Freudian terms, the words *sex* and its derivative *sexual* are far more technical than their usual dictionary definitions. Rather than restricting their meanings to adulthood sexual connotations, Freud uses them to describe the totality of the child’s libidinal instincts such as the need to feed and the need to excrete. Consequently, many commentators prefer further to qualify the words/phrase as infantile sexual desire. Due to its high place in psychoanalysis, Freud considers the Oedipus complex to be the most critical aspect of the child’s psychological development.

It is necessary to highlight the five stages of psychological development according to Freudian psychoanalysis because some of them not only serve as the predecessors of the Oedipus complex but also as the determinants of its resolution. The stages are as follows:

1) The Oral Stage

The oral stage lasts from birth to 18 months when the mouth is the pivotal spot (or rather part) of the baby’s body that provides it with pleasure primarily through sucking its mother’s breast.

2) The Anal Stage

The anal stage begins from the 18th month to the 3rd year of the baby’s life, and the anus becomes the key erogenous zone of all the body parts. Children tend to derive pleasure from defecating at will.

3) The Phallic Stage

The phallic stage, which corresponds with the Oedipus complex, covers the ages of 4 to 6 in the child’s life. In this stage, Freud believes, children begin to experience sexual pleasure from masturbation, and playing with their private parts. Oedipus complex, typically, takes place

(between the periods of 4-6 years) during the phallic stage, which is the third stage of the child's psychosexual development. It is immediately followed by the latency period.

4) The latency stage

From the age of 7 until about 11-13, the child goes through the latency stage in which s/he begins to realize the fact that his/her ambition of having the parent as a lover is realistically unachievable. The boy and the girl begin to operate on the reality principle, and the Oedipus complex begins to dissolve.

5) The Genital Stage

The genital stage starts at puberty and ends with the man's death. The genitals now, for the second time, become the real source of sexual pleasure and, due to the dissolution of the Oedipus complex before this stage, the sexual energy is now directed towards outside, not to one's mother [or father] (Valls, 2019). Freud's description of the Oedipus complex is as captivating as it is authoritative. He writes:

The son as a small child, begins to develop an especial tenderness for his mother, whom he has considered as his own property, and feels his father to be a rival who puts into question his individual possessions, and in the same manner the little daughter sees in her mother a person who in disturbing element in her tender relationship with her father and who occupies a position that she could very well fill herself. One learns from these observations to what early years these ideas extend back—ideas which we designate as the Oedipus complex because this myth realises with a very slightly weakened effect the two extreme wishes grow out of the situation of the son—to kill his father and take his mother to wife. (Freud, 1920:195)

This detail from the master theorist covers every aspect of the concept of the Oedipus complex, which tensely portrays the love rivalry that exists between the child and opposite-sex parent meaning the son feels that his mother belongs to him alone and cannot share her with his father while the daughter feels the same against her mother. "The selection of the mother as the object of love," writes Freud, "involves everything we understand by the Oedipus complex" (Freud, 1920: 315). This collimates to the animosity that makes the child in that period contemplate murdering his parent of the opposite sex which might be expressed or even achieved symbolically. It does not have to happen in the way it did in the myth of Oedipus the king of Theban, but the universal phenomenon of the Oedipus complex permeates the entire child-parent daily relationships. Its traces could easily be found in words, emotions, feelings and other forms of interactions with the parents.

To round up our discussion of the Oedipus complex naturally, we need to stress the following points briefly. The Oedipus complex has two essential pillars namely the hatred of the same-sex parent and the infantile sexual desire directed at the parent of the opposite sex. In other words, the concept of the Oedipus complex revolves around two heinous crimes (incest and parricide) both of which are considered by almost all cultures and civilizations of human beings not just as cardinal sins but also the greatest taboos of all time (Freud, 1920: 321). The Oedipus complex may take one of two formats, negative or positive. In the positive format, the child will harbour inexplicable hatred of the parent of the same sex while showing unrestrained love to the parent of the opposite sex; whereas, in the negative format, the child will keep loathing the parent of the opposite sex while "expressing" liking and endearment to the parent of the same sex (Valls, 2019: 225).

The dissolution of the Oedipus complex occurs due to *castration anxiety*, the male child fears that his father might discover his strange infatuation for his mother and consequently punish him

by cutting off his penis. It is the castration anxiety that helps the male child to *crossover* the delicate bridge of the Oedipus complex by burying his desire for the mother and identifying with the father. It is also the Oedipus complex that aids young adults in acknowledging the laws of the society by recognizing the prohibitions to begin to adjust and face the reality of life. They begin to utilise *repression* to avoid conflict with society (Castle et al., 2011: 405).

At the heart of the many criticisms of Freud's theory of the Oedipus complex lies the accusation of misogyny—the unfair and unreasonable hatred/contempt for women. It was not without great pressure that Freud took a U-turn later and included the girl child in his theories of psychosexual development in general and the Oedipus complex in particular. Even when he later managed to find some spot for the girl, Freud's overall attitude to women—"including women's tendency towards 'affectualization', 'penis envy', weaker superego, and lesser contributions to human civilizations"—is mainly accepted sexist (Akthar, 2009: 110). This mishap was, however, avoided by most of the classical psychoanalysts, who based their opinions on their clinical findings (De Mijolla, 2005: 254). Some researchers who deemed it necessary to help psychoanalysis get rid of misogyny and the accusation of undermining the conventional family system avoided the sexual/gender connotation altogether (De Mijolla, 2005: 285).

Finally, if the Oedipus complex is, as Freud would argue, a universal phenomenon of cardinal importance in the psychosexual development of human beings, what awaits those of us who did well in it? In other words, what rewards are reserved by nature or society or both for having a victorious completion of the Oedipus complex? Or better still, what is the fate of those who did not triumph well, those who were caught up in the trap of *father/mother fixation*? What is their fate? Akthar has an apt answer:

Successful negotiation of passage through the Oedipus complex results in the creation of the incest barrier, acceptance of generational boundaries, entry into the temporal dimension of life, respect for the value of waiting and effort, and formation of the superego. However, when the negotiation of this conflict is inoptimal, psychopathological symptoms result. (2009: 197)

The theory of the Oedipus complex serves a pivotal role in psychoanalytic literary criticism. It makes it possible for the critic to examine a barrage of issues relating to the characters' psyche shedding more light on the causes/sources of their behaviours as well as the hidden forces that shape their lives.

2.3. Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism

It is pertinent to examine the concept of literary criticism before moving to what psychoanalytic criticism is. M.H. Abrams and G.G. Harpham in their highly acclaimed *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, define "criticism as the overall term for studies concerned with defining, classifying, analyzing, interpreting and evaluating works of literature" (2012: 67). This implies that in doing literary criticism, the critic assumes the role similar to that of a chemist in the laboratory: she has got to evaluate, analyse and synthesize the text before realising his/her ultimate goal of interpreting the text. Literary criticism has an ancient history going back to ancient times. The ancient Greek philosopher, Aristotle (4th century BC) wrote *Poetics*, which many commentators consider the first work on literary criticism/theory, and since that time till today, countless volumes have been written on both literary criticism and theory all over the world. Especially from the early

20th century onwards, the universities began to invest invaluable resources in training professional literary critics. Even though literary critics could be biased sometimes or they might have viewed a text from an angle which is directly opposite of the author's worldview (or intention), even though literary critics could turn the text against its author or even against itself, they are the custodians of literature.

There are numerous ways through which a critic can approach a piece of literary work. We have formalist/textual approaches, political and cultural approaches; we have approaches based on sex/gender, history and psychology; and we have text-centered, reader-centered, author-centered approaches. Even though psychological criticism is believed to have been started by Aristotle (Guerin, et al. 2005: 152), it was not until the early 20th century that its more in-depth, more technical, and more controversial version, known as psychoanalytic criticism, appeared. Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), the enigmatic physician and the father of psychoanalysis was the first person to actively use the findings and the theories of psychoanalysis in the analysis of literary texts. "The study of literature," remarks Freud, "is no longer—if it ever was—simply the study and evaluation of poems, novels and plays; it is also the study of the ideas, issues, and difficulties which arise in any literary text and in its interpretation" (qtd. in Thurschwell 2001: 9). Thus, Freud focuses not only on literary texts but also the process of their interpretations. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan write:

Psychoanalytic literary criticism begins with Freud himself, whose "The Uncanny," in part a reading of Hoffman's horror story "The Sandman," can be said to inaugurate the critical genre. Freud notices that literary texts are like dreams; they embody or express unconscious material in the form of complex displacements and condensations. The same rule that he prescribes for dream interpretation, however, also applies to literature: it is not a direct translation of the unconscious into symbols that "stand for" unconscious meanings. Rather, literature displaces unconscious desires, drives, and motives into imagery that might bear no resemblance to its origin but that nonetheless permits it to achieve release or expression. Literature, as fiction, might even be said to demonstrate these very processes of representation-through-indirection at work. (Rivkin and Ryan, 2004: 413)

Psychoanalytic criticism, as we have seen above, is a type of literary criticism which uses the theories (such as the theory of the unconscious and the Oedipus complex) of psychoanalysis in order to understand a literary text. My choice of psychoanalytic criticism has everything to do with my firm conviction – to some, it may be a mere psychoanalytic assumption – that "the literary text, like the analytic patient, provides the terms of its interpretation" (Ellmann, 1994: 24). The "relationship" between psychoanalysis and literature has always been symbiotic starting from the cradle of the former. Examining how psychoanalysis and literature were used by Freud simultaneously, Ellman wittingly comments, "What Freud failed to get from his analysands he usually picked up from literature" (1994: 24). Because it is a person-centred approach, psychoanalytic criticism can help us to examine the psyche of anybody – be it the author, the reader or the characters – in the novel being studied. We should exercise extra caution because "Freudian literary criticism causes a peculiar form of irritation" (Ellman, 1994: 13); however, this could be directly linked to the fact that in its heyday (and still today) psychoanalytic criticism had been subject to "abuse" by critics who took it to the farthest horizon (Guerin et al., 2005: 153). Psychoanalytic critics

identify a 'psychic' context for the literary work, at the expense of social or historical context, privileging the individual 'psycho-drama' above the 'social drama' of class conflict. The conflict between generations or siblings or between competing desires within the same individual looms much larger than conflict between social classes, for instance. (Barry, 2009: 115)

This simply means psychoanalytic literary criticism operates on a crucial assumption that literary works do have a *psyche*, and the word *psyche* here means a hidden meaning, in a similar way that the author and the characters have. Moreover, the focus of a psychoanalytic critic ought to be more inclined to the exploration of the psychological forces which are at work in the text.

Following Freud, Jacques Lacan influences literary theory and criticism in a profound way. This is echoed in the words of Guerin et al. mentioning, “Jacques Lacan is the psycho-analytical theorist who has been most influential on literary theory and criticism in recent years particularly with regard to his development of the theories of both Freud and Ferdinand de Saussure” (2005: 178). Lacan’s popularity in the literary theory will not be hard to understand seeing how his “criticism shifts attention to language and sees it and the unconscious as almost identical” (Rivkin and Ryan, 2004: 414). In this sense, Lacan’s theories on language overlap with the analysis of literary works and the impact of the unconscious, which is structured like a language, as Lacan claims, is traced in written works.

Psychoanalytic criticism focuses on three major elements of a literary work: the author, the text, and the reader. Although psychoanalytic criticism in terms of the author is not appreciated so much in literary circles of today, it was a popular analysis in the earlier times of the theory. Taking the text into focus is the most preferred psychoanalytic criticism, and many recent approaches have begun to analyse the reader’s perception using psychoanalytic criticism.

2.3.1. The Author

To begin with, analyzing the approach of the author using psychoanalytic criticism, we should say that the author is a significant pillar in this theory. In the sight of psychoanalysis, the creative writer is not an ordinary person; s/he is a lucky “neurotic,” as Freud claims (1920), whom we should all envy because of her/his ability to handle the defects productively not destructively. S/he creatively comes up with something which is not only beneficial to herself/himself, but also to the world in general. Unlike the ordinary neurotic who loses contact with reality, the creative writer stays in touch with reality and even helps the rest of us to cope with it by creating a literary world. Lionel Trilling captures this brilliantly:

When Freud speaks of art dealing with reality he actually means the rewards that a successful artist can win. He does not deny to art its function and its usefulness; it has a therapeutic effect in releasing mental tension; it serves the cultural purpose of acting as a “substitute gratification” to reconcile men to the sacrifices they have made for culture’s sake; it promotes the social sharing of highly valued emotional experiences; and it recalls men to their cultural ideals. (2015: 22)

So, unlike the neurotic who is metaphorically (sometimes even literally) chained by her/his condition, the creative writer overcomes it and puts it to the best service of herself/himself and the rest of the world. Freud calls it “sublimation” believing that “sublimation of unsatisfied libido was responsible for producing all art and literature,” (Storr, 1989: 96). Therefore, authors “discharge

their infantile sexuality by converting it into non-instinctual forms” (Storr, 1989: 96). Even “[t]he subjects,” Anthony Storr continues, “which an artist portrays, and the ways in which he chooses to present them, are often determined by his patrons and by the conventions of his time. But they are also bound to reflect something of his own personality and personal history, although he himself may be unaware of any such connection” (1989: 100).

In Freudian criticism, the author's intention matters, even though the author himself cannot be aware of his real intention: he cannot access his unconscious. In other words, Freudian criticism affirms the *intentional fallacy* in an ironic way: the author has an intention which motivated him and he wants to communicate to us; however, the intention, being a product of the unconscious, is distorted and concealed for the author himself, much more so to the reading public without the help of psychoanalytic criticism. This fact alone can make psychoanalytic criticism a priceless tool without which the *real* motives of the author and/or the *real* meaning of the text cannot be excavated. The actual task of a Freudian critic is to dig deeply “inside” the text and bring out those hidden distorted and concealed motivations of the author, the characters and the text. This is exactly what classical psychoanalytic literary criticism was all about. We observe it in Freud's works, such as “The Uncanny” as well as in the works of the pioneers regarding psychoanalytic criticism, like Doctor Ernest Jones's analysis of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, “A Psychoanalytic Study of *Hamlet*” (1922).

At that point, a very good caveat that Lionel Trilling puts is that “Freud himself points out we are not in a position to question the artist; we must apply the technique of dream analysis to his symbols” (2015: 27). There is great fear here. Many commentators raise concerns about the possibility of abusing psychoanalytic literary criticism by ascribing some irrational views to the author and indicting her/him for committing crimes, which neither the history of the author nor her/his actual words imply in any way. These are justified concerns. However, this is not a peculiar curse of Freudian criticism; every other theory is subject to misapplication and abuse. As Trilling claims, “what Freud contributes outweighs his errors; [and] it is of the great importance” (2015: 30) in opening new terrains for writers and readers alike.

Freud's conception of the author is based on an extremely ingenious synthesis and numerous analogies. First, he compares the creative writer to a child at play. For Freud, “a piece of creative writing, like a daydream, is a continuation of, and a substitute for, what was once the play of childhood” (Person et al., 1995: 12). If Freud conceives children's play as a means of fulfilling of their unconscious wish, it is not wrong to say the author is believed to be fulfilling her/his repressed unconscious wishes in the act of creating stories, fashioning the characters and modeling the whole setting for them. He, then, equates children's play to adults' day-dream before finally equating the creative writer's act of story-making and characters modeling to what an ordinary adult does when s/he indulges in daydreaming. A compelling example of the author's symbolic presence in her/his work can be observed in the way the creative writer sometimes protects his/her protagonist from fatal dangers. The fact that, in some fictions, the hero is the most ideal character, who must not be permanently conquered, is itself a clear indication that every hero stands for none but her majesty, the ego (Freud, 1920).

2.3.2. The Text

The most crucial link between psychoanalysis and literature is their overreliance on language. Literature employs language in a special way; it reminds us that language is not as

innocent as we would think naively. Literature uses language to create worlds of different makeups and textures, including those that look very akin to our natural world, those that are far beyond ours, ideally or theoretically, and those worlds that lie far down below our world by all standards and all judgments. In literature, we are constantly reminded that language does not merely and meekly refer to reality. It has an incredible ability to create and modify reality. In the same vein, psychoanalysis' over reliance on the use of language is what gives it the qualification of Freud's *the talking cure*. "Psychoanalysis is," as Trilling puts it, "a science of tropes, of metaphor and its variants, synecdoche and metonymy" (Trilling, 2015: 31).

Within this context, the text reflects the unconscious: it is not to be read; it is to be analysed. A psychoanalytic critic treats the text with rigour and conscientiousness similar to the analyst who treats a neurotic patient. Although their actual approaches and practices will be different because the former would tend to be closer to the artists while the latter is supposed to be more loyal to the science of medicine, their underlying assumptions remain the same. They both strive to reach the unconscious via words. Chandra Baral writes, comparing the text with the process in jokes:

Any kind of literary creation is an emotional response which emanates from the primary process, [and just like a joke, a literary work] also calls for an emotional response and it succeeds or fails depending on the response it gets. The artistic creation invariably couches in itself some latent thoughts as the joke content does. There is disguise in art and as in dreams it expresses itself symbolically. The concept of 'form' and 'content', therefore, provides for the basic structural aspect of the literary work, as much as in the joke-work. (1988: 193)

Originating from the unconscious, the text carries the same enigmatic characteristics and bewildering qualities – the use of symbols and symbolization, images and imageries, distortions and concealments – as do dreams and jokes. Metaphors and metonymies in the text are to be treated in a very similar manner with condensation and displacement in the dreamwork. The unconscious is structured like a language, Lacan is popularly quoted to have remarked; likewise, the text is structured within language and the unconscious. The text, in the sight of a psychoanalytic critic, is a piece of language which, just like a dream, has infinite layers of meanings to be peeled infinitely. The text also exposes itself to the scrutiny of a psychoanalytic critic in much the same way a patient speaks spontaneously in what is technically known as *free association*.

We know that in his subsequent practices, Freud stopped using hypnosis and switched to the method of free association in which

[t]he patient was still required to recline on a couch, with Freud sitting out of sight at its head; but attempts at urging the patient to recover memories by hypnosis or by using pressure on the forehead were given up. Instead, the patient was required to put into words without censorship whatever thoughts or phantasies spontaneously occurred. (Storr, 1989: 51)

Within the same context, the text ought to enjoy the same kind of freedom in the hands of a psychoanalytic critic. We are not expected to interfere with the text by putting words in the characters' – or the author's – mouths; we patiently wait and allow the text to talk freely and spontaneously while we try to get the unconscious of the text. In a similar fashion, interestingly, the text usually delves into revealing its traumatic past and as a result, leads us to uncover what Peter Barry calls the textual unconscious (2009).

2.3.3. The Reader

In literary theory, the word *reader* is not just a noun referring to a person who engages in the act of reading, it is a principal concept that received a great deal of attention. It is the reader who “completes [the] meaning [of the text] by reading it” (Cuddon, 2013: 606). The paramount importance of the reader in literary theory gives birth to *reader-response theory*, a group of diverse theories which are “concerned with the reader’s contribution to a text” (Cuddon, 2013: 606). There is an *implied reader* whom the author/text seems to be addressing directly; on the other hand, there is an *actual reader* who engages herself/himself in the act of reading without identifying herself/himself with the person/people being addressed by the text. In other words, since some literary works have a voice, a narrator, who is very specific in her/his address in terms of the interlocutor, certain readers who belong to the group the voice/narrator addresses would feel that the text is talking to them directly. This category of people constitutes the implied readers, while any other person who reads the text is an actual reader.

The reader is a cardinal pillar in psychoanalytic literary criticism. S/he acts as an interpreter of the author’s dream, which is the literary work of the author – the text. Since both literary works and dreams originate from the same source (i.e., the unconscious), as we have seen in our discussion of the text, the reader and the analyst are sometimes equated as they both listen to the narratives and assign meanings to them. As far as psychoanalytic literary criticism is concerned, the reader/critic must possess considerable expertise and good background knowledge of psychoanalysis. In order to substantiate her/his claims and validate her/his interpretations, a reader/critic is expected to employ the principles/theories of psychoanalysis judiciously. “The reader is expected to be an ideal reader [who is] perfectly insightful [and] who understands the writer’s every move” (Seldan et al., 2005: 60).

Another distinguishing attribute of the reader/critic in psychoanalytic literary criticism is that s/he pays careful attention to the language of the text, which includes the author’s and/or the characters’ choice of words, jokes, slips of the tongue, and symbols in the text. Symbols are essential tools used by the reader to *produce* meanings using what Robert N. Mollinger calls the “identity theme [that is] the central, unifying pattern which makes sense out of what he chooses and does” (1981: 26). This means the reader pays careful attention to the symbols placing them in their theoretical/psychoanalytic contexts as well as they are deployed in the text. Mollinger explains further:

The reader of a literary work recreates the text. First, the reader relaxes control and allows interplay with unconscious wishes; then he reasserts control and wards off the unacceptable wishes. [...] There is an interchange between the reader’s and the writer’s primary and secondary processes — their wishes, impulses, and fantasies, and their modes of controlling and elaborating them. (Mollinger, 1981: 26)

It is obvious in the preceding quotation that, just as in the case of the author, the reader cannot escape the overwhelming influence of the unconscious either. Therefore, her/his unconscious wishes and fantasies may influence her/his interpretation. Robert N. Mollinger, aptly remarks that “[e]ven the intellectual meaning we supply to a literary text in our interpretation of it acts as a defensive device to control the fantasy” (1981: 26). Consequently, in psychoanalytic literary criticism, the reader/critic does not have any authority to claim having exhausted all of the meanings of the text because it is never possible to exhaust the entire contents of the unconscious and the text

which reflects the unconscious. It is also evident that the reader/critic makes an invaluable contribution to the text. When the reader/critic reads the text, s/he does not only complement and supplement the author's literary endeavor, but s/he also *recreates* the text.



3. ELNATHAN JOHN AND *BORN ON A TUESDAY*

3.1. Elnathan John: His Life and Literary Career

The Federal Republic of Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa. It is situated in the western part of the African continent, and based on the 2021 estimate, there are more than two hundred and eleven million people in Nigeria (Nigeria Population, 2022). Nigeria houses three major religions, namely Christianity, Islam, and paganism. In the northern part of the country, where the author Elnathan John came from, Islam is the predominant religion and in the southern part of the country Christianity is the primary religious belief while the worshippers of the African traditional religions take a very insignificant number of the population and they are scattered across the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Some states in northern Nigeria are densely populated by the adherents of both Christians and Islam. This leads to the eruption of politico-religious tussle of power and even actual violence. Due to the fact of their being densely populated and comprising different ethnicities and religious beliefs, some states are popularly known to be more volatile to ethno-religious and the political violence in Nigeria than the others. These states include Plateau, Kano, Lagos and Kaduna. Kaduna State is the birthplace of Elnathan John, and it is described by some commentators as the epicentre of violence in Nigeria (Campbell, 2021).

Elnathan John was born in Kaduna State in the year 1982. After obtaining his first degree from the Faculty of Law, Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria, Elnathan John went to the Nigerian Law School and became a certified lawyer. Thus, he is a lawyer by profession. His birthplace, Kaduna State, hosts all kinds of ethnic groups of the country including the minority tribes who lived in peace and harmony until the eruption of bloody religious conflicts from the 1990s onwards. The ethno-religious unrests keep disrupting the social stability enjoyed by the inhabitants of the Kaduna State, breeding many seeds of discord, mistrust, animosity, and tension among the entire people. They all convert the previously peaceful state into one of the most volatile zones in Nigeria. Kaduna State, since then, has been acutely divided between the religious lanes—Christianity and Islam.

The ideas behind the development of the novel, *Born on a Tuesday* seem to be from many sources. Still, their vestiges could be found in current so-called Islamic fundamentalism, which has been bedeviling the northern part of Nigeria for more than a decade, as well as the ancient tradition of *Almajiri* system that is still widely practised in the region. Besides his upbringing, the author, Elnathan John admits in an interview with *The Guardian* on the seed of his novel as follows:

Born on a Tuesday was informed partly by my upbringing but also inspired by the *almajiri* (the name for those sent from their homes as children to study in Islamic schools) I met at university. I was interested in their lives and their thoughts and intrigued that they were [often] people without names. What is a name? The question became important to me. The minimum a person can have is a name. I was interested in what happens when that basic form of identity is taken away. *Born on a Tuesday* is the protagonist's name, but not a real name. (Kellaway, 2016)

It can be inferred that the author builds his narrative from his background and the experience he has about the *almajiri* children, who are sent out of their homes by their parents on the pretext of giving them an opportunity to acquire Islamic education and training away from home. John takes a keen interest in studying the life of an adolescent *almajiri* who has been robbed of his right to parental care and, even worse, his identity which the author supposes should be the right any

child in the world should enjoy. However, very unfortunately, Dantala, the protagonist of *Born on a Tuesday*, lacks this right.

The author's main inspiration is the return of Boko Haram Insurgency which can be explicitly traced to 2007 when the jinni-like army of deadly terrorists of Panshekara, Kano State, appeared in the aftermath of sheikh Jafar's murder. The late sheikh was murdered at his mosque. He was believed to have been assassinated by the jihadists because of his support of the prohibition of jihadism in Islam and his public condemnation of jihadism. In the beginning, this demonic terrorist group focused their attention majorly on security agencies, but later on, they turned against ordinary civilians and the general public, including any public figure (an imam/pastor, a politician, a public commentator, an intellectual, an activist) who denounced their misconceived dogma and fanaticism. Towards the 2015 election, a well-coordinated terror attack was carried on at the Kano Municipal Central Mosque, a place very close to the Emir's palace, while the Juma'a prayer was taking place. This attack killed dozens of innocent Muslim worshippers instantly leaving hundreds incapacitated. In the novel, when sheikh Jamal was murdered at his mosque, in the presence of his students, a reader well-acquainted with the novel's setting cannot help seeing a literary re-enactment of sheikh Jafar's assassination.

What made the Kano Central Mosque attack deadlier was the fact that as the bombs exploded in a tightly packed mosque in the centre of the city, on one of the busiest roads of the ancient city, those who were not at the immediate spot began to run for their lives. However, the jihadists' shooting squad shot down all in the most barbaric way imaginable. The attack became one of the worst attacks in the history of terrorism in Nigeria. Many of the victims were among the rescuers who thought it was only a suicide bomber's attack and selflessly rushed to offer a first aid. Many hospitals lost their ambulance crew during the attack. Following this event, people were demoralized entirely and stopped providing first aid at any scene of the terrorist attack due to that distressing public experience. That dreadful attack frightened people both Muslims and non-Muslims alike; meanwhile, similar savage attacks were carried out at churches, schools, and even commercial centres like open markets and shopping malls.

Political thuggery is an influential wellspring of the story in *Born on a Tuesday*. Contextually, in the aftermath of the 2011 Nigerian presidential election, four years before the novel's publication, a post-election violence happened, and many commentators consider it one of the most horrible political riots in the history of Nigeria. A northern Muslim, Muhammadu Buhari, a former military head-of-state and the most outspoken disparager of the then ruling party, People's Democratic Party (PDP), lost the election to his political opponent, the next incumbent president Good Luck Jonathan, a southern Christian. Selfish politicians exploited the South/North and Christian/Muslim dichotomy and wreaked havoc on the Nigerian masses. During any election in the country, politicians hire thugs, giving them intoxicants and weapons purposely to be used against innocent electorates. In the same way, the assassination of Sheikh Jamal in *Born on a Tuesday* is juxtaposed with the assassination of Sheikh Jafar Mahmud Adam in real life. The post-election riot found in the novel has parallels in the history of Nigeria from the country's independence in 1960 to today.

Furthermore, the politicization of religion –the way religion is misused and manipulated mischievously by many religious leaders (imams and pastors) to support/oppose a political candidate based on ethno-religious differences– has unarguably served as a source of inspiration for the author. The Nigerian presidential elections of 2011 and 2015 were a classic example of how

religion has always been used as an instrument, an effective weapon in the country's political warfare. Political elites disburse money to religious institutions (churches and mosques) with the sole aim of exerting their influence and popularity on the religious leaders, who adopt the task of persuading their followers. They give reasons for voting for/against a particular candidate, claiming they will achieve spiritual salvation, a shortcut to Heaven. Not only for a Nigerian citizen, for anybody acquainted with Nigerian politics and its ethno-religious landscape, and for anybody who is familiar with the trends of the Islamic insurgency in Nigeria that has been going on for almost two decades. The story found in *Born on a Tuesday* is just one version of poignant stories which will soon – due to the recurrence of the pattern of their occurrence and the manner in which the younger generation (children and adolescents) are continually victimised – assume the status of the African oral tradition. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2021 report titled *Assessing the Impact of Conflict on Development*, 340, 000 children have died as a result of the Boko Haram conflict and 1,8 million children stay out of school. The more disheartening aspect of this estimate is that the data of the report came from only three north-eastern states, Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe; it is neither for the whole north nor for the whole country.

In a word, there are thousands of *Dantalas* in each Nigerian city. Brenda Cooper rightly observes, “[c]ontemporary African writers” and fiction writers everywhere in the world owe much of their stories to the circumstances of their upbringing, the state of affairs in which they were brought up and “which have moulded them, and which they select and transform” (2004: 40). Elnathan John's case is not an exception as he affirms on many occasions. Acknowledging his indebtedness to a young man whose life story served as the actual seeds of *Born on a Tuesday*, John states that he is grateful to “Basiru, the almajiri from Sokoto [he] met in Zaria, whose story made me create Dantala [the novel's protagonist], who will probably never read this book” (2015: 216).

Despite the fact of being a Christian, Elnathan John depicts the religion of Islam (as practiced in northern Nigeria) as objectively as possible to the extent that whoever is well-acquainted with the region could not help giving the book some considerations very similar to the non-fiction works of literature or a documentary. John's parents are of different ethnic groups, so diversity is part and parcel of him. Elnathan John's personal development from childhood through adulthood was undeniably influenced by the socioeconomic atmosphere of Nigeria's long history of political instability and corruption, ethno-religious conflicts and tensions, and political thuggery and insurgency. In recent history, the 2011 post-election violence took place in more than ten states in northern Nigeria. In Kaduna State (John's home city), many lives were wasted and property plundered. Four years later, in 2015, Elnathan John wrote the novel *Born on a Tuesday* in which he brilliantly reflects on not only the 2011 post-election riots but also the inhumane activities of the so-called Islamic jihadists named Boko Haram.

3.2. *Born on a Tuesday*

Born on a Tuesday (2015) is a *bildungsroman*, a type of novel that traces the development of its main character from childhood/adolescence to adulthood. The novel explores the Islamic fundamentalism and the plethora of its socio-economic, political as well as religious causes. It tells a story of a boy named Dantala, whom we find as a vagabond at Bayan Layi (a fictional

neighbourhood) in Kaduna State, Nigeria. As an innocent adolescent *almajiri*, somebody who leaves his family and goes to another city/town in order to learn the Holy Qur'an, Dantala is the protagonist of the novel who narrates the whole story: we get to know everything that happens through his words and from his perspective.

The novel begins during the period of a nationwide election in Nigeria. Dantala, together with his thug friends, is hired by the Small Party members to assist the party in their attempt to win against the ruling party, the Big Party. When the Small Party loses the election, the party members hire the protagonist and his friends to incite violence in order to challenge the election's outcome. During the riot, the local office of the Big Party is burnt to ashes. The violence causes the loss of many lives and property before the police arrive and restore back the order. Dantala's best friend and boss, Banda, is shot dead by the police in his presence. The den of the protagonist's gang, at Bayan Layi neighbourhood, is destroyed by the security agents, and the thugs are scattered. Dantala flees back to Sokoto State.

On his way to Dogon Icce, his hometown in Sokoto State, Dantala is involved in a ghastly car accident. This event forces him to branch at a motor park in Sokoto in order to get medical attention. After taking the treatment from a chemist, he stays at a mosque where he fortunately becomes a religious apprentice. The imam of the mosque, Sheikh Jamal and his deputy Mallam Abdul-Nur show interest in Dantala when they find out that he was graduated by a friend of the former, could read the Holy Qur'an correctly, and speak the Arabic language fluently. When his health improves, he pays a visit to his hometown for the first time after spending more than a decade away in Kaduna State. Reaching Dogon Icce, he finds out that the beautiful village of his childhood is reduced to ruins by a series of natural disasters, his father is dead and his mother has been ailing for years as a result of losing his sister – her mother's only daughter – to a catastrophic flood. His family house is gone. Throughout his visit, he cannot communicate with his mother. Even on the first day, when he greets her, she does not answer. Dantala returns to Sokoto and his religious apprenticeship. Due to his knowledge and dedication, he rises so quickly in status and becomes the muezzin of the mosque.

Sheikh Jamal is attacked allegedly by the members of the Shi'a sect and Mallam Abdul Nur, the deputy imam, travels to Saudi Arabia afterwards. The latter comes back radicalized and breaks away from the mosque. He establishes his new mosque where he preaches his fundamentalist ideologies. A heated unspeakable enmity erupts between the two mosques/Islamic centres: Sheikh Jamal is a moderate Muslim scholar, who is very accommodative, tolerant, and progressive while Mallam Abdul Nur is a radical fundamentalist who preaches not only against the non-Muslims but also the moderate Muslims. In his view, even going to the university, working for the government or getting involved in the politics are haram. He supports the establishment of an Islamic state at all cost, and its sovereignty on everybody, both Muslims and non-Muslims. His sect's overall goal is to overthrow the government and replace it with a sharia system.

Sheikh Jamal is assassinated by a gang of men in the police uniform. He is butchered right in front of his mosque in broad daylight: the entire state is thrown into chaos and confusion. The security agents try to restore peace and order, while Dantala is taken by the Army as a suspect terrorist. He spends a long time in the military custody where he comes face to face with death, though he survives.

In the end of the novel, Dantala is released though not as a healthy young man as when he was arrested. The harsh intolerable condition of the military cell has reduced him to a living corpse,

a “Black Spirit” (2015, p. 213). When he is released, he goes back to the city and finds out that their mosque has been demolished, and everything has changed: he recognises everyone, but no one recognises him. In the end, the protagonist loses everybody he dearly loves. He loses his parents and relatives, he loses his wife-to-be and her father, his most beloved Sheikh and his role model; however, he does not lose two important things: his faith in God and his ability to narrate his story.

Born on a Tuesday, is Elnathan John’s first novel. It was published in 2015 by Cassava Republic Press, and by Grove Atlantic in the following year. *Born on a Tuesday* was shortlisted in September 2016 for the Nigeria Prize for Literature (NPL), Africa’s most prominent literary award. The novel won the Betty Trask Award, a literary award “for first novels written by authors under the age of 35, who reside in a current or former Commonwealth nation” (The Betty Trask Prize and Awards, n.d). His second book, *Be(com)ing Nigerian: A Guide*, a collection of satirical pieces, was also published by Cassava Republic Press in 2019. In *Be(com)ing Nigerian: A Guide*, John displays a rare artistic and literary ingenuity as a satirist. He satirically discusses a number of sensitive topics, such as politics and religion, by exposing the deeply ingrained vices, which have, ironically, been turned into virtues by society. Using a Biblical allusion from the book of Genesis, “So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them” (KJV, Genesis, 1: 27), John brilliantly mocks the follies of the British colonialists and exposes the weak foundation upon which the Nigerian state was created. He writes: “the British created Nigeria in their own image, in the image of their colonial rulership they created it; oppressor and oppressed, they created them” (John, 2019: 9). From the onset of the novel, *Be(com)ing Nigerian: A Guide*, John makes it categorically clear that the lion’s share of all of the blame for the failure of the Nigerian political system falls on the British colonialists’ selfish interest. John’s third and latest book, *On Ajayi Crowther Street* (2019), is a graphic novel (*Born on a Tuesday*, n.d.), which unmasks the hypocrisy of religious leaders in Nigeria. He reveals the private realities of a pastor, Reverend Akpoborie, and his family. Reverend Akpoborie presents himself to the members of his church congregation and the public as a man of God. He performs extraordinary miracles, refuses to acknowledge the (homo)sexuality of his son, and always tries to attend the church services on time; however, in his private life, the pastor is a rapist, an imposter – a spiritual fraudster who performs false miracles in order to gain the worldly rewards.

In all his three novels, Elnathan John has been depicting the evils of the Nigerian society in terms of the high level of political corruption and religious hypocrisy. His sharp intellectual honesty, coupled with his genuine sense of humour, makes it possible for him to criticise and uncover the vices of his own society without completely disowning its people. John’s critical stance against the selfishness of the Nigerian elites/politicians does not blind him from noticing and exposing the insincerity of the masses. He does not subscribe to the lopsided opinion of viewing the average Nigerian as a victim of the circumstances. He always tries to portray the weaknesses of human beings in all of his characters, regardless of their social status. Consequently, even though he invariably gives the impression that the predicaments of Nigeria as a nation could be related to British colonialism, he never fails to draw attention to the unfortunate treatment the privileged Nigerians have subjected their own people. Coming from one of the Nigerian minority ethnic groups, his understanding of colonialism is radically different and intellectually richer. For John, the more powerful Nigerian tribes had already colonised the weaker tribes before the arrival of the European colonialism (John, 2020). This could explain why he constantly draws attention to the varied forms of social inequalities and class discrimination perpetrated against less-privileged

individuals and less powerful ethnicities. Elnathan John could be best described as an *activist*, a social activist who chooses to use art/literary medium to convey his messages. Therefore, literature for Elnathan John is a means of bringing about both self-awareness and social enlightenment.



4. REFLECTIONS OF THE OEDIPUS COMPLEX IN *BORN ON A TUESDAY*

4.1. The Theory of the Oedipus Complex

Our discussion of the Oedipus complex in Chapter 1 cannot be considered exhaustive, nor can it be described as comprehensive. If we had sacrificed the entire pages of this tiny piece of writing, they would not be enough for us to do justice to the theory of the Oedipus complex. The most important thing to remember is that “the Oedipus complex is more or less well-developed; it may even experience a reversal, but it is a customary and significant factor in the psychic life of the child; and one tends rather to underestimate than to overestimate its influence and the developments which may follow from it” (Freud, 1920: 196) and, which are very frequently represented in the child’s life as an adult. The Oedipus complex is paramount as Freud contemplates, “perhaps *mankind as a whole* has, at the beginning of its history, *come by its consciousness of guilt, the final source of religion and morality, through the Oedipus complex*” (Freud, 1920: 317, my emphasis). Although the Oedipus complex happens in childhood (between the ages of 4-6), its effects – in terms of the child’s ability to overcome it by identifying with the father and becoming a social person, who establishes psychologically healthy bounds with other people and rejects incestuous relationships – are so paramount throughout the child’s future life. Thus, overcoming the Oedipus complex saves the child from various pathological conditions, such as neurosis and psychosis, and a set of psychological disorders called oedipal pathology. “Oedipal pathologies are,” Salman Akhtar writes:

[t]he psychic and behavioural consequences of a problematic and unmastered oedipal phase [and, they] do have certain specific features of their own. Such ‘oedipal pathology’ affects generation boundaries, the incest barrier, the capacity to wait and respect time as an important dimension in life, and, most significantly, the super ego formation. The resulting symptomatic constellations are generally of two types: (1) neurotic, involving undue fear or bristly combativeness towards authority figures, nervousness about sex, undue jealousy, and tendency to seek unavailable and prohibited romantic partners, and (2) perverse, involving cockiness, destructive attitudes towards others’ couplehood, breach of the incest barrier, and failure to enter the temporal order of life, manifesting in the character trait of being chronically hurried. (2005: 196).

In the novel *Born on a Tuesday*, it is the protagonist’s failure to succeed in the Oedipus complex that causes him a great deal of trouble in his later life as an adult. In the same manner, Freud upgraded the Oedipus complex from a mythological concept to an academic/“scientific” and psychological one. When we talk about the Oedipus complex in psychoanalytic criticism, we expand its scope. We include a wide range of personal, intra-human (i.e. psychological) conflicts and inter-human (i.e., social) feuds, and their concomitant results which manifest themselves in a stratum of relations and interrelations, connections and interconnections, parallels and juxtapositions in the text being studied. “The Oedipal theme,” writes Quinn, “is given a unique twist in Harold Bloom’s argument that the “strong” poet/critic engages in a conflict ... with a great writer of the past, whom he first misreads and later rewrites” (Bloom, 2006: 303). Here, the conflicts referred to as the Oedipus complex are more expansive and broader in perspective than the familial phenomena, traditionally viewed as the “original” Oedipus complex. In other words, Bloom’s initial argument is based on a more encompassing analogy which he draws between the

classical or, rather, more celebrated and more revered poets (playwrights, novelists, philosophers, theorists, etc.) with whom the later poets and critics find themselves in a perpetual Oedipal rivalry. The later poets and critics aim at the lofty social status enjoyed by their predecessors (which they believe deep in their unconscious that they will never achieve) in the same manner a boy craves his father's position in relation to the possession of his mother.

Quite often, it is tempting to ask: Where are the links? Where are the connections? Where is the mother? Where is the castration fear? Who is the father? Where is the love for the mother and the hatred of the father, etc.? Questions like these are somewhat irrelevant questions to be asked. To conceive the bases that warrant a correct understanding, there are other options than a purposeful reading. An intensive critical rumination will make the connections clear and understandable. Let us go back to Bloom's hypothesis we have talked about, in which the younger poet and/or the critic is caught up in the Oedipus complex with the classical (famous) poets. Simple and careful analogies will do the work. Indeed, it is very plain that the classical poet is the father of the critic or the modern poet; he was (and still is) his literary, intellectual, professional, and vocational father in the very same way the ancient Greek yearly performances of the tragedies at the Theatre of Dionysus were the parents of the modern theatrical performances. The mother could be the wealth, the fame –the social status the classical poet had (and still has) in the people's minds. That is what the modern critic's/poet's covetous pen dreams about. While his sharp criticism never ceases to betray his envy and "hatred" of his classical father, his un/due praises would not go unnoticed by a critical-minded psychoanalytic reader either. A classic example could be the English poet Ben Jonson's extolment of Shakespeare. Ben Jonson is popularly quoted to have remarked that *Shakespeare was not of an age but for all time!*

Consequently, although our discussion of the Oedipus complex in this chapter involves many aspects and instances which could directly be pinned down to the father-son feud as found in *Born on a Tuesday*, a very significant number of discussions belongs to the thematic reflections of the Oedipus complex that fall in the category of Bloom's hypothesis quoted above. Therefore, they do demand a more conscientious rumination before they reveal their appealing connections with the theory of the Oedipus complex. This is, in fact, in line with how the classical psychoanalytic critics used to approach a text, as was shown by Freud in his work "The Uncanny". For Freud, in "The Uncanny," fear of castration takes the form not of a literal image but of a metaphoric substitute that displaces the protagonist's anxiety onto the fear of losing his eyes, a fear that is available for interpretation only because language displays the latent connection" (Rivkin and Ryan, 2004: 413).

Born on a Tuesday (2016) tells a poignant story of Islamic fundamentalism as found in Nigerian context. Dantala is the protagonist and the novel's narrator, whose development (both physical and psychological) forms the cornerstone of the whole story. Dantala was a small boy when his father sent him to Kaduna State in order to learn Qur'an/Islamic studies under the care of a mullah, Malam Junaidu, in a traditional system of Islamic education called *almajiranci* (a pupil/student who studies in this type of education system is called *almajiri*) and thus, Dantala becomes an *almajiri*.

Although the protagonist tells us very little about the rest of his family members, his twin sisters and three older brothers, he gives the readers the full detail of his relationship with his parents. From childhood, Dantala's relationship with his father has always been problematic because his father punishes him severely for every mistake he makes, big or small (*Born* 19). Dantala's father sends him away from home at a very tender age and never cares to visit him. This

results in the protagonist's hatred for his father because even when the story of his father's death reaches him, he neither cries nor feels sorry. On the other hand, the protagonist's relationship with his mother is characterized by love and affection, and even after he becomes an adult, Dantala always refers to his mother by an affectionate name, *Umma*. He tells any story that relates to her in a deep nostalgia and always describes her in a special language throughout the novel.

Instead of returning home when he finishes his studies in Kaduna State, Dantala joins a gang of thugs and becomes a hoodlum. During a nationwide election, his gang is involved in a political violence, and consequently, their hideout is destroyed by the police. Dantala tries to run back to his home town, Doggon Icce, in Sokoto State. However, he cannot as he is involved in an accident and taken to medical care. After taking his medical care, he stays at the mosque of imam Sheikh Jamal. He becomes a devoted student of the imam, Sheikh Jamal.

Sheikh Jamal becomes his teacher, his role model, and his substitute father. His contra character Malam Abdul-Nur is the deputy imam, but he is a new convert to Islam. Before his conversion, Malam Abdul-Nur was a Christian and his name was Mr. Alex. Due to his extraordinary dedication and zeal, he acquired a great deal of Islamic knowledge within a short period of time through self-education. Malam Abdul-Nur is a very harsh and quick-tempered person and an intolerant radical mullah. He advocates jihadism and calls any other Muslim who disagrees with his extremist views *a kafir*. After many failed attempts at convincing Sheikh Jamal to accept jihadism and convert the Al-Hakiky Islamic Movement into a radical Islamic movement, Malam Abdul-Nur breaks away and establishes his new Islamic centre, where he preaches his extremist ideologies and recruit his followers as mujahideen.

The moderate Sheikh Jamal is unfortunately assassinated by Malam Abdul-Nur's jihadists. Consequently, the entire state is thrown into chaos and confusion. The protagonist, Dantala, disobeys soldiers, who are sent to disperse the mobs in the city. Even though Dantala rejects the fundamentalist ideologies of Malam Abdul-Nur, he is taken by the Army as a terrorist suspect. He spends a very long time in military custody, where he sees naked brutality and inhumanity.

His life has been put upside down. He loses everything that he thinks is valuable to him: his career and his beloved Islamic centre are both gone. He has nobody to call a relative or friend, and he embarks on a journey to an unspecified destination. However, as we shall see below, this study makes it clear that the entire predicaments of the protagonist (as well as most of the major characters) are but the effects of some psychological phenomena such as the Oedipus complex (its key components inclusive) and defence mechanisms. Let us begin by exploring the reflections of the Oedipus complex in the novel.

4.2. Pleasure Principle/Reality Principle

A key indication of Dantala's (the protagonist's) disability to overcome his Oedipus complex is his perpetual miscarriages in accepting or acting by the Freudian *reality principle*. The reality principle refers to one's ability "to delay gratification in the service of self-preservation" (Benjamin, 2014:1). Unlike the pleasure principle, which is animalistic and primitive, the reality principle is learned in society (Rycroft, 1995: 183). In Freud's structural model of the human mind, in which he conceptualizes the *Id*, the *Ego* and the *Superego*, human beings' first experiences are based on the operation of the *Id*. Freud sees the 'Id' as "everything that is inherited, that is present at birth that is laid down in the constitution—above all therefore, the instincts, which originate from the somatic organization" (Akthar, 2009: 137). At the beginning of life, an infant/baby does not

know any restraint when satisfying its needs. It considers that everything and everybody exist in the world just to satisfy their needs. The ultimate goal of the Id is the satisfaction of immediate gratifications regardless of consequences; therefore, the Id operates on what Freud calls the *pleasure principle* – an inordinate tendency of babies to subscribe to instant gratifications impulsively. Due to the influence of the pleasure principle, a baby thinks there is nothing more important than getting all of its needs satisfied as quickly as possible. The infants know nothing about the social norms and values, nor are they responsible for them. They attempt to do anything to satisfy their immediate gratification even if it endangers their lives because their psychological mindset at that time is operating solely on the pleasure principle.

On the other hand, babies between the ages of three and six begin to learn a bitter truth: the world does not exist to satisfy their needs. This realization is as essential as it is necessary because, without it, the human being cannot overcome this stage (which is animalistic and selfish by nature) and enter the Ego stage in which they begin not only to comprehend the structures and the makeups of the external world but also to adapt to the reality principle. In this stage, which squarely falls within the period of the Oedipus complex, human beings begin to realize that the world exists independent of their whims, and it does so with or without them. The Ego, which is “a mental agency and ‘self’ for the individual himself” (Akthar, 2009: 88), begins to develop at that stage. While acting as the former, i.e. a mental agency, the Ego poses as a police officer or a judge checkmating the selfish demands of the Id and putting them in line with the demands of the external world. However, while acting as the latter (i.e. as a kind of “self”), the Ego starts to feel some degree of responsibility, trying to assume the role of a *subject* and establish what we call “*I*”. The child *becomes* a separate person if entrusted with specific duties and responsibilities.

The Ego succeeds; however, rather than just suppressing the Id, the highest goal of the Ego is to reconcile the pleasure-seeking motives of the Id, the reality of the external world and the strict unrelenting behests of the Super Ego. Because “the ‘[E]go’ is in contact with reality and scans; selects, suppresses, filters, and organizes perceptions and stimuli using intelligence and judgment; it works in accordance with reality principle,” delineates Akthar (2009: 88).

In *Born on a Tuesday*, Dantala reflects these stages very clearly. The protagonist is portrayed as not having his Ego well developed. As a result, he does not recognize the reality principle, and even when he is an adult, he invariably operates on the pleasure principle. He narrates:

In the distance, I see four soldiers approaching. When they get behind the crowd, they stop. Malam Yunusa looks at them, looks at me and mutters, ‘Bastard sons of goats.’ I smile. I have never heard him curse before and it sounds really funny coming from him. At some point Malam Abduljalal goes quiet like he has forgotten what he wants to say. Malam Yunusa tugs at his caftan then nudges me to go up. When I climb the benches the whispering stops. I scream, ‘Allahu Akbar!’ The response of the crowd is better than the first time I smoked wee-wee.

It can be argued based on the above scenario (and many others in the novel) that Dantatala’s Ego is poorly developed as it does not work in accordance with reality principle: it does not suppress the Id. Dantala sees the soldiers coming towards the crowd he is leading and receives their message accordingly as follows:

The soldiers go round on the right side of the crowd and approach where we are standing. Alhaji Usman steps away from us to speak to them. They are arguing and pointing at me. I keep on speaking. Alhaji Usman leaves them and whispers to Malam Yunusa. Malam Yunusa in turn whispers into my ear. (*Born*: 192-193)

The soldiers ask him to disperse the crowd as the government has imposed a curfew and banned any public gathering till peace is regained. The protagonist gives us a vital clue into what is happening in his psyche when he says “A force is driving me that I do not know, but, wallahi, I love it. I love it even though the soldiers look menacing and have their fingers on their triggers, ready to shoot” (*Born* 192-193). The force he is referring to is nothing but the powerful forces of the Id and/or the unconscious which make him to forget about the danger and the urgency of the situation and subscribe to the pleasure principle. He loves the feeling and the fact that the entire crowd is giving him the attention just as a baby loves when the mother gives it her attention. He emphasizes that he loves the feeling because it is pleasant, and it is pleasant because it operates under the pleasure principle.

Due to Dantala’s unsuccessful resolution of his Oedipus complex, the protagonist fails to work with the *reality principle*; he fails to understand the materiality and the urgency of the situation during the crisis when the Army was trying to disperse people. He subscribes to the immediate gratification and pleasure principle instead of the reality principle. “A *force is driving me* that I do not know, but, wallahi, I love it. I love it even though the soldiers look menacing and have their fingers on their triggers, ready to shoot” (*Born*: 192, emphasis mine), he confesses. The force that is driving the protagonist to act rashly in order to satisfy the instant gratification and to get some feeling which “is better than the first time [he] smoked wee-wee” (*Born*: 192), is nothing but the Id, the pleasure principle.

He describes “[t]he response of the crowd [as being] better” and more pleasant “than the first time [he] smoked wee-wee,” (*Born*: 192), and he allows himself to be dragged into a clash with the army due to a simple reason: the extraordinary attention he receives from the mob satisfies his desires. He even realizes the harmful effect of giving in to such an infantile lust for ephemeral power because he compares it with the intoxicating effect of wee-wee. Despite (all this and) the fact that he notices “the soldiers look menacing and have their fingers on their triggers, ready to shoot” (*Born*: 192), he chooses to disobey them. His disobedience puts him in serious trouble and crushes his entire future ambition –he fails to become the caliph after the death of his mentor Sheikh Jamal. He dashes all his hopes and those of the moderate Muslims who are against the jihadism of Mallam Abdul Nur.

His attitude is a mistaken judgment, which is due to his failure to abandon the pleasure principle and act under the reality principle. The result is that the voice of moderation is quenched, and the hope of propagating “authentic” Islam in the country is smashed. Had he ignored that wonderful feeling of being high, which he describes as more satisfying than the extreme bliss he experienced when he first smoked marijuana, he would have saved the whole situation. However, he yields to the temptation of his desires which work with the pleasure principle.

4.3. Rebellion Against The Father

According to Freudian psychoanalysis, when a child has an unsuccessful resolution of the Oedipus complex, he displays neurotic behaviours such as being “bristly combativeness towards authority figures” (Akthar, 2009: 196). This explains very clearly the protagonist’s eagerness to rebel against authorities. It blinds him from seeing the danger of his action of disobeying the soldiers. He cannot let the crowd scatter for the sake of peace. He confirms that “the soldiers look menacing and have their fingers on their triggers, ready to shoot” when they realize the rebellious attitude of the crowd. Yet, he consoles himself, saying he “can see fear in their eyes” (*Born* 191).

How could trained and well-armed soldiers, who have been given the order to act by all means and at all costs to restore peace, be afraid of mere civilians? However, the protagonist's rebellious spirit against all forms of authority would not allow him to act according to the demands of reason and the dictates of reality.

This attitude is based on Dantala's relationship with his father and his rebellious attitude towards him. He rebels against his biological father: for example, he "burnt a whole bag of millet stalks" (*Born* 19) belonging to his father in a bold show of rebellion which is also a classic case of *displacement*; he rebels against his spiritual father Sheikh Jamal by disobeying the sheikh's teaching on tolerance and moderation; he rebels against the government by disobeying the soldiers' order to disperse the gathering during the riot. The rebellion is ingrained deep in his unconscious, and consequently, he finds it hard to obey the constituted authorities –a clear indication of the unresolved Oedipus complex (Akthar, 2009).

By rebelling against the government, the protagonist also rebels against his spiritual father and his mentor Sheikh Jamal. Throughout the novel, Dantala's mentor Sheikh Jamal refrains from advocating *jihadism* or extremism; he always supports moderate and liberal Islamic views. Even after an assassination attempt is made on his life –he escapes from the attempt and is taken to a hospital where the bullets in his body are removed – he still holds his grounds and condemns any act of violence in the name of revenge:

The day of the attack, Sheikh made one of the drivers take him from the hospital with all his bandages to the field where people had gathered, angry, ready to burn down every Shiite mosque and house. He winced as he screamed. He said he would rather die than have them start a war with the Shiites. At first they wouldn't listen, but he screamed until he found the words that made them calm, that made them pay attention. (*Born* 114)

The Sheikh preaches tolerance tirelessly and encourages it practically; he is tolerant to a fault. This could be considered his tragic flaw because he tolerates the myopic, neurotic Malam Abdul-Nur until the latter brings a catastrophe upon the sheikh and the entire society. A total fulfillment of Alhaji Usman's prophecy is when he warns Sheikh Jamal that Malam Abdul-Nur "will be [the sheikh's] ruin" (*Born* 111). Despite his sheikh's insistence on a nonviolent approach, Dantala fails to act accordingly when the soldiers disperse people to bring back law and order during the riot after the sheikh's death. Dantala cannot subscribe to the government's authority—or, let us say, within the terminology of psychoanalysis, the authority of the father. Had he subscribed to the call of reason, had he acted according to the reality principle, had he obeyed the soldiers' order, he would have averted the whole calamity that befalls him and his beloved Jama'atul Ihyau Islamil Haqiqiy—the Society for the Restoration of True Islam, something that would have very effectively installed him as the caliph of Sheikh Jamal after the Sheikh Jamal's demise.

In the beginning, the soldiers do not have any disruptive intention towards the people; instead, they "want the crowd to disperse [peacefully because the government] say all public gathering and preaching is [sic] prohibited" (*Born* 191). By default, the fight happens between the Firqatul Mujahideen, the followers of Mal. Abdul Nur and the Nigerian Army/Police. The followers of the assassinated sheikh are merely victims of the mujahideen's atrocities. As the late sheikh used to preach against extremism tirelessly, the security agencies would never include his followers in their blacklist. However, with Dantala's childish act of disobeying and even engaging the soldiers in front of the late Sheikh Jamal's Islamic centre, everything goes awry. He has the authority to command the angry mob because they all respect him, and they know his status as the deputy of

the late sheikh. When he fails to ask the crowd to disperse, when he fails to enjoin the crowd to exercise patience and obey the government for peace, the result is what we read below:

Soldiers begin to shout at people, asking them to leave and go home. They are hitting and pushing people. When one of them fires a shot in the air, people scream and start to throw stones at them. The soldiers shoot into the crowd. Some run away but most people stand their ground, pelting the soldiers with even bigger stones. I get down from the benches and pick up a stone. The crowd is closing in on them. The soldiers start to back away and then begin to run, shooting as they do. The crowd pursues. A large stone gets one of the soldiers in the neck. He trips and falls. As we all surge forward to where the soldier has fallen, I turn around to look for Malam Yunusa. He is there, a few feet behind me, lying motionless in the dust beside one of the boys of the volunteer guard. Tears well up in my eyes as I drag his body and lean it against a wall. By the time I reach where the soldier is lying, the crowd has torn off his uniform and smashed his head with stones and sticks. A human body without a face does not look like a human being. (Born: 193)

It is the same problem (unsuccessful resolution of the Oedipus complex) that makes Malam Abdul Nur, the radical deputy of Sheikh Jamal, lose his contact with reality. Like Dantala, Malam Abdul Nur also fails to align his life ambitions and dreams of establishing an Islamic state with reality. He fails to align with the *reality principle* and to obey the constituted authority. Mal. Abdul Nur does prove to be even more rebellious to the father's authority, the government. There are countless obstacles, hurdles and impediments (both from within and from without the Nigerian Muslim communities) which will never allow such wishful thinking to be realised, yet Mal. Abdul Nur insists on establishing the so-called Islamic state. From within the Islamic house, there is a serious schism between the Sunnis and the Shi'ites (there are sects and sub-sects of both Sunna and Shia traditions who abhor one another vehemently and sometimes even label each other as *kafir*. For example, *Darika* and *Izala* belong to the Sunni Islamic tradition, but neither is willing to accept the other as Muslim). This is what we find in the novel very similar to what is observed in the actual context of Nigeria.

The Nigerian state is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society. In his reasonable counter argument during the debate with Malam Abdul Nur, the moderate Sheikh Jamal expostulates thus, "If you [the extremist Muslims] got guns and men and tanks and defeated the Nigerian army, what is your plan for ruling this country, especially as there is a whole other half that is not Muslim?" (Born 165). For anyone acquainted with the Islamic principle of tolerance, the question of imposing *sharia* (Islamic canonical law) upon the non-Muslims does not even arise, nevertheless, like one of the major characters Mal. Abdul Nur, many radical Muslims do not behave in accordance with the reality principle. For them, it is impossible to accept the authority of the father, and they do not want to acknowledge the fact that almost half of the Nigerian population are not Muslims and cannot be ruled by *sharia*. However, Malam Abdul Nur rebels against the Federal Government that is incomparably stronger and has more military, economic, and all other resources at its disposal than his movement and the entire Muslim population of the country. Consequently, he brings unspeakable destruction upon himself, his followers, the people he wants to "liberate", and the society at large. What is worse is that even his "enemies," the moderate Muslims (who are working tirelessly to propagate the authentic Islamic teachings of tolerance and selflessness, patience and perseverance), and the al-Hakiky movement of Sheikh Jamal get entrapped and are destroyed as a result of Mallam Abdul-Nur's actions.

4.4. Hatred for the Father

A crucial aspect of Freud's Oedipus complex theory is the boy's hatred for the father, whom he views as a rival, and certainly a compelling one. Not only is the father hated, but he is also feared because as the boy fantasizes about eliminating the father and winning the mother as a lover, deep from inside, he believes that the father realizes his horrible ambition and consequently plans to punish him by castration. Furthermore, in psychoanalysis, as Anthony Storr expounds, "the father [is] also portrayed as authoritarian and severe; the source of prohibitions and threats; and the origin of what later became called the super-ego" (1989: 48). The "rivalry" between the father and the son could take many forms and could be expressed in multiple ways.

Within this context, the protagonist of the novel, Dantala, reflects his hatred for his father and never shows a piece of love for his father. Even when his father dies, he does not show any sorrow. The protagonist narrates as follows:

Then Alfa, whose father lives near my father's house in Sokoto, had just arrived at the school and *told me my father had died* months earlier. I did not ask him what killed him because, Allah, forgive me, *I did not care much*. It had been very long since I saw my father and he had not asked after me. [...] So, I told Malam Junaidu I was going back to Sokoto even though in my heart I didn't want to go. [...] It is not that I didn't agree that it is Allah who gives life and who takes, it is the way he said it in that dry tone he used when teaching that made me sad. *But I did not cry. I did not cry ...* (Born: 12)

Dantala's inability to mourn his father's death and his ability to boldly recount that he "did not care much" about his father's death and he "did not cry" (Born 12) give many hints on some more severe but subtle deeper issues concerning his relationship with his father. It is obvious why he was neither bereaved nor did he grieve: Why would he be grieving over the death of someone he had been harbouring a deadly antipathy about? Why would he be bothered by the death of someone whose murder he had been unconsciously contemplating?

This line of reasoning will even be all the more convincing when we consider more critically the time when the protagonist was forcibly separated from his mother by his father. A very critical reader who follows the timeline provided by the protagonist-narrator in *Born on a Tuesday* would unfailingly discover that it is not wrong to assume that the latter was separated from his mother when he was in the dire condition of the Oedipus complex or, at most, when he was in *latency period*, which comes immediately after the Oedipus complex (Storr, 1989: 49). Therefore, it would not be wrong for the protagonist to conjecture that his father had succeeded in castrating him not anatomically but symbolically. By sending Dantala, the father creates an unthinkable distance between him and his mother. Having all of this in the background, we can safely conclude that there is a very clear case of the Oedipus complex reflected in the novel.

4.5. Love for the Mother

Incomprehensible is the novel's protagonist's reverence for his mother. It could only be brought to the limelight by the invaluable help of psychoanalytic reading. The Oedipus complex has the following three phenomena in its triangular outlook: (1) the love for the opposite-sex parent (the mother, in the case of *Born on a Tuesday*); (2) the hatred for the same-sex parent; and (3) an evil pair of fear and guilt in the last remaining corner (the fear that the father has discovered one's

illicit thoughts towards the mother and decided to punish by castration as well as the guilt resulting from one's "ambition" of murdering the father).

Dantala loves his mother and loves whatever she loves. In spite of the whole lot of differences existing between the protagonist's sect, *Izala* and *Darika*, and the unspeakable antipathy with which the members of the former are allegedly reported to view the latter's saints, Dantala finds a photo of Sheikh Inyas (a patron saint of Darika) while walking in the street and picks it up. He takes it to his room and keeps it there simply because the picture "is identical to the one Umma [his mother] had in her room in Dogon Icce" (*Born*: 61). He does not have any love or respect for this sheikh despite the latter's saintly status in the eyes of the Darika adherents. Furthermore, being a Salafi by *akida*, and a deputy imam, he is not expected to keep posters/photos of anything living (animal or human) as it is against the Salafi teachings. Even though when his sheikh reproaches him for keeping the picture, something viewed as an act of "bid'a", an act of "shirk" by the Salafists, he "feels ashamed" but just "removes the photo from the side of the bed" (*Born*: 63). He cannot get quickly rid of a photo that looks like the one his mother used to keep. He "folds it and stuffs it in [his] bag" in the presence of Sheikh Jamal (*Born*: 64). His love and respect for his mother, his psychological attachment and admiration override any sense of religious duty and loyalty to the teachings of his *akida*. He quotes a verse from the Holy Qur'an (which says that shirk is the gravest sin in the sight of Allah) to support the sheikh's argument that keeping a photo is tantamount to shirk. However, when he detaches the picture from the wall, he carefully folds it and puts it in his bag instead of tearing it, burning it or disposing it instantaneously. He can do none of these immediately.

The logical implications of the protagonist's action are varied and illuminating. Let us examine a few of them here: 1) With regards to his mother, an act of "shirk" loses its gravity and becomes lawful. If it were a bottle of alcohol he would remove it from the table in his room after being reprimanded by his sheikh; he would not have put it inside his bag in the presence of the sheikh. 2) Only precious objects are hidden in the bag to protect them from theft and destruction. Therefore, by folding it and putting it in his bag, Dantala's action makes it vivid that the sheikh's reprimand has made him value the photo even more, though on the surface it may look otherwise. The unconscious is in operation here. 3) Lastly, an important thing to remember here is this simple fact: the photo is not a souvenir from the protagonist's mother, nor is it his beloved mother's picture—it is neither hers nor from her. Yet, Dantala cannot let himself leave this photo; he preserves it with a dutiful attitude and fetishism. This kind of displacing the sexual desire from "human objects and onto the fetish substitutes" (Rivkin and Ryan 2004: 410) is not an uncommon attitude among the "neurotic" literary characters.

What could be more revealing of the protagonist's mother fixation than this photo phenomenon? Explaining what classical Freudian psychoanalytic critics do, Peter Barry cites an example of mother fixation in "Harold Pinter's [play] *The Homecoming* [which] centres on an East End of London all-male household consisting of an autocratic father and two grown-up sons. The mother has been dead for some years but her memory is worshipped by the widower and her sons" (Barry, 2009: 116). In a similar vein, throughout the novel, the protagonist worships the memory of his beloved mother. The constant repetition of his mother's name—"Umma" and "my Umma" scattered throughout the novel—confirms that the protagonist's entire life has been shaped by his mother's influence. His descriptions of her, at times, do nothing but mark out his repressed desire for the mother he has been carrying all along from his childhood.

This is not surprising because, as Freud succinctly puts it, “[t]he selection of the mother as the object of love involves everything we understand by the Oedipus complex” (Freud, 1920: 315). “Freud insisted that,” write Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan, “sexuality was evident throughout life, from childhood on. The energy of sexuality is far from [being] exclusively genital, it can also be anal or oral, Freud noted, and it can also be displaced onto fetish objects or substitutes” (Rivkin and Ryan, 2004: 410). This perfectly fits what Dantala does in *Born on a Tuesday* with regard to the photo of Sheikh Inyas as we have argued in the preceding paragraphs.

4.6. Father-Son Feud

The conflict between the Federal Government and mujahideen could be used as a typical illustration of the Oedipus complex because it typifies the “natural” and “universal” father-son feud which very often leads to unimaginable catastrophes. According to the terrorists’ belief, the Nigerian state is an infidel country. The terrorists show excessive love to those countries that are of opposite caliber —the countries, which in their delusion, are real Islamic states such as Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan. Both historically and culturally, the fundamentalists belong to a society they call “infidel” (which they hate and plot against). In this sense, their hatred is vividly similar to the father-son feud of the Oedipus complex. They reject what they belong to.

Within this context, their hatred could be taken as the hatred for the same-sex parent, whereas the unconditional loyalty they pledge to the so-called Islamic societies means the love for the parent with whom they try to be connected. Whether the fundamentalists describe Nigeria as a *secular*, *non-Islamic*, *infidel* or *un-Islamic* state, the underlying point remains the same because all of these words are opposites of the word *Islamic*. Moreover, the Islamic fundamentalists as citizens of their countries represent children while the governments stand for parents. In light of this analogy, the fact that the terrorists abhor the governments and the latter’s severe attitude in dealing with the former are clear manifestations of the father-son feud. From the terrorists’ side, their antipathy to the government is juxtaposed with their infantile love for the mother (or mother country, Nigeria). Alternatively, as we have elaborated somewhere else (in Chapter 3.4), the terrorists’ unspeakable antipathy for the Federal Government of Nigeria (the father figure) stands in stark contrast with their unflinching loyalty to the so-called Islamic countries (another mother figure for them). It is beyond the realms of doubt that the relationship between the terrorists and the so-called Islamic states is similar to the natural mother-child relationship: the latter breastfeeds the former with ideology as well as financial support. This is what we read in the novel:

We have lost one of our major funders in Saudi Arabia. I did not know of this funder until I started handling our second bank account. There was money coming from the Maliki Foundation, which stopped a few months before Malam Abdul-Nur came back. The Foundation hosted Malam Abdul-Nur when he first got to Saudi Arabia. They gave him everything he needed because he was from Sheikh. When Sheikh called to ask if there was a problem, they told him they would send him an email. Two weeks after, they emailed to say that they had suspended the project under which we were receiving assistance. We do not know what happened when Malam Abdul-Nur was there or what he told them about us but Sheikh has found out that they are the ones who gave [Malam Abdul-Nur] money to buy and build up his farm. Sheikh says he will travel with the next hajj and try to have a meeting with them. He has added my name to the next hajj list too. Now I need to go and get a passport from the Immigration office in Sokoto. (*Born*: 176)

The quotation above makes it plain that the mujahideen receive aids from some foreign countries both in terms of ideologies and finances. Sheikh Jamal sends Malam Abdul-Nur to Saudi Arabia in order to soothe the tension between the Shiite members and the latter. Malam Abdul-Nur uses the opportunity and secures funding from there, which he later uses and builds a base for recruiting and training his followers, the mujahideen. The father-son feud that exists between the mujahideen and the Nigerian government is juxtaposed with the terrorists' loyalty to the so-called Islamic countries, and this loyalty is brought about due to the benefits the mujahideen are gaining from those countries as seen in the quote above.

4.7. Mother Fixation and the Traumatic Childhood Experience as Its Cause

We can leave the "Islamic" countries out of the scope at that point and present the situation as follows: Nigeria is the mother figure, the Federal Government represents the father figure, and the fundamentalists represent the son figure. In Freudian psychoanalysis, when a child goes through the Oedipus complex, he harbours an unspeakable rivalry towards the father due to his inordinate ambition to possess the mother figure. This is precisely what we have in *Born on a Tuesday*. The rivalry between the terrorists and the Federal Government is over the control of the mother, Nigeria. It can be effectively argued that the terrorists suffer from an inherent *mother fixation* in this regard. Why is it that, despite the incomprehensible reverence the terrorists show to the "Islamic" countries, they still do not simply migrate and live peacefully in the 'holy' countries so they can avoid all of the 'evils' they constantly grumble about in Nigeria? They cannot do that because they are caught up in a fixation. They are fixated on the mother country Nigeria.

A person who suffers from mother fixation can withstand unimaginable hardship and trouble in order just to be as close as possible to his mother, physically and psychologically. He idealizes and idolizes her, tries to do anything to please her, and even prefers to be in a relationship with women who share many similarities with his mother. "All male children, Freud argued, experience an early attachment to the mother that is sexual in nature. *Only the father's intervention, separating mother from child, prevents incest*," Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan explain (Rivkin and Ryan, 2004: 410, my emphasis). The father's intervention referred to in the quotation above could be seen very clearly in the novel. The protagonist's father takes an action to send Dantala to another city, which is far away from the mother –this is an excellent instance of metaphorical castration.

In the same vein, when the quote is viewed in the light of the feud between the mujahideen and the Federal Government of Nigeria, the government's determined effort to suppress the fundamentalists' attempt to have control over the Nigerian state stands for the same 'father's intervention'. What is more enthralling in the second case is that even the last part of the quotation ("... prevents incest") can be found in the mujahideen and the Federal Government's relationship: when the mujahideen succeed in taking the mantle of power from their "infidel" government, the "incest" occurs and, when the incest occurs, a multiplicity of disasters, including but not restricted to sanctions from the world powers and their allies, boycotts from other countries, civil wars within the country, invasion by other stronger countries who feel threatened by the mujahideen's success, befall the country in question. Also, the citizens, or more generally, the whole population of the country, would lose their most basic fundamental human rights, such as the right to freedom of conscience and religion, the freedom of expression and free speech. The dignity of the girl-child and women will be thrown into dustbin; they may not be allowed to attend school or practice the career of their choice. Afghanistan and Somalia are classic examples of this situation when the

father fails to intervene, and consequently the desire to achieve what you want, even it is not logical (metaphorically it is incestuous), happens. If nation states or countries are the mothers to their citizens – and surely, they are – what could be more incestuous than those same citizens bringing upon their own country any (usually many, sometimes all) of the disasters mentioned above? The obstruction brought by governments could literally be referred to as a required intervention, and as Akthar elucidates above, it is only the father's intervention that wards off incest.

“Fixation points are,” writes Charles Rycroft, “circumscribed inhibitions of development” (1995: 68) because they hinder smooth psychological growth and usually tend to arrest the person at a particular stage of psychological development by making the individual unable to step into the next developmental stage or forcing him to regress (i.e. revert) to the previous stage. Therefore, the terrorists' inability to migrate and live in a preferred “Islamic” country might show their *mother fixation*. They cannot think of any other country except Nigeria, though an excellent number of them can afford living abroad and enjoying the “Islamic” way of life they always claim dreaming about in any “Islamic” countries of their choice. They prefer to attach themselves to the mother (Nigeria) and complain bitterly about her relationship with the “infidel” leaders.

Besides the sociological level, the protagonist experiences mother fixation at the individual level. “The selection of the mother as the object of love involves everything we understand by the Oedipus complex, which has come to have great significance in the psychoanalytic explanation” (Freud 1920: 315). Charles Rycroft defines fixation as

[t]he process by which a person becomes or remains ambivalently attached to an object, this object being one which was appropriate to an earlier stage of development. Fixation is therefore evidence of failure to progress satisfactorily through the stages of libidinal development. The concept assumes that the fixated person has a tendency (a) to engage in infantile, outmoded patterns of behaviour or to regress to such patterns under stress; (b) to choose compulsively objects on the basis of their resemblance to the one on which he is fixated; and (c) suffers impoverishment of available energy as a result of his investment in the past object. Excessive frustration and satisfaction, excessive love and hate have all been adduced as causes of fixation. (1995: 88)

The protagonist of the novel experiences this kind of fixation. He was separated from his mother when he was still very green. Paying attention to the time hints found in the novel, one would never be wrong to deduce that Dantala was sent away by his father to Kaduna State as a young boy, most probably when he was still fighting the overwhelming battles of the Oedipus complex or very early in the latency stage. He states that:

I remember when I was very small, my father almost beat me to death because I burnt a whole bag of millet stalks. That was before the rain stopped falling in our village and my father sent me and my three brothers far away for Quranic training. I don't know where they are now, my brothers. Maybe they have gone back home. Maybe they have decided to stay like me. (*Born* 19)

The protagonist was not just small when he was separated from his mother, but he was *very small*, as seen in the first sentence of the quotation above, when his father carried out a symbolic castration on him. The protagonist was almost beaten to death before he was sent away from home. To call such an experience traumatic is a mere understatement. Psychoanalytic scholars believe that traumatic experiences result in fixations (Valls, 2019: 126). Rycroft aptly puts it, “[e]xcessive

frustration and satisfaction, excessive love and hate have all been adduced as causes of fixation” (1995: 88). Probably only the death of someone who is not only very close to a child but also who shows extra love and care could be more demoralizing than separating the child from his mother (by sending him to an entirely different place, a city in which he is but a stranger) at that tender age as done to the protagonist of the novel.

4.8. Phallic Fixation and Castration Anxiety

Phallic fixation and castration anxiety are observed symbolically regarding the terrorists’ relationship with the government. The terrorists also suffer from acute *castration anxiety* as they always fear that the government will punish them by taking away their weapons. The guns are always displayed as potent weapons that do not only kill but also force people to act in a certain way, as when the soldiers threaten the crowd at the protagonist’s mosque by pointing guns at them and shouting and telling them to go to their houses. The gun is a well-known and accurate phallic symbol of power per excellence. Consequently, castration anxiety is expounded more and more via the use of gun in the novel. The government wants to take the guns away from the mujahideen; the government is determined to castrate the mujahideen.

It is very paramount to remember that according to Freud, if a child has got a *phallic stage fixation*, he will find it very difficult to assimilate societal values, laws, and order. This explains why terrorists do not internalize societal values. Worse still, they also find it hard to internalize Islamic values such as the remarkable tolerance of the Holy Prophet towards the non-Muslims. The terrorists cannot tolerate even their fellow Muslims who do not subscribe to their extremist ideologies. They do not adopt the Prophet’s incredible patience and good neighbourliness due to their phallic fixation. Anthony Storr makes it very clear that there exists a direct link between the *phallic fixation* and the *love for the mother*, which is accompanied by the *castration fear*. He explains it in the following quotation:

Freud came to assume that, by the time he has reached the ‘phallic’ stage of development, at around the age of four or five, the small boy is sexually interested in his mother, wishes to gain exclusive possession of her, and therefore harbours hostile impulses towards his father.[...] the hostility arouses fear that the father will retaliate, and the form, which this retaliation is likely to take, is that of castration. (Storr, 1989: 46)

In the Freudian conceptualization of the Oedipus complex, “the father was also portrayed as authoritarian and severe; the source of prohibitions and threats” (Storr, 1989: 48), just like the Federal Government of Nigeria. Both the innocent, law-abiding citizens and the mujahideen, in *Born on a Tuesday*, receive severe and brutal treatment in the hands of the government’s security agencies, which could be justifiably described as authoritarian in the literal sense of the word based on the methods they employ in fighting the jihadists. The military random, mass arrests, the unnecessary harassment of innocent civilians (who are simultaneously targeted by the terrorists) by the Nigeria Police, and the sporadic shootings by both are uncontested testimony of the inhumane approaches of the government and the security agencies. The protagonist states that, “My fear was fed each time by the petrified faces of motorcyclists, afraid of being made to do frog jumps for offences as little as looking too directly into a policeman’s eyes. People were forced to undergo humiliating punishments such as roll[ing] in the dust while being slapped and kicked” by the security agents (*Born*: 114). When the army carries out a mass arrest of people (including both

terrorist suspects and innocent citizens) and takes them to the military detention camps, they subject them to the harshest and the most brutal treatment. People die in dozens; people die daily. It is described that sometimes it is even better to die than to survive in the military prisons. Dantala states:

Before they throw you into the pit they tie a rope around your legs so that they can use a long hook to pull you out when you are dead. It used to be that death was the worst thing that could happen to me. Then it was torture, especially the pliers and screwdrivers. After ten fingers and ten toes, and you don't say anything, even the person torturing you knows there is nothing you can give them and they stop. They leave you to die. This is the hardest part, when the pain doesn't succeed. The period when they think the hunger will kill you and they leave you down here and there is nothing to show whether it is morning or night or afternoon. (*Born*: 209)

Sometimes it is hard for people to choose between the rash and harsh military/police officers and the terrorists concerning the way they both use for the same society that they claim to save. It could be rightly argued that the attitudes of the governments – and their approaches too – in terms of their war against terrorism, discloses terrorism. Todd Sandler, in his *Terrorism: What Everyone Needs to Know*, informs us:

For all terrorist groups, backlash, or a negative reaction to stringent government counterterrorism measures, may also serve as a recruitment mechanism. A common terrorist tactic is to push the government to overreact to a brutal terrorist attack as a means of attracting members. Overly harsh government reactions, such as torture or summary executions, can alienate the general public, thereby gaining recruits for the terrorist group. Governments can be overzealous in limiting civil liberties, thereby losing support among their constituency, which may come to view the government as worse than the terrorists. (2018: 52-53)

Thus, the government appears as a castrating figure for the terrorists. The castration anxiety is among the most crucial aspects of the Freudian theory of the Oedipus complex. The mujahideen use rifles not only to show how powerful they are but also to achieve political ascendancy over their rivals. The government helps establish the gun as a phallic symbol –the symbol of power. The government's effort (in terms of taking the gun away from the terrorists) has also been explained as the father's attempt at punishing the son through castration. The terrorists' rebellious attitudes towards the government serve as a clear indication of their phallic fixation, which could shed light on the psychological background of their rebellion because if a boy is fixated on the phallic stage (i.e. has a phallic fixation), he finds it hard to internalise the laws of the father.

4.9. Laius Complex

In terms of psychoanalytic criticism, a valid explanation for the cruel *modus operandi* of the governments could be related to the concept of the *Laius complex*, which is, according to Salman Akhtar, “the paternal counterpart to a son's Oedipus complex, which impels urges to commit pederasty and filicide in the father” (2009: 157). Iris Levy delineates further, stating that the Laius complex “refers to the murderous and incestuous wishes of a parent toward a child. In its broader meaning, the Laius complex also includes any wish on the part of one in authority to symbolically murder or diminish a subordinate” (2011: 222). The aggressiveness, the harshness, and the severity

of the governments and their security agencies will be better understood if they are examined under the light of the Laius complex.

The background of this complex is based on another ancient story. King Laius is the father of Oedipus in the famous ancient Greek drama *Oedipus Rex* written by Sophocles in 420 BC. Freud owes the idea of the Oedipus complex to this play, as we know, and he gives it a thorough analysis, again and again, to make his theory well-grounded and universal. At this juncture, it is essential to stress the fact that in *Oedipus Rex*, it was the high-handedness of King Laius which ignited the quarrel in which he was killed; it was King Laius's hot-temperedness that "provoked a quarrel in which Oedipus killed him" (Laius Complex, n.d: para. 3). King Laius had not planned to eliminate Oedipus –as the latter was an infant– directly and immediately. He pierced the feet of the baby Oedipus and asked a servant to take him to a mountain in the jungle and abandon him there to die in a less hurried but more agonizing way.

In the same manner, the governments in *Born on a Tuesday* expose the protagonist in particular and the masses of children in general to death in an indirect but steady way. It is a symbolic example of the Laius Complex. Dantala narrates this situation as follows:

Cholera outbreak in many villages, our movement has been supporting the volunteers going round talking to people about open defecation, hand washing, boiling or purifying water and washing fruits and vegetables thoroughly before eating. A lot of people have died and relief from the state and local government either takes forever to come or doesn't come at all. The first time it happened the local government chairman came around with some materials and a lot of cameramen. I thought they would return but it was all a show. Movements like ours and the Dariqas and the Shiites are coming in to help with clean water, drugs and burying the dead. (*Born* 152)

The cholera outbreak was an authentic attestation of a veritable sea of sorrows in which the masses are drowning as the ship of good governance is being wrecked by selfish leaders. In addition to the cholera pandemic, floods are a typical "natural" disaster in *Born on a Tuesday*. Dantala learns painfully that his two sisters drowned "in the flood—she [the protagonist's mother] doesn't know where the water took them—their bodies have not been found" (*Born* 43). The governments ignore taking care of the suffering people; they do not show any effort to rescue the villagers during and after the flood:

[p]eople are dying of sickness, [t]here is no water or hospital in Dogon Icce and many people, especially children, purge until they die. The water got contaminated after the flood and although the local government chairman promised to bring water tankers, they have not seen any yet. (*Born* 39)

Terrorism scholars/researchers believe that providing social services to the populace during emergencies like the cholera pandemic cited above from *Born on a Tuesday* is a highly effective method utilized by terrorist groups in order to garner more social support, get more sympathizers among the public, and establish themselves as a better alternative to the failed government. They aim to make it clear that despite their meagre means and zero political power, they can still do what the governments cannot.

"Empirical evidence shows that," Todd Sandler states, "service-providing religious fundamentalist groups have engaged in more suicide terrorist incidents than other terrorist groups" (2018: 53) because more and more people would willingly offer themselves to be used as suicide

bombers since they have been convinced practically that the group would take care of their families after their death. What happens to the widows and the children of the gallant military/police officers who sacrificed their lives in the service of their country? Through the theory of the Laius complex, incomprehensibly wicked behaviours of parents and/or authorities could be fully comprehended from the psychoanalytic perspective (Akthar, 2009: 157).

In this chapter, our discussion of the hatred for the father, the love for the mother, and the father-son feud have demonstrated that the Federal Government of Nigeria stands as the father figure. In contrast, the mujahideen stand for the son. The country, Nigeria, represents motherly aspects. Moreover, in the same manner, the mother acts as the cause of the father-son feud in the Oedipus complex. The conflict between the government and the terrorists goes on their claim on Nigeria. The mujahideen want to possess Nigeria, but the government does not allow them. The harsh stance of the government in fighting the terrorists has been made lucid through the discussion of the Laius complex. Our claim is that this symbolic relationship shows the government fights the terrorists in order to avert an incestuous relationship between the son(s), i.e., the terrorists and their mother, Nigeria.

5. PSYCHOLOGICAL DEFENCE MECHANISMS

The entire contents of the unconscious mind are revolting, repressed, dark and active. As discussed in the theory of the Oedipus complex, it is deep down in our unconscious. Freud believed that the human race bury the two most heinous crimes of all times in the unconscious – the infantile desire for the mother and the aggressive ambition to kill the father. Thus, every kind of lustful love, whimsical wish and dream could be found in the unconscious. Unsurprisingly the unconscious, to use a Freudian phrase, is the seat of the Id. Throughout the baby's life, it knows nothing about restraint or self-control; it operates purely on the pleasure principle, which demands that every gratification has to be satisfied as quickly as possible and that the whole world (everything and everybody) owes its existence to help the baby in fulfilling its needs.

However, with the development of the Ego, many things have changed. The baby begins to face the blunt reality, and this becomes a source of psychological sorrow, a source of enormous anxiety. If the Ego must survive, our psychic system as a whole is tasked with the overwhelming assignment of finding an efficient solution for the anxiety. That is what sets the psychological defence mechanisms into motion. Defence mechanisms are psychic apparatuses which, coming from the same source (i.e. the unconscious) as the threats they are bound to thwart, detect the shattering feelings of guilt and anxiety and intercept them right from the onset, and thus, protect the Ego (Crammer 1991: 3). Donald Meltzer remarks defence mechanisms when he describes them as “lies we tell ourselves to evade pain” (qtd. in Burgo, 2012: 18). Charles Rycroft sees a defence mechanism as

[a] general designation for all the [psychical] techniques which the ego makes use of in conflicts which may lead to neurosis. The function of defence is to protect the ego, and defences may be instigated by (a) anxiety due to increases in instinctual tension (see also instinct); (b) anxiety due to a bad conscience (super-ego threats); or (c) realistic dangers. The concept of defence is usually stated in terms which imply that the human ego is beset by threats to its survival emanating from the id, the super-ego, and the outside world, and that it is, therefore, perpetually on the defensive. (Rycroft, 1995: 62)

It is imperative to distinguish between defence mechanisms and defence behaviour. While the former is more of a theory, the latter tends to be practical; the former is entirely unconscious as it is conceptual, but the latter could be either conscious or unconscious. Take an example of a husband being bullied and tyrannized by an ill-willing boss at work. Consequently, but unconsciously, he might transform his anger on his innocent obedient wife at home by constantly blaming her for every trivial thing she does at home. His constant blaming falls under defence behaviours, whereas we could theoretically name his action as *displacement*. In other words, defence mechanisms are “theoretical abstractions used to describe how the mind works,” while “defence behaviours” include practices, actions and habits “that serve defensive purposes” (Cramer, 1991: 4).

5.1. Denial

Sigmund Freud defines denial as “a way of taking cognizance of what is repressed” (1924: 242) because when we deny something, we do not completely eliminate it from our psyche. Rather, we push it back into the oblivion of the unconscious. In other words, we simply repress it. Freud's view on denial is more encompassing as it gives room to a whole set of variants of negation, reversal

and he considers it to be a correlative factor in neurosis. He also establishes a link between denial and psychological conflicts (Freud 1920: 330-335).

When faced with a stressful experience, human beings often find solace in denying either the inner component of the experience (internally and constantly repudiating the particular thought which feeds up the anxiety), like when “the person's ego is seeking to repudiate part of his own id [or his own super ego]” (A. Freud, 1983: 68) or the outer component, namely the real world event/object whose existence makes the reality unbearable and more stressful. In our helplessness, we find it easier to deny the existence of the experience: for us, it simply did not exist. Denial is among the earliest psychological defences that we experience as early as infancy: it “is available to serve a defensive function during the earliest months of life” (Cramer, 1991: 36). Therefore, it is not accidental that in discussing defence mechanisms, the vast majority of psychoanalysts do start with explaining the mechanism of *denial*. It is a

[d]efence mechanism by which either (a) some painful experience is denied or (b) some impulse or aspect of the self is denied, (a) and (b) are not certainly the same process. According to Freud, denial of painful perceptions is a general manifestation of the pleasure principle, the denial being part of hallucinatory wish-fulfilment [...]. As a result, all painful perceptions have to overcome the resistance of the pleasure principle. (Rycroft, 1995: 63)

Misperception, *reversal* and *negation* are the pillars upon which the mansion of denial is erected in the psyche. *Reversal* and *negation* function like the heart and brain in the human body. The former operates as a cardinal “component of denial in which a disturbing perception is changed into its opposite” (Cramer, 1991: 48). The latter is so important that it is almost impossible to talk of denial without including it in the picture. “Negation may function hand-in-hand with reversal, for if reality is not what it appears to be, then there is a greater possibility that a reversal-the opposite of reality-may be true” (Cramer, 1991: 49). For a practical denial to take place, the two phenomena are necessary, and the logic for their necessity is pain: when we try to counter the feeling of fear with that of confidence, we have first to negate the fact that we are afraid before we assume we are confident and, once we succeed in doing that, we have succeeded creating a *reversal* of the actual phenomenon (Cramer, 1991). This view of *denial* (in which both *negation* and *reversal* are taken to be its intrinsic components) seems more comprehensive than attempting to treat each of the three as an independent defence mechanism as suggested by some theorists such as Charles Rycroft who, in his monumental *Critical Dictionary of Psychoanalysis*, warns us that “Denial has to be distinguished from negation, in which an unpleasant perception is announced by assertion of its negative” (Rycroft, 1995: 63). The scanty elucidation offered by Rycroft on how to differentiate *negation* from *denial* is a good cue on how weak such a distinction is and how strong the link between the two psychic phenomena is.

It seems more convincing to take the line of reasoning similar to Jose Luis Valls, who, instead of trying to cut off all salient connections between denial and negation, substitutes *disavowal* for *denial* to treat *negation* as a separate defence mechanism. This is because Valls never fails to draw our attention to the fact that both mechanisms of negation and disavowal possess this ability to operate in the preconscious mind largely (Valls, 2019). As a result of this extensive elucidation of *disavowal*, Valls's omission of *denial* in the *Freudian Dictionary of Psychoanalysis* is understandable. After all, the terms have always been used synonymously by many psychoanalytic scholars (Akthar, 2009: 81). In support of viewing *reversal* as an integral part of *denial*, Anna Freud writes:

It is a curious thing that adults are so ready to make use of this very mechanism of in their intercourse children. Much of the pleasure which they give to children is derived from this kind of *denial of reality*. It is quite a common thing to tell even a small child "what a big boy" he is and to declare, contrary to the obvious facts, that he is as strong "as Father," as clever "as Mother," as brave "as a soldier" or as "tough" as his "big brother." It is natural that, when people want to comfort a child they resort to these *reversals of the real facts*. (1983: 85) (emphasis mine)

It is also worth noting here that some psychoanalysis theorists' disagreement, or rather divergent opinions on whether *negation* and *denial* should be viewed as separate concepts or not has its origin in the translation of Freud's original work, which was written in German. Freudian scholars and translators have been using both *to deny* and *to negate* simultaneously since the 1920s (Strachey, 1961: 235). Therefore, it is not surprising to find such disagreement among theorists today. After all, being psychological processes, defences do not work in isolation, and as Freud aptly remarks, "the psychoanalytic content has a habit of being more complicated than we should like to have it" (1920, 288).

To sum up our brief discussion of the concept of denial, we ought to mention the four types of denial: 1) perceptual denial, 2) fantasy denial, 3) denial in words, and 4) denial in action. The reflections of denial and the instances in which it is employed by the characters in *Born on a Tuesday* will be given in the subsequent pages.

5.1.1. Perceptual Denial

Born on a Tuesday tells a distressing story of numerous struggles between a barrage of social and psychological forces. There are many conflicts ranging from personal (intra-individual) and familial to political and religious ones. Viewing the novel from a psychoanalytic perspective, we aim to make it lucid that although each of those conflicts can be examined and evaluated in its right, they all owe their existence to the presence of intra-personal psychological conflicts within the individual characters in the novel. Even though it could be argued that the novel begins and ends with disturbing stories of hardships and difficulties, the real heart-breaking calamity occurs after one crucial event –the protagonist's denial of reality in the aftermath of Sheikh Jamal's assassination.

As has been illustrated in Chapter 2, during the discussion of the Oedipus complex, the protagonist's sect, the movement of the late Sheikh Jamal, would not have been involved in a direct conflict with the Nigerian security agencies thanks to the unflinching effort of their leader in propagating pacifism and religious tolerance. If Dantala had acted based on the training he received from Sheikh Jamal on tolerance and forgiveness, if he had followed the footsteps of the sheikh, if he obeyed the soldiers' instruction and dispersed the crowd, he would not be arrested. Nor would he be taken to the military prison as a terrorist suspect. This is because the government/the security agencies (as well as the general public) knows that he is the deputy of the assassinated sheikh, who always discourages violence, and tirelessly, preaches against jihadism. Had the protagonist imitated his mentor, he would have been considered a victim of terrorism, he would have saved the late sheikh's movement and he would have realised his ambitions of marrying the sheikh's daughter. He would have become the chief imam of the mosque and the leader of the Al-Hakiky Islamic Movement after Sheikh Jamal's assassination.

However, due to Dantala's denial of reality, everything turns upside down. Nowhere can we find this denial more glaring than when the soldiers come to the sheikh's Islamic centre to disperse the crowd, and the protagonist refuses and disobeys them, acting in the direct opposite of reality. The result is unsurprisingly catastrophic. The protagonist claims that [he] can see fear in their eyes. (Born 192)

This is an unmistakable evidence of Dantala's use of the mechanism of denial. The protagonist's assertion, "*I can see fear in their eyes*", conveys to readers his inability to perceive reality as it is. It betrays his acute misperception, another critical element of denial (Cramer, 1991: 47). Who is supposed to be afraid of whom? It is unrealistic that a well-armed military power backed by the world authorities (the Federal Government of Nigeria, African Union, and the United Nations/States) is afraid of them at that moment.

"Another component of denial that allows for reality to be both perceived and rejected at the same time is negation," and in this case, Cramer writes, "disturbing perceptions, thoughts, and feelings register but are rapidly transformed by the addition of the negative sign, the 'not' and thus, the big dog is 'not big'" (1991: 48). Dantala first negates the clause "I am afraid" by asserting its opposite "the soldiers are afraid". The inevitable outcome of this negation is reversal because the whole source/cause of the fear has been transformed upon the fearful, and the scary becomes scared.

Because the actualization of this instance of denial has brought forth an act of (mis)perception of reality, it is entirely safe to place this denial under the category of *perceptual denial*. If a "disturbing perception is acknowledged but is changed into something that is less painful, [t]he result is a misperception" (Cramer, 1991: 48). The beauty of this encounter goes beyond bringing together the critical elements of denial into a single event; it further illustrates an exciting case of *projection*. Dantala projects his fear unto the soldiers and asserts that they are afraid of the public. An individual can exploit various defence mechanisms simultaneously to ward off a psychological threat posed by enormous anxiety. Otherwise, it would be too overwhelming to handle. Scholars, clinical and academic psychologists have conducted extensive empirical research to demonstrate the existence of perceptual denial and the "changing [of] perception [takes place] in such a way that reality is no longer threatening" (Cramer, 1991: 38, 44-47). In this sense, the protagonist's denial is an unconscious psychological necessity. Thus, the soldiers would cease to be a source of anxiety.

Our use of defence mechanisms might sometimes be paradoxical. The defences are expected to be effective and serve their evolutionary purpose. They have to be unconscious – and indeed, the overwhelming majority of them are. However, that is precisely where their fatal flaw lies because, operating at the unconscious level, they may mislead us into believing something that is not "out there" or hinder us from sensing a real danger that is threatening and needs our urgent attention. Is it not better for the protagonist to be afraid and save himself and his people than to use the mechanism of perceptual denial by misperceiving reality? Of course, it is. But do human beings have control over their emotions? Many questions are to be handled by the bio-psychologists, but the simple truth given by psychoanalysis is that the psychological defence mechanisms are unconscious. Joseph Burgo writes about this disadvantage, which is "inherent in psychological defences: while they're necessary and useful, for each and every one of us, in coping with the inevitable pain that goes along with the fact of being human, when they become too deeply entrenched, they may prevent us from accessing important emotions we need to face" (2012: 16).

5.1.2. Denial Through Fantasy

Denial through fantasy is the second type of denial. In this type of denial, people do not repudiate reality by misperceiving it; instead, they leave tiny space for reality in their minds and bury themselves in wishful thinking. They are always under the impression that no matter how odd, no matter how unlikely, their wishes must come to pass, and they live by that belief against any evidence of reason, against any logic. Malam Abdul-Nur, the leader of the mujahideen in *Born on a Tuesday*, as well as his entire followers, is caught up in this type of denial. His fantasy makes him deny reality on the ground of his capacity and the capacity of his enemies. Having his whole mind full of the fantasy of establishing an Islamic state, he does not want to acknowledge the exigencies of real life. The following paragraph summarizes Malam Abdul-Nur's belief, or fantasy, in establishing an "Islamic" state.

The basis of the Nigerian government is kufr because democracy is 'a disgusting, anti-Islamic, Western invention which seeks to introduce liberal ideas and kill Islamic values.' He adds that working for the cause of kufr makes a person a kafir. He emphasises the word 'kafir' and says that it is the obligation of every able Muslim to forcefully challenge and remove ungodly, infidel rulers. Not through elections, because elections themselves are part of a system of kufr, but by force, because Muslims are bound by submission to the will of Allah. (*Born* 163)

Anyone – Muslim or non-Muslim – who has read about the religion of Islam, its origin, principles, and the history of the classical Muslims, including the Holy Prophet and his companions, would find the assertions above extremely erroneous in addition to being dangerous. For the sake of a swift analysis, let us assume that democracy is un-Islamic (though it is a weird assumption in its own right) and "working for the cause of kufr makes a person a kafir," but how could it ever be an "obligation of every able Muslim to forcefully challenge and remove ungodly, infidel rulers" (*Born* 163) if the Holy Prophet spent thirteen years out of his twenty-three-year mission, propagating Islam in Mecca without taking arms against one of the most tyrannical oppressive leaders recorded in the human history? However, Malam Abdul-Nur lives in a world of fantasy; he ignores the condition the Muslims are living with. A denial through fantasy "involves the imposition onto reality of [one's] personal fantasy," Phebe Cramer accurately observes (1991: 50). Malam Abdul-Nur's approach reflects a personal fantasy that is out of contact with reason and reality.

Unlike the protagonist, whose perceptual denial leads to misperceiving reality, Malam Abdul-Nur perceives what is going on correctly. Some events are taking place in the universities and in politics, which are entirely against Islamic teachings at the local level. At the international stratum, some powerful and privileged countries take decisions on behalf (and more often at the detriment) of the weaker nations imposing their views on the rest of the world by using any means at their disposal. On the other hand, some countries are branded not just as second-class and third-class nations but as second and third-worlds. As heinous as they sound, these are undeniable facts. He is also aware of some countries that claim to be squarely Islamic in terms of Islamic principles and practices. These facts account for the indisputable features of the fate of the entire humanity in the era of globalization. However, his fantasy arises as he thinks of overthrowing the governments and overhauling the whole political structure using improvised explosive devices and rifles.

He perceives reality but distorts it via an elaborate fantasy. “The denial [through fantasy] occurs not in terms of a failure to perceive what is there, but rather in an imposition of a highly personalized interpretation of what the perceived events mean” (Cramer, 1991: 52). This perfectly captures Malam Abdul-Nur’s situation: first, he perfectly perceives the reality of the Muslims’ world in the current world order, then he denies it through his fantasy of establishing an Islamic state overnight without patience, without attending to his most important assignment as a believer – purifying one’s soul (which involves purging it of the grievous sins such as *shirk*, hypocrisy, envy/jealousy, show up, greed and filling it up with the noblest thoughts and spiritual attributes like *tauheed*, *ikhlas*, i.e. sincerity and faithfulness, *tawakkul* unconditional trust in Allah, patience, forgiveness, *dhikr*, i.e. constant remembrance of Allah).

Jihad is a controversial issue in Islamic traditions. According to Sharif, it is the purification of one’s soul that the Holy Prophet reports as the greater jihad. It

refers to the personal struggle against one’s nafs; the lower self or ego, wherein a person strives to overcome temptations, carnal desires and the devil’s whisperings; striving also to internalize the Islamic teachings through acts of worship and devotion: like prayer, fasting, dhikr and almsgiving ... [It refers to one’s] striving against the ego and against the Devil - the inner jihad; which many refer to as jihād al-akbar, “the greater jihad.” Far from being a baseless notion (as some falsely claim), the inner jihad being the “greater” or “most obligatory” form of jihad is something rooted in the texts of the Revelation, and in the normative reading of the scholars. (Sharif, 2006: 1)

Regarding the quotation above, *Born on a Tuesday* depicts a classic case of a defence mechanism of reversal in the same phenomenon of the mujahideen raising swords against external enemies while ignoring the internal ones.

We have seen how – due to the salient interconnectedness existing between reversal and denial – some scholars opt for classifying reversal not just as a close ally of denial but as its integrated innate element. It is, therefore, not wrong to append it here to conclude our discussion with the mujahideen’s denial through fantasy. The act of diminishing a paramount religious duty into a minor one and turning the minor obligation into the principal task illustrates the reversal which accompanies –and acts as a platform for– the denial through fantasy. The scope of this thesis cannot allow for a comprehensive discussion of the theological dimensions of their action. An apt elucidation will serve our purpose: while the outside, physical jihad has always been considered as a *fard al- kifayah*, i.e. a religious duty in which the Muslim community can delegate some members to discharge it so that the rest of the population can pursue their daily lives; the inner jihad – the purification of one’s soul/the abstinence from the cardinal sins like murder, stealing, telling lies, fornication, and unfaithfulness (which the so-called mujahideen engage with relish) – is such a crucial spiritual duty in Islam that every single believer, as a matter of obligation, has to strive for it individually.

In addition to the *denial through fantasy* and *denial in perception*, Anna Freud, in *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defence* (1983), elaborates on two more types of denial: *denial in act(ion)* and *denial in words*. Interestingly, instances of both are found in the novel, as we shall see in the following paragraphs.

5.1.3. Denial in Action

Denial in action involves an active engagement with reality in order to deny it. In this type of denial, people deploy certain characteristics and habits which they think will help them in countering and overcoming their reality. Denial in action invariably involves impersonation of some kind, and sometimes it involves carrying out dangerous or funny activities (A. Freud, 1983). Anna Freud recounts one of her patients, a child who “used to put on his father's hat and walk about in it. As long as nobody interfered with him, he was contented and happy” (1983: 88) because in his illusion he succeeded in denying the reality of his being “a little, weak boy” with his action of putting on an adult's hat. Her young patient had convinced himself psychologically that he was no longer a boy as long as he could move around in his father's hat.

The terrorists in *Born on a Tuesday* engage in this type of denial through their actions of killing people. Among all of their victims, Sheikh Jamal stands out due to his social status as a famous preacher and the head of a religious movement, as well as due to the brutality and savagery employed in his assassination. The existence of the sheikh is a disturbing reality, a significant obstacle to the terrorists' ambition because he continues to refute their misleading ideology. By their act(ion) of the sheikh's assassination, the terrorists have denial in action. It is very important to stress that when we deny reality via our actions, we do not misperceive it; instead, we bravely divert it by trying to act oppositely.

In addition to killing people, the mujahideen's impersonation, namely their act of putting on the police and army uniform, could tell us more about their utilization of this mechanism of defence –denial in action. The reality is that Nigeria, being a sovereign state, has a legitimate and internationally recognized government presiding over the affairs of the Nigerian populace. This is a terrific reality, according to the mujahideen, a reality their psychology cannot withstand, a reality that breeds in them immense anxiety –a reality they cannot endure but deny. Consequently, they choose to kill people to deny their existence by putting on the uniforms of the Nigerian security agencies in the same fashion Freud's young patient used to do. Dantala narrates how these people play the police to actualize Sheikh's assassination:

[M]en in police uniforms getting off the motorcycles and heading towards the mosque. I open my mouth to ask what is going on, when they start firing. My head tells me to run into the mosque but my body jumps the short fence and runs into the darkness behind the trees where broken down buses are parked. I lie flat on the ground and hear the men screaming and firing. I get up slowly and peep from behind one of the buses. The policemen are shooting at people trying to run out of the mosque through the doors and the windows. One by one they enter the building. I make to scale the fence, to go and save Sheikh. I stop. His words come to me crisp and clear: the president and vice president never travel together in the same plane...someone has to take over in case something happens to one person. (*Born*, 185)

On the other hand, governmental security agencies do not fall short of using *denial in action*. The existence of terrorists becomes a painful reality that neither the government nor the security agents are ready to acknowledge, but unfortunately, it is out there. It would not be an exaggeration to describe the existence of a powerful terrorist group (with links and connections to other international terrorist networks) as a source of anxiety to the governments of even the most developed countries in the world. The situation is much more problematic for a developing country like Nigeria. We have seen how crucial *negation* and *reversal* are the components of *denial*. The

governments try to negate the terrorists' life by putting them to death. Even though the people at the sheikh's mosque were not armed,

[t]he soldiers shoot into the crowd. Some run away but most people stand their ground, pelting the soldiers with even bigger stones. I get down from the benches and pick up a stone. The crowd is closing in on them. The soldiers start to back away and then begin to run, shooting as they do. The crowd pursues. A large stone gets one of the soldiers in the neck. He trips and falls. As we all surge forward to where the soldier has fallen, I turn around to look for Malam Yunusa. He is there, a few feet behind me, lying motionless in the dust beside one of the boys of the volunteer guard. Tears well up in my eyes as I drag his body and lean it against a wall. (Born 193)

During the riot that ensued after the assassination of Sheikh Jamal, when people were trying to leave the city to avoid the violence from both the mujahideen and the security agents, this happened in the bus on which the protagonist wanted to travel.

As we come closer we realise it is an army truck. The driver slows down and tries to make a U-turn. The truck honks and the soldiers start shooting and screaming. People in the bus start screaming at the driver, telling him to stop. As soon as the driver parks on the side of the road, the two men in the front seats get out and begin to run. The truck pulls over behind us and several soldiers jump out, firing shots in the air. As we all get down from the bus with our hands in the air, four soldiers emerge from the dirt road with the two men who just ran away.

'You are the people who kill soldiers, abi?' one of the soldiers shouts at the two men. One of the men spits on the soldiers. A soldier from the truck kicks them both to the floor and shoots them in the chest and in the head. They order us to lie flat on the hot asphalt and they tie our hands behind our backs with wire. (Born 195)

Even the ones who are not shot in site, when they are taken to the military prisons, they are "not given [...] any food or water" (Born 198). They are kept there to die. This includes both the terrorist suspects and the innocent, terrorized civilians. For example, when the soldiers go to a school, and some "boys refuse to let them in," they kill "a few of them" (Born 197) and make their way into the school. Extra-judicial killings have become the norm of the day. To deny the existence of the terrorists or to reverse the situation or both, the Nigerian security agencies in *Born on a Tuesday* kill prejudicially on the roads, in schools, and especially in military custody, where media coverage cannot reach. *Denial in action* is depicted in the novel via the most regrettable means, the action of killing people by both the terrorists and the governments, each trying to deny the reality of the existence of the other, with the hapless masses becoming the victims of the atrocities committed by both parties. Smelser and Mitchel comment that "perhaps the greatest source of terrorism of this time [is] the terrorization of an established government against its own citizens" (Smelser and Mitchel, 2001:12), as this novel reveals.

5.1.4. Denial in Words

Denial in words involves the use of words to repudiate reality. It could take two routes: you are fully aware of the reality of a situation, and you make some pronouncements which contradict the situation, or someone says something in contradiction with what is obtainable in reality, and you choose to believe in the person and ignore the reality. Concerning children, denial in words could be helpful at times as it makes them cope with the anxiety of growing up and making the

necessary adjustments in the world of adults. If you keep repeating to a young child who seems less bright that s/he is intelligent and intelligent people are hard-working, psychologically, you will lift up his spirit. S/he will begin to work hard, believing that s/he is a bright kid and, therefore, must be up and doing. Anna Freud aptly states, “It is quite a common thing to tell even a small child ‘what a big boy’ he is and to declare, contrary to the obvious facts, that he is as strong ‘as Father,’ as clever ‘as Mother.’ It is natural that when people want to comfort a child, they resort to these reversals of the real facts” by using denial in words (1983: 85).

It is a critical distinguishing feature of the sect of mujahideen. They try to deny the existence and sincerity of other Muslims who do not belong to their sect by calling them kafir, i.e. non-believers. Whoever does not belong to their extremist school of thought, whoever does not view the religion of Islam from a political perspective, and whoever chooses to be more committed to the purification of his soul and living as spiritual as possible is branded as ‘kafir’ by the terrorists. This erroneous designation is not restricted to secular Muslims alone. It is extended to Muslim intellectuals – muftis, sheikhs, preachers – and all of the non-radical, apolitical Muslims. As the protagonist reveals, Malam Abdul-Nur, the leader of the mujahideen, does emphasize the word *kafir* whenever he addresses any audience, anywhere. This is what we see during the debate between Sheikh Jamal and Malam Abdul-Nur. In the novel, this point is focused on: No matter how knowledgeable you are, no matter how much money and effort you invest in the revival of the pristine non-violent Islamic doctrines, if you do not subscribe to their aggressive creed, you are a *kafir*, and you deserve to be killed, to be eliminated by all means. They use words and discourse for their political aims to deny the reality of the others’ faith. Their proclamation is contrary to reality. The terrorists’ ultimate goal in labelling Muslims as kafir is to deny the reality of the latter’s belief.

Sometimes denial in words has an interesting feature of duality: it involves two people/parties. One person will deny reality in his/her words. In contrast, the other person, who is fully aware that what is said contradicts reality, ignores reality and accepts the words of his/her interlocutor. Banda, the leader of the thugs’ gang, saves Dantala from engaging in this type of denial, which is employed by the politicians during the campaigns before the nationwide election. We read what happens below:

The Small Party has promised we may even get one thousand naira per head if they win the elections. They will build a shelter for us homeless boys and those who can’t return home or don’t have parents, where we can learn things like making chairs and sewing caftans and making caps. (*Born* 14-15)

Due to the sugar-coated promises made by the Small Party candidates during the pre-election campaigns, the protagonist asks Banda whether the politicians would build a shelter for the homeless boys living under the kuka tree in Bayan Layi, the boys’ neighbourhood. Banda replies: “I don’t like to think of that; all I want is that they pay every time they ask us to work for them. After the election, where will you see them?” (*Born* 16). Banda is not deceived. He does not allow the politicians’ denial in words to waylay him and make him lose contact with reality. It is a priceless intellectual prowess even the wise Sheikh Jamal lacks. Because before his murder, in one of his sermons, the sheikh, Dantala narrates, “speaks about the death of the governor, the cluelessness of the federal government and why we need to support and vote for a Muslim president in the next elections” (*Born* 181).

In this regard, Banda emerges more insightful than the sheikh because, in reality, a good leader could come from any religious background – he may even be irreligious. His quick and witty rhetorical question: “After the election, where will you see them?” (*Born* 16), captures his wise mind set. Banda believes that his relationship with the politicians is similar to that of an “employer/employee”. He just wants them to pay him for the work he does. Therefore, for Banda (just as it is for anybody who has attained political maturity) the phrases such as *vote for your fellow Christian/Muslim*, *vote for the Christian/Muslim candidate*, and *vote for someone who shares your faith* are worn-out phrases, are mere tools for the politicians who deliberately design to manipulate the electorates into voting for specific candidates, whose highest merit might be their attachment to a particular region or religion.

5.2. Projection

One of the most enthralling aspects of psychoanalysis is its intricate relationship with our daily life. Naturally, human beings tend to shift any personality traits onto others (such as envy and laziness), which society perceives as unfavourable. That is called projection. Joseph Sandler (1987) defines projection as “a psychological defence mechanism which has to do with the shifting of the attributes of an unconscious self-representation to a conscious object-representation” (qtd. in Akthar, 2009: 224). It is a “psychical mechanism characterized by perception of internal psychical processing in the external world” (Valls, 2019: 259).

It would be better to find the first instance of projection from our previous discussion to show how the defence mechanisms intersect and intermingle. Scarcely if ever, people use psychological defences in isolation. For example, when the protagonist employs denial (perceptual denial, to be more precise), namely when he denies reality by misperceiving it in his encounter with the soldiers during the riot, he says he “can see fear in their eyes” and disobeys them. This description, this assertion, and the entire scene portray a classic instance of projection as a defence mechanism of the protagonist. Since projection involves getting rid of one’s negative thoughts, feelings, and other unacceptable personality traits as well as unconsciously depositing them unto another person, Dantala tries to relieve himself of his fear and projects it unto the soldiers.

Although it later turns out to be an infantile decision which results in catastrophic consequences, from a psychological point of view, this projection has served its purpose, for the protagonist ignores the soldiers’ menacing presence and goes ahead with his preaching. This is not surprising because, despite being so essential in helping people to cope with stress and avoid psychological blackouts in daily life, sometimes the use of a particular defence instead of another could lead us into terrible trouble. If instead of denial and projection, the protagonist throws his thrust unto *reaction formation* and/or *rationalization* acting maturely/intellectually, he would have obeyed the soldiers and/or the government. He should have ordered the crowd to disperse and acted as his mentor Sheikh Jamal would have done if he were at the scene. He should have imitated what the sheikh does during the meeting with the Shiite Mallam in the government house. Even though an attempt is made at his life and his mosque is burnt, the mature sheikh offers to rebuild the burnt Shiite mosque personally, although nobody requests him to do that. His ultimate goal is to rekindle the lamp of peace put off by the crisis. However, the protagonist refuses to emulate and use his reason, and he regresses to the use of projection.

Even though it will not go deep into the religious points of view concerning terrorism, as a matter of necessity, this thesis ought to shed light on the conventional Islamic perspective (which

was unambiguously stated in the Qur'an and the Sunna) on terrorism. It is not a hidden fact that Islam holds an unequivocally stern stance against any form of terrorism and extremism of all kinds. However, due to the rise of Islamophobia in both media and academia in the decades following the 11th September terrorist attacks in the US, many people – pathetically, even some Muslims who rely on the Western media for commentaries on the current affairs – refer to “Islamic terrorism.” Not a harmless misnomer in its own right, the label “Islamic terrorism” does a great job of conveying the clandestine profession of a cause-and-effect relationship between Islam and terrorism. Islam puts a strict prohibition on any kind of indiscriminate violence, even during a conventional war. However, the texts of Islam, just like the scriptures of any other religion, are open to infinite interpretations. The scriptures are not inaccessible to Muslim terrorists. As they are fully aware of the inexhaustible power of religion to quench human psychological hunger, they choose to disguise their inhumane savagery in the cloth of religion when they fight for political reasons against the incomparably enormous political entities.

The terrorists have fallen short of living up to their religious injunctions. The woeful failure of the so-called mujahideen in discharging their religious duties, their inability to live up to their religious obligations and their intellectual inadequacies form the bases on which they place their claim of the apostasy of *the Other*. In addition to the above, as we read in *Born on a Tuesday*, the mujahideen indulge in horrible capital sin: they kill, they steal, they fornicate, and they betray trust. Even though these are grave sins, they would not be characterized as *kufr* by moderate Muslims, but the extremists do what psychoanalysts call *denial through exaggeration*. They first amplify their shortcomings in their unconscious and equate them with disbelief. Finally, it gives birth to overwhelming anxiety that they cannot handle. Therefore, they subsequently project their disbelief unto others and label them as *kafir* indiscriminately. The biggest irony is that they lack tolerance and think they would be tolerated by the society they stand against. Their use of projection prevents them from seeing the reality of their faith and their actual position concerning it. Besides, their method of reviving Islam through violence is problematic.

Mallam Abdul-Nur, the mujahideen's leader, is a quick-tempered, short-sighted, dishonest, and barbarous person whose cruelty has no border. He beats, maltreats and punishes his followers, including his biological brother, Jibril. His approach to his wife is also cruel: he “treats like a donkey [...] like an animal that he despises. Some days he locks her in her room without food because his food is cold or there is too much salt or not enough salt. He beats her with a tyre whip” (*Born* 124-125). Describing Mallam Abdul-Nur's maltreatment of the people around him, the protagonist says:

I don't like the way Jibril returns with a red eye or swollen lip many times after his brother has sent for him. Jibril is too old to be beaten like a child. I don't like the way Malam Abdul-Nur hits people, especially the new boys, who have started living in the newly built rooms by the side of ours behind the mosque. Apart from me, the only people who live in the mosque he does not hit are Umar, Sambo and Mohammed, who act as Sheikh's bodyguards. Last month he whipped one of the boys, Khalil, with a horsewhip until he bled and Chuks had to treat his wounds. Jibril too has whip marks all over his back. (*Born* 68)

The protagonist narrates how Malam Abdul-Nur behaves towards many other people cruelly. His inhumane behaviours are not only observed in his relationship with his wife: “Malam Abdul-Nur has shot someone [one of his followers that migrated with him to their jihadists' training camp] in the thigh” because the poor man attempted to escape and “leave the premises” (*Born* 162).

Jibril sleeps with Malam Abdul-Nur's wife. When Dantala discovers that Jibril is having a love affair with Malam Abdul-Nur's wife, instead of showing remorse and repenting, Jibril manipulates the protagonist and uses the opportunity to introduce him to fornication so that he would never feel guilty of being immoral. He could have escaped from his brother's maltreatment and stayed back with Dantala in Sheikh Jamal's al-Haqiqy Islamic Centre. However, he follows his brother and goes to "jihad" not because of any religious conviction but because of his lust, his illegal love affair with Abdul-Nur's wife, which is not only haram according to Islamic teachings but also a betrayal of the highest order.

Malam Abdul-Nur is a thief because he steals; he lacks honesty and integrity; he cannot keep trust. When the mosque committee trusts Malam Abdul-Nur to keep the money collected from the magnanimous worshippers, he cheats:

When everybody had left, Malam Abdul-Nur asked me to help count the money in the boxes. When we counted the last box he told me I could leave. I thought that I would help with adding everything together. I kept all the numbers in my head. In all, we had eighty two thousand six hundred ninety naira. So I was surprised when Sheikh was talking later in the evening about how good their visit was, how full the mosque was and how people dropped 'as much as seventy thousand naira' in the boxes. I thought it was a mistake but Malam Abdul-Nur was nodding in agreement. I don't forget numbers. (*Born* 70-71)

This quotation reveals that the mujahideen are depicted as everything but righteous Muslims. In their unconscious, they are painfully aware of their dismal failure concerning their religious duties, as well as their indulgence in heinous sins, which are known as *al-kaba'ir* in Islamic jurisprudence terminology. This results in the feeling of enormous guilt in their unconscious.

According to Jozef Perelberg, a Dutch psychoanalyst, Nikolaas Treuniet conducted "a research project offering analysis to patients who committed murder. Treuniet stresses the role of guilt as the instigator of the outburst; in patients, who commit such violent crimes" (1999: 21). Perelberg also links excessive projection to "homicide" whilst a "massive introjection" to "suicide" (1999: 20). In the event of a terrorist's suicide, both homicide and suicide are brought together. It could be argued, based on their belief, that they are the only men of God and everyone else is the devil who must either be converted by force or eliminated at all costs. As a result of their tremendous projection, they empty themselves of all of their evils and deposit it unto the Other, namely the innocent people outside. On the one hand, this makes them perceive the Other as the worst evil whose presence on the earth cannot be tolerated and whose elimination is the most significant religious duty—homicide. On the other hand, due to their intensive introjection of the evils they see in the world (of course, the world as a whole can never be perfect or free from incomprehensible, sometimes even absurd, evils which bring unnecessary hardships to the weak, the harmless, the innocent vast majority of not only Muslims but also non-Muslim human population), they feel overwhelmed by their helplessness and hopelessness. Thus, they find themselves in immense frustration and disappointment in life due to their inability to provide a solution either to themselves or to the suffering victims of life's ill-treatment and, therefore, unconsciously resolve to take their own lives as well as their victims' lives as they engage into both suicide and homicide.

In projection, there must be some personality that is transformed; there must be "an aspect of self [which] is disowned and given to another [person] to carry" (Johnson, 219: 180). In the novel, the governments are also caught in the mess of projection. The only difference, as we shall

see below, is that while the mujahideen project their weaknesses unto the moderate Muslims, the governments project their shortcomings unto the terrorists and execute them for their faults, the majority of which, in reality, originate from the countless inadequacies and lamentable incompetence of the governments. We have already made it categorically clear that, as far as psychoanalysis is concerned, the relationship between the terrorists and the governments is similar to that of a child and his parents.

The first and the most crucial cause of the governments' projection is their failure to educate their citizens in *Born on a Tuesday*. Education is a universal tool for nation-building, an authentic key for unlocking the essence of individuals. Education is an essential ingredient for the developing individuals, families, communities and nations – the most effective means of human emancipation. Any nation that fails to provide its citizens with a qualified education succeeds in planting the seeds of its own destruction, as in the novel.

Of all the main characters in the novel, Sheikh Jamal is the only one who has been at university. The rest are either illiterate or half-educated through self-education. Malam Abdul-Nur, the leader of the mujahideen, has been portrayed as knowledgeable and can speak both English and Arabic fluently. Still, he has never been to any college or university despite his great zeal for knowledge. As he is self-educated, he is totally against any conventional education system, including Islamic universities. During the debate between Malam Abdul-Nur and Sheikh Jamal, the latter asks the former whether “he had ever been to any of the ‘so-called’ Islamic universities he is condemning,” or if he “knows the curriculum of any of them” (*Born* 164). As an arrogant imposter who parades himself as a scholar cannot afford to say, *I don't know*, so he shakes his head and admits that he has neither been to any university nor known their curricula. Yet, he condemns other people doing what Islam prohibits by talking about what he does not know.

Dantala has been caught in the same trap with Malam Abdul-Nur as he also shares the latter's enthusiasm for education. This is evident from how Dantala struggles to learn English with the help of his friend Jibril and the great effort he puts into achieving that goal. His insatiable hunger for learning and his innate capacities would have made him a promising intellectual –a source of solutions, not problems– had the government done their work of providing the downtrodden citizens with an opportunity for qualified education. The same applies to all innocent adolescents who live under the kuka tree at Bayan Layi (a fictitious neighbourhood in Kaduna State) and who perceive themselves as not just homeless but also hopeless members of society. Their *only* value lies in their ability to hamper the electoral processes to “help” politicians. They are being used as political thugs, bandits, insurgents, or militants to destabilize society, portraying the incumbent government as incapable of providing security. Despite their burning enthusiasm for knowledge, neither Malam Abdul-Nur nor Dantala was lucky enough to be appropriately educated because the governments made it impossible for an average Nigerian.

Throughout the novel, we read about densely populated cities/states such as Kaduna, Sokoto, Kano, and Zaria. However, we do not read about education being launched by the governments. The moderate Sheikh Jamal opens a new school and an Islamic centre because he believes that the genuine liberation of the “oppressed” Muslims can only be achieved through education. Still, there is nothing similar from the government's side. The government leaves the youth in the hands of corrupt politicians and terrorists. In order to carry on their daily activities, governments need to externalize this dreadful aspect of the self. They need to project their total failure upon their citizens by discharging their most fundamental duty of educating the citizens. Unfortunately, the category

of the citizens who carry the burden of the governments' projection is the same class who are deprived of their fundamental human rights, namely the poor masses. Concerning the terrorists, in particular, and the youth, in general, the governments are too slow to correct but too quick to condemn them.

However, in real life, Nigeria's two democratic governments had taken corrective measures, and it would be unfair not to mention them here. On the 25th of June 2009, former president Umaru Musa Yar'Adua signed the Niger Delta Amnesty Package in order to bring an end to the terrorist activities carried out by the Niger Delta's militants. The amnesty had a general outreach in terms of its being inclusive of all the members of the numerous, at times warring, militant groups of the Niger Delta region. More than 15,000 militants were fortunately neutralized. Many commentators described it as a big success. The second example came from the government of Good Luck Jonathan, who introduced the Tsangaya (*Almajiri*) Model Schools on the 10th of April 2012. Is it a coincidence that Yar'Adua and Jonathan belong to the same party? The latter served as the vice president to the former, and in fact, Jonathan became president after the death of Yar'Adua. As far as the war against terrorism and militancy/insurgency is concerned, each of these presidents laid down an accurate sample of selflessness in serving their country. They showed an authentic intention of finding a solution to the challenges via this single act of cutting the roots of the poisonous tree, namely, illiterateness.

A question we should ask is why there has never been a university professor, a PhD holder or any well-established independent researcher who is considered an authority in Islamic studies but involved in Islamic fundamentalism. Or, if there are, why are they not as active as their self-educated counterparts? Why does their participation in such movements remain extremely minimal despite their vast knowledge of the Islamic sciences? We can see this practical example in the novel: even though both Sheikh Jamal and Malam Abdul-Nur share a distrust in the current political system of the country and both also believe it is not in line with the Islamic teachings, the former chooses an enlightened way of educating the people whom he wishes to liberate, and that is why he establishes a school in addition to his mosque where he teaches people daily; whereas the latter sees jihad as the only means through which the Muslims can be liberated.

The departments of Islamic studies in the universities have their curricula well-drafted by experts in each field and discipline. As with any form of religious education, the ultimate goal of Islamic education is not political. The overall aim of education in Islam is to equip an individual Muslim believer with all necessary knowledge for encouraging his religious duties and obligations, which unarguably involve his worldly endeavours—such as commerce and politics—but does not make their importance override one's spiritual success. Moreover, the experts responsible for designing these curricula are not only authorities in Islamic studies but also conventional education, so they pay attention to the pressing needs of the learner's society. The curriculum designers are aware of the fact that to conquer their overwhelming challenges, Nigerian Muslims do need to invest in making their youth pious professionals, not fierce fighters, and they put emphasis on it. After leaving the university, the graduates of the Islamic studies departments, unlike their uneducated/half-educated counterparts, could be easily absorbed into the labour market in both government and private sectors, religious and secular institutions; thus, instead of thinking about how to abolish the "un-Islamic" political order, they will be weighed down by the responsibilities of nation building. Conversely, the uneducated/ half-educated frustrated Muslim youth (and equally

non-Muslim youth too, as seen in the Niger Delta, for example) who experience the failures of the governments would be more prone to terrorism and all forms of anti-social activities.

A final word of caution needs to be asserted. I do not mean to assume that all terrorists are either illiterate/uneducated or half-educated/self-educated. Some terrorists are impeccably educated, and others are respected professionals from highly prosperous families. Therefore, my argument is squarely resting on our text *Born on a Tuesday* and its immediate context because “[r]egardless of what specific terrorist incident we examine, each is in a sense unique, having a dynamic, context and logic of its own” (Horgan, 2005:94). In Nigerian context or more broadly in the context of the developing countries in Africa, the Middle East and some parts of Asia, terrorism cannot be divorced from the disheartening socio-economic realities and political instability, in addition to the psychopathological tendencies displayed by the people involved in terrorism. The truth “is that terrorism, whether domestic or transnational, has no single or primary cause” (Sandler, 2018: 26).

In a nutshell, as we have seen above, the major characters of *Born on a Tuesday* use projection in several instances. The protagonist projects his fear unto the soldiers and it becomes the genesis of his most significant trouble in which he almost loses his life. For the mujahideen, the backbone of their claim of holiness is their use of projection. Even though they commit major sins and crimes such as stealing, fornication and murder, they call the mainstream Muslims kafir due to the influence of projection. Finally, the government project its failures in education and governance unto the youth and the masses.

5.3. Identification with the Aggressor

Quite often, technical meanings are offshoots of literal meanings. When you identify with someone or something, you associate yourself with the person/thing and identify with a course of action. It simply means aligning yourself with it and supporting it. According to Charles Rycroft, identification is a “process by which a person either (a) extends his identity into someone else, (b) borrows his identity from someone else, or (c) fuses or confuses his identity with someone else” (1996: 106). From this definition, it is obvious that there exists an intersection between identification and projection on the one hand and introjection and the former on the other. When a person takes some of his own personal (usually negative) characteristics and hangs them on another person, projection occurs –which is easily inferred from the (a) above. In contrast, introjection happens if s/he “takes in” some of another person’s traits, and that is what Rycroft refers to as “borrow[ing] his identity from someone else” (1996: 106). We keep the last instance (c) in which one “fuses or confuses his identity with someone else” (1996: 106) till its due time.

Both of these metaphorical giving and receiving, these lending and borrowing take place without the full awareness of the person because, as José Luis Valls states, “[i]dentification is an unconscious process, rather than simple imitation; though they share some points of contact, it is an appropriation expressing an ‘equal to’ and referring to something in common that remains in the unconscious” (2019: 159). It originates from the child’s relationship with both parents. We have the pre-Oedipal identification when the baby lives in an oceanic unity with the mother. In the phase of the Oedipus complex, we have another form of identification –that is, identification with the aggressor– which serves as a facilitating psychological incentive for the resolution of the Oedipus complex. Even in its earliest, i.e., pre-Oedipal form, identification can serve the purpose of defence.

As the baby “introjects” the mother object into itself, it relieves and protects itself from “separation anxiety” (Rycroft, 1996: 117) (Valls, 2019: 160-161).

Broadly, there are two types of identification: primary and secondary. The former exists earlier in the baby’s psychological development when it thinks of itself as a whole with the mother. The latter, our immediate concern in this sub-chapter, occurs later in life and builds on the latter’s psychic formation. Although it is arguably said to have typically started as early as the last phase of the Oedipus complex, when the male child begins to identify with his father by accepting the latter’s ideals due to the ingrained fear of castration, identification with the aggressor involves more of the out-of-family phenomena. It emerges mainly as the child begins to encounter outer life.

Among the psychological defence mechanisms, *identification with the aggressor* is somewhat ironic in that the victim of an aggressive behaviour begins to acquire some empathy towards his oppressors and begins to look up to them as role models by internalizing their characteristics and emulating their actions. “Identification with the aggressor,” writes Salman Akhtar, “leads a harshly treated subject to take on the attribute of the abuser. Consequently, a subject [the victim] himself becomes harsh and abusive towards others” (2009: 139). From this definition, it is clear that this defence mechanism combines two seemingly opposite phenomena, namely passivity and activity. One is abused first, in which one plays a passive role, remains a victim, and receives ill-treatment from outside. As long as the oppression lasts, the oppressed remains passive and receptive. However, after a while, this person might identify with the oppressor. Therefore, while the “persecution” is still going on, the oppressed begins to, actively in his unconscious, associate himself with the persecutor by internalizing those negative traits such as trickery, wickedness, mercilessness, and even physical characteristics like being agile and shouting at others (Howell, 2014: 51). Then, comes the last stage when the victim, having mastered all of the techniques used by the abuser, assumes the latter’s role and acts it out.

Even though Anna Freud had made an immense contribution to developing the theory of defence mechanisms and many commentators tend to tie the popularity of the theory to the publication of her well-acclaimed book *The Ego and The Mechanisms of Defence* (1946), the actual theorists of the concept of defence were her father, Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) and his contemporary, one of the fathers of psychoanalysis, Sándor Ferenczi (1873-1933). Moreover, rather than examining the general concept of *identification* in psychoanalysis/ego psychology, our concern in this sub-chapter is to scrutinize the novel *Born on a Tuesday* and bring some instances and reflections of identification with the aggressor to the limelight.

Elizabeth Howell traces the origin of identification with the aggressor as follows:

Ferenczi introduced the concept and term, identification with the aggressor in his seminal “Confusion of Tongues” paper, in which he described how the abused child becomes transfixed and robbed of his senses. [...] To expand upon Ferenczi’s observations, identification with the aggressor can be understood as a two-stage process. The first stage is automatic and initiated by trauma, but the second stage is defensive and purposeful. While identification with the aggressor begins as an automatic organismic process, with repeated activation and use, gradually it becomes a defensive process. (Howell, 2014: 49)

Indeed, like any other defence mechanisms, it happens in the darkest corner of our mind, the unconscious, and begins in childhood when a baby identifies with the mother or even earlier, in infancy, when “[t]he category of having does not exist: everything is being (Valls, 2019: 160). But in the wider context, as we engage in social transactions, we begin to utilize this defence more

frequently to cope with the harsh realities of real life: being helpless and sometimes hopeless, the oppressed people begin to look up to the oppressors for ‘guidance’ and places them on the higher rung of the ladder of achievement. He begins to realize that there is a need for him to be like his oppressors by behaving and acting similarly, even though it may be to a lesser degree. When taken outside the family circle in extreme cases, when the word aggressor becomes more literal, when the situation warrants and the imitation becomes perfect, identification with the aggressor could be extreme. A frequent illustration of this overflowed form of identification with the aggressor is found in the case of revenge. It is not uncommon to find an oppressed person, who succeeds in scaling through the persecution and later succeeds in getting an upper or even an equal opportunity upon his persecutor, behaves extremely decided to take revenge. Because he has his good reason smothered by malice and his mind is fully occupied with “grudge-holding, un-forgiveness, inconsolability and ruthlessness [...] –an individual driven by vengeance shows little concern for the possible moral and social consequences of his actions” (Akthar, 2009: 304).

The best and the most appropriate illustration (of identification with the aggressor, in this thesis) comes from the worst aggression witnessed by the human race: colonialism/colonisation, the European aggression towards their colonial subjects, particularly the colonialists’ aggression against the African continent. It is too ambitious for this thesis to aim at handling the European colonial aggression against the African people. Still, being a thorough analysis of a novel based on contemporary Nigeria, this thesis must briefly shed light on the fact that Nigeria was – and still is – a by-product of colonialism, and any in-depth academic analysis of the present situation of the country, as a matter of necessity, must put the historical facts/factors which gave birth to Nigeria into consideration.

A quick glimpse at the brutality used by the British colonizers to establish their dominance over their colonies reveals how horrendous the colonial industry was. Aime Césaire describes how a colonial army wiped out the inhabitants of a particular African city under the commandship of General Gerard: “they spared not one woman, not one child... At the end of the afternoon, the heat caused a light mist to arise: it was the blood of the five thousand victims, the ghost of the city, evaporating in the setting sun” (1955: 5). In 1903, when the British wanted to conquer the remaining part of the Sokoto Caliphate in northern Nigeria, they fought and conquered Sokoto, the caliphate capital; however, the sultan escaped. Instead of leaving the fugitive sultan (and his supporters) to flee to Sudan as planned, the British chased him, captured him, and killed him together with hundreds of his loyal followers (Falola and Genova, 2009: 46). The British decapitated the sultan, took pictures of his severed head, and disseminated all of the pieces to celebrate their victory and warn others who might have considered opposing them.

Whether in Africa or elsewhere, colonialism was an extremely iniquitous enterprise disguised in the humanitarian gown of the mission of civilising. Describing the European colonisation of Africa as a reasonable intrusion is a mere understatement. Adam Hochschild, in his seminal book *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa*, writes: “The further I explored, the more it was clear that the Congo of a century ago had indeed seen a death toll of Holocaust dimensions and Joseph Conrad describes it as ‘the vilest scramble for loot that ever disfigured the history of human conscience’” (1998: 9-10). In this sense, due to the wrongful venture of colonialism, “Europe is responsible before the human community for the highest heap of corpses in history” (Césaire, 1972: 8).

Although colonisation ended, its evils continue to interfere with every aspect of Nigeria (and Africa) as it is tied to the former colonialist systems, politically and economically. The colonizer inflicted on African people the most mutilating psychological injuries that will probably take centuries of effective convalescence to heal appropriately. However, the governments (the vast majority of Nigerian/African elite) emulate the British desperately. The majority of the ruling class never sees anything wrong with the British colonisation of Nigeria/Africa; instead, they see it as a kind of blessing because it has given them an opportunity which they would never have had otherwise. Identification with the aggressor involves the use of several other defences. It brings *introjection* and *projection* (A. Freud, 1983: 120) and therefore, it should not be a surprise if, as we have seen in our discussion of projection, the governments project their failures unto the colonial masters outside the country or they project their glaring inadequacies in governance and their inability to provide the Nigerian citizens with security unto the Muslim extremists. Identification with the aggressor must, as a matter of intrinsic nature and interconnectedness, involve not only the pair of *introjection* and *projection* but also *denial*: the governments would always find it convenient to declare that they and their security agents are neither brutal nor aggressive; instead, it is the terrorists who are both aggressive and brutal.

In *Protecting the self: Defence Mechanisms in Action*, Phebe Cramer enumerates three components of identification: 1) incorporation, 2) introjection and 3) identification proper (2006: 110). An interesting point to be emphasized here is the presence of all three components of identification –incorporation, introjection and identification proper– in terms of the Nigerian governments’ identification with the colonizer. The ruling class *incorporates* British cultural elements like language and mode of dressing. Because “the motive of introjection [is] the desire to be the same as the model” (Cramer, 2006: 111), the Nigerian governments also *introject* the outlook, and the features of the British society into their society, such as retaining and maintaining the functions of the traditional rulers while still striving tirelessly to attain the much-beloved values of liberal democracy. “Introjection may also occur,” as explained by Cramer, “in the internalization of the parents’ code of prohibitions” (2006: 111). Lastly, their *identification* involves their unflinching effort to establish themselves (and the Nigerian state) as a separate entity which is both similar to and different from Great Britain.

The colonised suffered the colonizer’s incapacitating aggression starting from the earliest contact with the aggressor (the colonizer). This could be traced as far back as the pre-colonial era of Nigeria when the British aggression and interference in the politics of the local people became historically conspicuous with the 1851 bombing of Eko/Lagos. The British employed their military technology in order to overthrow Oba Kosoko and reinstate Oba Akitoye on the throne.

The slaughter was awful. The battle raged for 5 days and finally, Lagos fell into the hands of the British. An Italian consul and trader, Giambattista Scala who visited Lagos after the invasion noted in his journals that the city was in ruins and its population has been reduced from 22,000 to 5000, leaving mostly children and the aged. (Adebowale, 2019, 1851 Bombardment of Lagos, para. 16)

The colonial apologists’ relentless effort to justify all sorts of atrocities is appallingly disappointing. One commentator writing about the battle of Burmi, in which the British murdered the last sultan of the Sokoto caliphate, described the sultan and his followers (the people who chose to flee together with the Sultan after the fall of Sokoto) as rebels. Sympathizers of colonialism offered flimsy excuses and misguiding explanations as a justification for the British interference in

the local politics of Lagos. However, after the intervention, the British occupied Lagos and made it their colony (Odegowi, 2011).

Then, the newly created elite who began to be involved in the affairs of the government during the colonial rule and who emerged as the ruling class instantaneously after the independence had the rare opportunity to witness the British aggression at a first-hand level, so they found it easier to imitate the colonialist aggression in dealing with their fellow Nigerians. In other words, many Nigerian governments identified with the aggressor by adapting the father's – i.e., the British – ideals. This is clear in how the governments treat the terrorist suspects and the innocent Nigerian masses in the novel. The governments have international support and backing from the former colonial masters, the former aggressors. More plainly, the new elite, the ruling class, and the governments emerge as inheritors of British aggression. They now form a group of new legitimate aggressors whose authority is derived from the former colonial aggressors. Salman Akthar captures this situation as follows:

While originally described in the context of child development, especially the preliminary stages of superego formation, 'identification with the aggressor' also seems to underlie the functioning of those large groups who, having faced persecution by one group, begin to persecute other, more vulnerable groups. (2009: 139)

In the light of the above-mentioned conditions, the mujahideen's leader, Malam Abdul-Nur, undergoes aggressive treatment at the hands of both the government as well as his own family. Because we have discussed the governments' aggression by citing numerous instances from the novel, now we should turn to the source of identification with the aggressor in Malam Abdul-Nur's family. His younger brother Jibril tells us that "their uncle used to beat all the children in his house every Friday," without any apparent reason "just in case they had done something he didn't know of during the week" (*Born* 68). It is an impressive display of aggression. In their book *Abnormal Psychology*, Jill M. Hooley et al. discuss a number of clinical studies which demonstrate that "stressful events early in life may help set the stage for the development of inflexible and distorted personality patterns" (2017: 367). Malam Abdul-Nur's upbringing was a classic illustration of child abuse. It was a childhood full of aggressive behaviours acted upon him as well as the other children in his family by the adult members of this family. This makes it easier for him to identify with the aggressors and their aggression as he grows up. "Sometimes we don't identify with the person, i.e. the aggressor, but we identify with the action, the behaviour of aggression," states Anna Freud (1983: 112). Malam Abdul-Nur succeeds considerably in his use of identification with the aggressor. He does the same concerning the action of aggression as Anna Freud refers to above. The extent of his identification with the action of aggression is as phenomenal as it is sporadic. The protagonist, Dantala, registers his complaints below:

I don't like the way Jibril returns with a red eye or swollen lip many times after his brother has sent for him. Jibril is too old to be beaten like a child. I don't like the way Malam Abdul-Nur hits people, especially the new boys, who have started living in the newly built rooms by the side of ours behind the mosque. Apart from me, the only people who live in the mosque he does not hit are Umar, Sambo and Mohammed, who act as Sheikh's bodyguards. Last month he whipped one of the boys, Khalil, with a horsewhip until he bled and Chuks had to treat his wounds. Jibril too has whip marks all over his back. (*Born* 68)

In the same fashion, the governments do not care to distinguish between the real terrorists and the innocent citizens. The security agents attack an entire neighbourhood, killing, maiming, and torturing people. The mujahideen, too, apply the same tactic in their operation due to the influence of identification with the aggressor. Their leader identifies with the oppressive governments and the security agents excellently. On one occasion, the protagonist's friend Jibril, the biological brother of Malam Abdul-Nur, returns from the latter's house. He narrates what he witnesses in the following sentence: "[H]e took off his shirt. He did not say a word. When he turned and [Dantala] saw the new wounds on his back, tears began to roll down [Dantala's] eyes" (*Born* 74). Malam Abdul-Nur's compulsive aggressive behaviours –which arise as a result of his identification with the aggressor, the governments, the police, and the army– do not make a distinction between a friend and a foe: he shoots one of his followers for attempting to run away from the training camp, and he treats his wife "like an animal" (*Born* 124). In the novel, Malam Abdul-Nur is portrayed as a sociopath who uses religious fundamentalism to cover his sociopathic behaviours because sometimes "individuals with a 'psychotic character' may go through life without breaking down into overt psychosis" (Akthar, 2009: 234).

We find in the behaviour of the youth at Bayan Layi (a fictitious neighbourhood in the novel) an illustrative display of identification with the aggressor. In their case, just like in that of mujahideen, the governments and/or the security agents serve as the source of aggression, the aggressor to be identified with, and whose acts of aggression are imitated. The government's aggression is multi-faceted: sometimes it involves physical violence, as do the security agents, while at other times, it takes the form of depriving the masses of essential services such as education and an efficient health care system. For example, the few hospitals are concentrated in the big cities where the elite live, and therefore, people living in rural areas do not have smooth access to health facilities. The protagonist narrates the ordeal of his village as follows, "[p]eople are dying of sickness, [t]here is no water or hospital in Dogon Icce and many people, especially children, purge until they die" (*Born* 39). What makes the situation worse is that even a few hospitals in the big cities are not meant for ordinary citizens because they charge exorbitant fees. Dantala tells how Banda suffers from sickness:

Banda is coughing and spitting out even more blood. I worry. Maybe after the elections, when the Small Party becomes the Big Party, they can pay for him to go to the big hospital in the capital with plenty of flowers and trees. Or, if Allah wills it, he will get better without even needing the hospital. (*Born* 14)

Despite the government's inability to either educate the youth and/or employ them (not necessarily directly but) by making the country's economy stronger and diversified, the governments are always ready to condemn, execute, and crack them down violently, as it happens during the post-election riot in the novel. While the governments are too slow to correct, they are too quick to condemn; the governments are poor at rehabilitation but good at retribution. The government fails to administrate social justice and order by providing its citizens with economic and educational opportunities. They apply pre-judicial killings, arbitrary detention, and planned persecution to the whole citizenry in *Born on a Tuesday*. The result is that the poor youth, having experienced such intense aggression, unconsciously resort to the use of identification with the aggressor as a defence mechanism in which they also identify with the action of aggression and become dangerously aggressive towards the innocent members of the civil society.

The thugs' aggression varies due to the target victims. If they find out that their target is a criminal, the action of the aggression is likely to include violence and physical destruction; whereas, if they consider their target victim a mere irresponsible person, their aggression tends to be an outright rejection, as we read below:

Malam Junaidu had warned us about the kuka tree boys, who come to the mosque only during Ramadan or Eid days—'yan daba, thugs, who do nothing but cause trouble in Bayan Layi.' We despised them because they did not know the Quran and Sunna like us and did not fast or pray five times a day. (*Born* 13)

From the excerpt above, the thugs' abandonment of the religious rituals of their community shows their symbolic aggression towards the entire community/society by rejecting societal values. However, when they feel that the target is not only irresponsible but also a criminal, they do not use symbolic aggression. They engage in physical aggression. When they catch a thief who steals "some gallons of groundnut oil from Maman Ladidi's house, [they] give him the beating of his life" (*Born* 10). The protagonist narrates: "Banda asked what [the thief's] name was. He said Idowu. I knew he was lying because he had the nose of an Igbo boy. I grabbed a long nail and pierced his head many times, demanding his real name" (*Born* 10). Having received such an inhumane aggression and met such a jungle justice, the thief dies a few hours later, and "his body [is found] in a gutter that evening" (*Born* 10). The thugs treat the thieves in a similar way the police treat them. The protagonist narrates what happens during one of the riots as follows:

As the crowd moves beyond Bayan Layi, they are stopped by the sound of gunfire ahead. I am still far behind taking a piss and I see the crowd running back. Two police vans are heading this way and they are firing into the air. As they get closer the policemen get out and start firing into the crowd. As I see the first person go down, I turn and run. (*Born* 20)

Since the military aggression against the Nigerian citizens has been elaborated in many places in the thesis, such as in 4.1.4, when the soldiers open fire on the unarmed crowd, and in 3.8 when analysing the army's treatment of the terrorist suspects in the military custody, we only restrict our reference to the police aggression here. The above incident makes it clear that the thugs identify with the police in carrying out the jungle justice on the thief as well as the general public.

To conclude our discussion of identification with the aggressor, we need to recap some key points. As we have seen above, in *Born on a Tuesday*, the authoritarian attitudes of the government are arguably due to the government's identification with the British colonialists who used aggression and subjected the people to harsh treatment during colonisation. Following them, both the thugs as well as the mujahideen identify with the cruel and oppressive government. After receiving inhumane treatment from the government and its security agents, they assimilate such aggression and apply it to innocent citizens.

5.4. Sublimation

Although all of the defence mechanisms are set against a single target, which is the protection of the ego, some of the defences are higher in their efficacy and nobler in terms of their social outcome and impact on the subject. For example, the difference between *projection* (a defence in which a person attributes the dark side of his personality to another) and *intellectualization* (a defence that allows an individual to think more logically and examine the negative

situation/experience more objectively and try to find “scientific” and/or philosophical justifications for the whole phenomenon) is very obvious in terms of their outcomes. This could explain why clinical psychoanalysts divide defence mechanisms into two: mature and immature. The former includes defences such as sublimation and intellectualization, while denial and splitting are good examples of the latter (Cramer, 2006). Because of its paramount importance, both in and outside the novel, because of its being the inexhaustible fountain of all cultural productions, sublimation ought to be the last defence mechanism we will examine in this thesis. The novel, in particular, and literature and art in general, Freud would vehemently argue, owe their existence to the noble defence mechanism of sublimation. Luis Valls captures the significance of it when he aptly remarks that “thought, language, and even the ego are sublimations” (2019: 322). Sublimation has many advantages: it is a positive, mature and constructive defence mechanism; it is utilized by “normal” individuals, not neurotics (A. Freud, 1983: 44). No wonder if, as Charles Rycroft remarks, “all ego-development depends on sublimation” (1995: 206).

In his *Creative Writers and Day Dreaming* (an attempt at providing a theory of arts), Freud convinces us that both the neurotic and the creative writer have something in common: neurosis. However, the difference arises in the fact that while the former gives in to his unconscious urges and becomes an enemy of himself and sometimes an enemy of society (as found in the case of sociopaths), the latter ‘conquer’ the impulses and cleverly converts them into a source of pleasure for himself and the society: “when a creative writer presents his plays to us or tells us what we are inclined to take to be his personal daydreams, we experience a great pleasure” (Freud, 1908: 13). The success of the creative writer in curing his latent neurosis internally and making them a source of fame for himself and a fountain of entertainment for the larger society can only be achieved through his use of sublimation.

Sublimation is a psychological defence mechanism in which a person diverts the unconscious repressed lustful wishes, aggressive and destructive instincts, and infantile sexual energy into a socially approved endeavour (A. Freud, 1983: 175). Sublimation has “no obvious resemblance to the original desire or its object” (Matsumoto, 2009: 171). It involves reversal as it converts a negative, destructive impulse into a positive and constructive one. To some extent, it resembles *reaction formation* in that the person’s responses are purposefully “formed”, or rather, the powerful and dangerous impulses of the unconscious are transformed into something not only safe but beneficial. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Psychology* offers a lucid and comprehensive definition as follows:

Sublimation is a defence mechanism which converts unconscious negative drives and desires into positive and productive behaviour. In classical psychoanalytic terms, our impulse is to fulfil the wishes of the id (often sexual and aggressive urges). However, through the reality principle, the ego transforms these urges and energies to fit appropriately within the larger societal context. From this perspective all choices that are appropriate and expected within society, both large (e.g., choosing a career or a partner) and small (e.g., keeping one’s house tidy, creative endeavours), are thought of as sublimations of base desires. This process is unconscious; the individual using this defence mechanism is only aware of his or her choices and decisions and is completely unaware of the urges that have been transformed. Sublimation is the ultimate goal of the ego and is therefore thought to be the most positive defence mechanism in both the short and the long term. (Matsumoto, 2009: 546).

In this respect, *Born on a Tuesday* portrays sublimation regarding Mallam Abdul-Nur. He shows a typical use of sublimation when he “converted [to Islam], learned Arabic and memorised the whole Quran in just one year” (*Born* 31). In a flash of exaggeration, the narrator concludes that “there is not a hadith of the Prophet that he doesn’t know” (*Born* 31). This incredible success achieved by Mallam Abdul-Nur within one year could be explained in light of this effective defence mechanism –sublimation.

In Nigeria, where Christians and Muslims co-exist, it will not be hard to comprehend the reasons for his mind-blowing intellectual aptitude, which would be mysterious otherwise. Many religious people, regardless of their being Muslim or Christian, regardless of denomination or sect, harbour an unspeakable enmity towards the adherents of the other religion. This is an undeniable fact that could be supported by religious crises (which in numerous cases resulted in massacres of innocent people) and marked Nigerian history since independence. Initially, being a Northern (minority) Christian, Mallam Abdul-Nur leaves his Christian name, Alex, and becomes a devoted Muslim. However, before his conversion, he had been harbouring the desire to eliminate the Muslim majority, whom he considered misguided enemies. Therefore, after converting to Islam, that murderous ambition underwent an unconscious censor and metamorphosed from an opposing desire to kill Muslims into a positive desire to learn about Islam. The mujahideen’s leader, Mallam Abdul-Nur, in particular, and the other leaders of Muslim terrorist groups, in general, are self-proclaimed sheikhs who could display an incredible knowledge of Islam and deploy it in their arguments for the justification of Islamic extremism, which has no basis in the pristine Islamic teachings. Concerning the relationship between the mechanism of sublimation and humans’ desire to acquire knowledge, Freudian psychoanalysts believe that “[i]t is sublimation in adults [that] generates the need for knowledge common to all human beings” (Valls, 2019: 352).

Perhaps nothing would make the argument above clearer than examining the behaviours of the same character, i.e. Mallam Abdul-Nur when he employs a negative defence mechanism of denial. When he denies the simple fact that the Nigerian army is stronger and more powerful than his followers, he invites a catastrophe upon himself, his followers, and the entire innocent members of the society. Because we have already given comprehensive treatments to the most conspicuous negative defence mechanisms found in the novel, such as denial and projection, and also examined the same character’s employment of those defences, there is no need to repeat them here. However, the point deserving reiteration here is that as soon as Mallam Abdul-Nur stops using the positive defence of sublimation and begins to utilise the negative ones, such as projection and denial, he becomes a murderous monster, a dreadful devil and a brutal beast of destruction. The same thing is obtainable regarding Dantala, who sublimates his libidinal energy in two conspicuous instances explained in the following paragraphs.

Earlier in the novel, Dantala channels his powerful unconscious energies into seeking knowledge in Kaduna city as a student. He memorises the whole Koran and learns how to speak the Arabic language fluently. When Sheikh Jamal calls Malam Junaidu, Dantala’s first teacher, in order to find out about the protagonist’s performance, Malam Junaidu confirms that Dantala did well as a student. Since the protagonist cannot ask Sheikh Jamal about their conversation with his former teacher, he asks Malam Abdul-Nur. We read their dialogue as follows:

Malam Abdul-Nur motions to me to leave. I get up. But I have to know what Malam Junaidu said.

‘Please what did Malam Junaidu say?’ I don’t know where I get the boldness.

‘He said you know your Arabic well.’ (*Born* 35)

However, as soon as Dantala substitutes *regression* for *sublimation* and he begins to smoke marijuana and cigarette (*smoking might be seen as a regression back to the oral stage when the mouth is the centre of pleasure; therefore, it exposes the protagonist’s oral stage fixation*) by joining the gang of the vagabond boys under the kuka tree, everything spoils: he stops learning and becomes a killer (*Born*: 10, 12, 19). He also ceases to utilise sublimation as he stops practising the daily religious rituals such as the five daily prayers and the recitation of the Holy Koran. As he exchanges sublimation for regression, or more properly, as he undergoes what Charles Rycroft calls the regression of sublimation (1995: 184), the protagonist loses all his sense of civility and refinement. He indulges himself in doing the most heinous crimes. During the election, he acts as a political thug to help the rival (Small) party rig the election and when the Big Party wins the election, he joins the boys under the kuka tree to go round the city, killing innocent people and setting properties on fire. Dantala tells us what happens during the post-election riot as follows:

The first thing we do is set ablaze the huge poster of the Big Party candidate in front of the market. I like how the fire eats up his face. I wish it was his face in real life. The Big Party office is on my mind—I can’t wait to search the offices and drawers and take whatever I can get from there before we set it ablaze. (*Born*: 18)

Even before they start the riot, they smoke wee-wee. It has been established above that smoking might be seen as a regression from a psychoanalytical point of view. Through his employment of regression, a negative and immature defence mechanism, he makes the worst savage of himself—he becomes a murderer and an arsonist. When an alleged thief is caught in Dantala’s neighbourhood, the protagonist “grabs a long nail and pierces [the thief’s] head many times” (*Born*: 10). Dantala continues to tell us that he “likes using sharp objects when beating a thief. [He] likes the way the blood spurts when you punch” (*Born*: 10).

Contrary to regression, through his utilization of sublimation, Dantala had promoted himself both socially and spiritually. When he had channeled the unconscious energy into learning, he did not only acquire knowledge but also grew in piety. The protagonist narrates: “I read another hadith which I cannot forget, and that makes me now scared of killing anything I will not eat: ‘He who takes pity even on a sparrow and spares its life, Allah will be merciful on him in the day of Judgment’” (*Born*: 96). Dantala’s use of sublimation really pays him. When Sheikh Jamal realises that Dantala memorizes the Qur’an, speaks Arabic and English fluently, he makes him his deputy. Dantala states that:

I have not been able to sleep since Sheikh told me that I will follow him to the deputy governor’s office. The temptation to tell Jibril everything that Sheikh wants me to do with him is very strong but I keep quiet because I don’t want it to sound like I am bragging, especially now that I have started singing the call to prayer at the mosque. (*Born* 115)

By using sublimation, the protagonist becomes not just a deputy imam and a teacher but also a secretary for one of the most vibrant and promising Islamic movements in the country and a

trusted confidant of its leader. He begins to mingle with significant personalities such as imams, deputy governors, and emirs.

The Freudian theory of defence mechanisms is one of the great contributions of psychoanalysis in helping us understand the complexities of the human psyche/mind as well as human behaviour. Among the defences that have been explored are denial (with all its four types), projection, identification with the aggressor, and sublimation. The characters in *Born on a Tuesday* employ all of these defences accordingly. In particular, Dantala, the protagonist, and the mujahideen's leader, Malam Abdul-Nur are shown to have utilised all of the four defences in one way or another, as has been examined in this chapter.



6. CONCLUSION

Born on a Tuesday (2016) is a contemporary novel and has not been extensively studied. This study aims to serve as a pioneer work of criticism which views the book through the psychological/psychoanalytic lens. Thus, it will pave the way for subsequent studies. Moreover, one of the key practical values of this study is that it calls upon the policymakers to reflect with high percipience and sharp acuity before designing any policy in the government's war against terrorism in order to avoid creating those ironical situations in which the more resources are channelled into fighting terrorism, the worse the security situation becomes.

If psychoanalysis is, as Freud puts it, "a procedure for investigating mental processes which are almost inaccessible in any other way" (qtd. in Alan De Mijolla, 2005:1362), then by applying the principles and the theories of psychoanalysis, psychoanalytic criticism has also a unique potential for making the mental processes –by underlying the characters' behaviours in the work of literature– apparent as does this study through its discussion of several psychoanalytic concepts and theories in *Born on a Tuesday*.

By exploring the effects and/or workings of the unconscious through its discussion of the Oedipus complex, this study reveals the hidden but powerful psychological fears and desires which motivate the behaviours of both the governments and the terrorists in *Born on a Tuesday* as they engage each other in a never-ending conflict in which each party's ultimate goal is to eliminate the other—a typical feature of the Oedipus complex known as the *father-son feud*. A very crucial facet of the Oedipus complex is the mother or, rather, the love for the mother, which was given a comprehensive examination in the analysis part of this study. After demonstrating logically how the country, i.e. Nigeria, takes the roles and the characteristics of the mother in the novel, after demonstrating how and why (due to their harshness and authoritative attitudes) the governments perfectly fit in the position of the father, the analysis makes it easier to understand why taking the political control of the country becomes the bone of contention between the mujahideen and the governments. The violent struggle to take political control of the country is the cause of the father-son feud.

The analysis has also delineated that the terrorists' inability to take their minds off the country/Nigeria is due to another crucial aspect of the Oedipus complex called *the mother fixation*. The analysis reveals the cause of the mujahideen's mother fixation. As illustrated in the discussion, many psychoanalytic theorists believe that exposure of a young child to excessive love or cruel treatment is a critical factor that leads to the mother fixation. Then, the analysis links the mujahideen's mother fixation to the harsh treatment they received from their parents and the governments when they were children. This was achieved by examining the familial relationships of some of the major characters of the novel, like the protagonist and Malam Abdul-Nur.

At this juncture, in order to put the government's authoritarian attitudes into a psychoanalytic perspective, a brief discussion of the Laius complex (the father's unconscious desire to commit filicide) was given. The government has been successfully positioned in the father's place whilst the mujahideen are unarguably in that of the son. It is via this apt analogy that we navigate through the narrative and delineate the governments' harsh treatment of the masses as Laius complex while concomitantly ascribing the mujahideen's rebellious attitude as a manifestation of the son's hatred for the father.

Because Laius complex is the parent's counterpart of the Oedipus complex (Akthar, 2009), its brief discussion helps us see why despite its failure in the provision of the basic social amenities such as roads and hospitals, the government is alarmingly swift regarding retribution. This point is made clear through an analogy created in which the starving masses (like the inhabitants of Dogon Icce, the protagonist's home village), who lack healthy drinking water and good roads and who are deprived of access to health facilities, are equated with the baby Oedipus whose legs were tied and left in the jungle to die alone. Leaving Oedipus alone to die slowly of hunger and diseases or, even worse, leaving him to be eaten off by predators is synonymous with how the governments leave the youth at the mercy of selfish politicians, grossly incompetent and sordidly savage security agents, and sanctimonious psychopathic mullahs who establish terrorist groups. The heartlessness and brutality that the armed forces mete out upon the innocent people (simultaneously terrorized by the mujahideen) could only be comprehended when the whole situation is perused under the light of the *Laius complex*.

When discussing the *defence mechanisms*, this study makes it clear that the very efficacy of the defences lies in their nature of being indiscernible phenomena and the fact that they operate at the unconscious level (Cramer, 2016). Our discussion of defence mechanisms has revealed beyond doubt that just like the masses, the elite are also prone to defence mechanisms, such as denial and projection. Therefore, it is paramount for them not to succumb to their feelings when devising a means or drafting a policy and/or making a law concerning the governments' counterterrorist projects. *Projection* could help us understand why the governments find it convenient to shift their incompetency to the youth: Is it not easier to describe the youth as lazy than to shoulder the responsibility of creating a conducive environment for them to thrive?

The study has shown that the mujahideen in *Born on a Tuesday* engage in the use of projection when they describe the mainstream Muslims as kafirs since they do not support their extremist ideologies. The mujahideen project their disbelief unto the non-radical Muslims. Still, it is the same negative defence of projection that leads Dantala/the protagonist into the worst of experience he ever has in the novel—staying in the military prison. When the soldiers come to scatter the crowd in front of Sheikh Jamal's mosque, Dantala projects his fear unto the soldiers and claims that the soldiers are afraid, and consequently, he disobeys them. It is this disobedience (which he brought upon himself through his projection) that brings him face to face with death.

Among the numerous psychoanalytic concepts which have been extremely useful in this study, one deserves a particular mention here – the *defence mechanism of denial*. In discussing the defence of denial and its types, it has been shown that when the mujahideen and the governments engage in the most brutal fight to eliminate each other, they are both helplessly revealing the phenomenon of *denial in action* as they vehemently struggle to deny the existence of each other. A classic case of *denial in action* happens when the mujahideen assassinate Sheikh Jamal in the novel. As his existence breeds psychological anxiety in their psyche, they deny it by murdering him. They also use *denial in words* against him by calling him a kafir. Moreover, the mujahideen's unrealistic attitude in thinking that (despite the yawning gap between their military capability and that of the governments) they could still succeed in overthrowing the government and changing the whole political system of the nation has its origin in their *denial through fantasy*. The mujahideen's and the governments' constant declaration of their innocence while describing the other as savage and inhumane does a brilliant job of affirming their utilization of *denial in words*. The former displays denial in words by describing the mainstream/moderate Muslims as infidels. The fourth and last

type of denial is *perceptual denial* which causes the terrorists and the governments not to be able to perceive reality because nowhere in the novel exists any attempt of reconciliation. The employment of brute force by both parties from the beginning till the end of *Born on a Tuesday*, the absence of any attempt to resolve the conflict via peaceful dialogues/negotiation indicates how poorly both parties perceive reality. Since all of these have been elaborated in the discussion of denial, it is safe for this study to conclude that both the governments and the mujahideen are actively using the essentially harmful and usually destructive defence of denial.

To draw attention to the situation mentioned above, this study examines the psychological condition of *identification with the aggressor* – a defence mechanism in which a previously abused person would begin to practically imitate the behaviour of his abuser and treat others (including his early oppressors) with a similar or even worse hostility. Nowhere has this been made clear than when a comparison is drawn between the Nigerian governments and their British colonial masters. The cruelty of the Nigerian armed forces in dealing with their fellow Nigerians does not distinguish between terrorist suspects and innocent citizens. For instance, even though the protagonist has no connection with terrorism, he is subjected to the most brutal treatment in the military prison. He also narrates the predicament of his fellow prisoners, who are mostly not terrorists. The study argued that the governments and/or the security agents identify with the British colonial masters. They treat the masses harshly and use violence and cruelty to maintain the existence of Nigeria in a very similar fashion to the British colonial masters who used violence and cruelty during the creation of Nigeria.

The governments always claim to be safeguarding and protecting the populace, but the reality (inside and outside the novel) is that Nigerians have suffered many atrocities as a consequence of the ineptitude and/or brutality of the Nigerian security agencies while they are fighting against the terrorists' violence (UNDP's Report, 2020). Our discussion of identification with the aggressor puts this irony into a psychoanalytic perspective by demonstrating that the governments/the security agencies are doing nothing but identifying themselves with their former colonial masters. This is simply true because describing the activities of the European colonialists as savagery is a mere euphemism: Africans would not have been able to apprehend the real significance of the word *evil* had they not gone through the twin experiences of slavery and colonialism. After undergoing an extremely iniquitous treatment at the hands of the British colonialists, the Nigerian governments began to act out similar deleterious treatment due to the psychological condition of identification with the aggressor. Likewise, after sketching out the government aggression towards the youth in particular and the entire population in general, it was also argued that Nigerian youth who engage in the destructive activities of militancy/insurgency and terrorism are acting out the same psychological drama – they are acting out their condition of identification with the aggressor. The most lamentable fact is that the innocent poor masses emerge as victims in both situations. In terms of *identification with the aggressor*, there exists a causal relationship between the authorities' aggression (not restricted to the act of physical violence) and militancy/terrorism in the Nigerian context.

Another important thing worthy of mentioning in the conclusion part is the author's message. In other words, what are the key ideas the novelist might have intended to communicate in *Born on a Tuesday*? Since we are aware that Elnathan John (as quoted in Chapter 2.1) takes the inspiration for the story directly from his encounter with an *almajiri* called Basiru, the same person John disguised as Dantala in the novel, it will not be wrong to conclude that the novelist is sending an

ominous warning about the worrisome future of the Nigerian youth in particular and the Nigerian populace in general. This can be deduced effortlessly by every critical reader of *Born on a Tuesday* because even though there are some disheartening incidents at the beginning of the novel, in the middle of the story, things get better and more stable. Dantala leaves the thug's life and becomes a responsible and respected person in society. He climbs higher on the social and spiritual ladders of society: he becomes a teacher, a deputy imam, and a secretary in one of the most promising religious movements in Nigeria.

However, at the end of the novel, he loses all of those achievements. He loses all of his friends and family members. His mentor, the moderate Sheikh Jamal, is assassinated, and their newly established Alhaqiyq Islamic movement's headquarters (including their mosque and school) is demolished. Both his physical and mental health deteriorates. When he comes out from military custody at the end of the novel, nobody recognises him because he looks sickly and skinny and dresses in shabby rags. People think he is just an ailing lunatic, a mere madman whose health condition is also debilitating. He cannot stand erect or walk normally without the help of a stick (*Born* 212). In the very last sentence of the novel, we read that Dantala decides to take a bus and "go wherever the bus is headed" (*Born* 215). Therefore, it is safe to conclude that the author's principal message is that as long as things remain the way they are, as long as the Nigerian society maintains its status quo, the future of the Nigerian youth is uncertain and bleak.

The study concludes that the main cause of the characters' involvement in terrorism does not arise only from intolerant religious teachings; instead, it is due to their inability to scale through their psychological handicaps. At first, they do not have their Oedipus complex well resolved and consequently, they paddle through the turbulent river of life and get confronted with the inevitable stresses and anxieties of life. They resort to the use of harmful defence mechanisms. Instead of using *sublimation*, for instance, almost all major characters employ *projection denial*. The vast majority of the characters stick to *the pleasure principle* and abandon *the reality principle*. Although this study does not aim at downplaying the socio-political and economic factors which could make the phenomenon of terrorism thrive in the Nigerian context, it provides some compelling arguments that the underlying causes of religious extremism lie in the psychology of the people –the terrorists, the security agents as well as the governments. It is high time that the Nigerian state realised this natural law: any society that fails to engage its youth constructively, the youth will engage the society destructively. It is essential to recognise the fact that the vast majority of the outlawed youth who stand up against either their immediate communities, like the "area boys"/*yan daba* (represented by the boys in the kuka tree district at Bayan Layi in the novel) or those who rebel against the Nigerian state such as the Niger Delta militants and Boko Haram (represented by the mujahideen) are most likely doing so due to the overwhelming frustration and dreadful disappointment, which create in them some psychological conditions (that are both antisocial and self-inflicting) and which also transform into nihilistic tendencies of militancy and terrorism.

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