
Dualism in Abubakar Adam Ibrahim's Season of Crimson Blossoms

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Abstract

“The psyche becomes a (re)writing machine which is not just seduced once, but constantly re-worked—a type of inter-desiring text—since new pleasures and experiences can be (re)inscribed through these acts of seduction and unconscious (re)inscriptions.”

- Seduction and Desire: The Psychoanalytic Theory of Sexuality Since Freud, Quindeau, (2013: 245).

This study, Dualism in Abubakar Adam Ibrahim's Season of Crimson Blossoms', diverts from the commonplace interpretations of Season of Crimson Blossoms (2015) in light of postcolonial, feminist and hemogenic perspectives to offer a psychological perspective in view of the concept of 'dualism' – what Shubh M. Singh and Subho Chakrabarti defined as "the existence of two different, often opposite, and irreducible principles."

This brings forth the ‘personality split’, what in neuroscience is termed ‘dissociative identity disorder’ (DID), a duplicitous trait we would see in the character of Hajiya Binta, at individual level, who straddles good and evil; and at the social level, in the character of Senator Buba Maikudi, who represents the political class.

In principle, this study investigates the manner in which the author, Abubakar Adam Ibrahim, uses the characters of especially Hajiya Binta, Hassan Reza, and Senator Maikudi to challenge the simplistic notion of good and evil, or what can be termed as right and wrong, which is said to be "social construct."

Using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory, the study examines the thought processes of some of the characters to see why they behave the way they do, how their actions and inactions shape the society in which they live, and, in another instance, how social structure affects their psychological well-being.

Keywords: Dualism, personality disorder, psychoanalysis

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study explores how Abubakar Adam Ibrahim uses Dualism as a literary motif to make the complexity of his characters' behaviors, settings, and plots lucid. Therefore, this study will explore the following objectives:

- 1- To demonstrate how Abubakar Adam Ibrahim uses the character of Hajiya Binta to explore the concept of good and evil, which exists in all human beings.
- 2- The author explains how the double standard of 'politicians' has led to various social ills: economic downturn, unemployment, lack of access to education, etc.
- 3- To illustrate the way *Season of Crimson Blossoms* juxtaposes places and settings to present the complexity of human experience.

Research Design

This study employs the qualitative research method to examine the mental properties of some of the major characters, like Binta Zubairu and Hassan Reza, in *Season of Crimson Blossoms* to expose the stimuli that influence their behaviors.

The study involves in-depth analysis of the psychological and dualistic nature of the novel using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory.

This study generates and investigates valuable information from authoritative works and previous Literature on *Season of Crimson Blossoms*, including books, magazines, e-journals, articles, newspapers, presentations, and lectures, which it used as the background of the study. It also used psychoanalysis and Dualism as its analytical frameworks.

Literature Review

Dream texts are also cryptic because the unconscious is rather poor in techniques for representing what it has to say, being largely confined to visual images, and so must often craftily translate a verbal significance into a visual one.

- Literary Theory, Eagleton (1996, 137).

Attempting to trace the intersection between psychology and Literature is not a new activity. Nurten Birlik, in his essay, *Psychology, and Literature*, cited how Peter Brooks tried to capture a critic's job beginning with the *model of scientific objectivity*. Brooks later doubted if there would ever be a *value-free criticism*.

There is a great turn in literary studies, which gave birth to "the theoretical revolution," which is quite a different approach to analyzing literary texts. It is in this regard that Nurten Birlik differentiated the two approaches: "Whi: le the former practice is logocentric and assumes a *Cartesian self* both in the author and the

characters created by the author, the latter problematizes any possible centers that might be assumed by a "logos" or any unified, stable selves that act on a stable ground or that achieve coherence due to an essence they embody before their encounter with culture/ideology/discourse," (Nurten 16).

A theoretical approach to the analysis of literary works, which psychoanalysis falls into, takes precedence, according to Birlik, and it "emphasizes [s] the constructed/ ideological nature of the self or identity."

Just in accordance with this study which put some characters in Abubakar Adam Ibrahim's *Season of Crimson Blossoms* under inspection, Nurten Birlik argued that "Rather than an autonomous, stable and self-knowing Cartesian subject of humanism, these vantage points take the fluid, constructed nature of the subject as their starting point, and put under scrutiny the subjectification process and the material conditions of being of these configured subjectivities which are always in the making," (p. 16).

There is no stability or a final meaning to literary analysis, but meanings are based on the perceptions of either the reader or the critic.

This notwithstanding, "convergences and influences between psychology and literature" started with the emergence of Freud's metapsychology [the aspect of the Theory starting with its structure] long before the theoretical turn emerged. That is to say, when the idea of logocentrism (scientific objectivity) was the order of the day. Freud's metapsychology was "one of the central elements that triggered and also contributed to the theoretical turn, (Birlik 17).

To contextualize his argument, Nutren Birlik said that there are many branches of psychology, including "ego psychology or cognitive psychology," etc., but literary critics ordinarily consult psychoanalytic psychology the most "in their analysis" (P. 18). Why this? Nutren Birlik asserted that "Freud's discovery of many of his theories in his self-analysis went parallel to his reading of literature, and he ended up borrowing and recontextualizing vocabulary and concepts from literature" (p. 18).

Citing Jauregui, Nutten Birlik said that Freud made a Bible out of Shakespeare's literary works. This is one of the reasons he applied his Theory of psychoanalysis, especially his interpretation of dreams, to literary works, including Shakespeare's.

Nutren Birlik agreed that "literature became a valid source for understanding different phenomena in the human psyche" because both "Freud and Jung attached significance to humanities, particularly to literature," and Freud resorted to Literature to validate, breathe life into, his theories, (p. 18).

Birlik argued that what enriched psychoanalysis and attracted literary critics and readers to it is Freud, Jung, and Lacan's ability to familiarize themselves "with literary and philosophical figures" and to re-employ their concepts in the field (p. 19).

Reasons for this interdisciplinary interaction Norman Holland, through Nutren Birlik, said can be found in one unusual confluence that psychoanalysis is the "science of human subjectivity" and it "offers insights into the mind's ways of thinking, dreaming, imagining, wanting, and especially the mind's ways of hiding from itself," (p. 19). It is this same principle that allows this study to apply Freud's psychoanalysis theory to examine Abubakar Adam Ibrahim's characters' thought processes. To this extent, Nutren Birlik said:

"Freud's reference to psychoanalytical practice as the talking cure and the emphasis he puts on free associations of the words in his analytic training might be another motivation for the interaction between psychology and Literature. (p. 19).

However, psychoanalysis has its focal point. As Birlik put it in the language of the analysis and the pivotal role of different forms of slips in the sessions is the center of attention, and "Words are the only material of the unconscious because the subject is nothing other than a construct of words to which only words can give access," (p. 19).

Both psychoanalysis and Literature are concerned with narrative and telling stories. Psychoanalysis reads the past to make sense of the present. Like a detective story, it starts with effects and traces these effects back to its origins. The reader, too, has to find causes and connections and, like the analyst, has to work again through time to recover meaning. (Sarup, 161).

Another side of Birlik's argument lies in Lacanian psychoanalysis, which is said to be a linguistic turn "triggered by structuralism" where meanings are forged through a perpetual interplay of signifiers called *signification*; a process defined as "a free-floating linguistic element which determines the course of things in

signification on both subjective and communal level but which is also impossible to put under control," (p. 22). However, the Lacanian process is entirely linguistic.

Mainly, the central message Nurten Birlik's essay, *Psychology and Literature*, relays is that "Psychoanalysis generates ideas about the working and structure of the human psyche, which creates a common ground between literature and the human world", (Birlik, p. 24).

In *Literature and Psychology: Writing, Trauma and the Self*, Önder Çakırtaş said that Freud set precedence in this regard by "borrowing and recontextualizing vocabulary and concepts from literature" to practicalize his Theory. To draw a clear connection between 'literature and psychoanalysis,' Freud analyzed 'Oedipus Rex' and 'Shakespeare's Hamlet' in his *The Interpretation of Dreams* to unravel their 'Oedipal elements' and 'the effects the plays 'on their audience' (Hossain 43).

However, this study is not the first, nor will it be the last, to marry up Freud's Psychoanalysis theory and an object of Literature to examine the complexity of human behavior; Shubh M. Singh and Subho Chakrabarti tested the waters in their 'A study in Dualism: The strange case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde'; Md. Ibrahim Khalil and Himadri Sekhar Royto in their *The Unconscious Desire and Its Conscious Reflection in Richard Wright's Native Son* While the former intention was to measure the Theory's efficacy in Robert Louis Stevenson's 1886 Gothic novella, the latter examined the influence of "the unconscious" on Bigger Thomas in Richard Wright's 1940 novel, *Native Son*.

However, it is in the interest of what this study intends to achieve that I review these mega works, which adopted the Freudian psychoanalysis theory to interpret literary texts before we put pressure on previous studies on Abubakar Adam Ibrahim's *Season of Crimson Blossoms*.

Ab initio, adopting a qualitative content analysis method, Shubh M. Singh and Subho Chakrabarti's study focuses on duplicity of human nature existent in the character of the kind and genteel Dr. Jekyll, who takes life to the extreme by bringing out his second nature.

Shubh M. Singh and Subho Chakrabarti established that "Stevenson creates a hero in Dr. Jekyll, who aware of the evil in his own being, and sick of the duplicity in his life, succeeds by way of his experiments on himself in freeing the pure evil part

of his being as Mr. Hyde so that each can indulge in a life unfettered by the demands of the other," (p. 2).

To them, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde possess "two equipotent, coexistent, and eternally opposed components – one kind, hospitable and humane and the other brutal, barbaric and bloodthirsty - that make up a "normal individual."

The 'two independent entities' – good and evil, according to the study, do not require each other to justify their existence even though the existence of one negates the other.

In essence, the picture of the two opposing elements living in the character of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde made Shubh M. Singh and Subho Chakrabarti push an argument to the effect that Stevenson "discard[s] [the] Christian notions of monism and embrace[s] dualism," which presents a more complex relationship that is coeternal, coexistent, and equipotent. They said thus:

"Evil now does not require the existence of good to justify itself, but it exists simply as itself, depicted as being the more powerful, the more enjoyable of the two, and in the end, ultimately, it is the one that leads to Dr. Jekyll's downfall and death" (P. 4).

In the same style as Shubh M. Singh and Subho Chakrabarti's finding, this study inspects how Hajiya Binta, an elderly woman subjugated by traumatic experiences, unleashes her dark side and even reconciles it with the good one that even when her mind strays the thought of going to "the madrasa, where women were taught matters of faith" keeps of popping up and her sight fixates on the English translation of Az Zahabi's '*The Major Sins*', forming an equipotential line of good and evil, which the character of Binta houses. Both studies paid careful attention to this "duality of human nature" to analyze the complexity inherent in human thought processes.

A study in Dualism: The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde did not limit its examination to duality in the character of Mr. Hyde, but also the "society as a whole, where the aristocracy that superficially was genteel and refined, had dark secrets to hide behind the high walls of the mansions in which they lived," (Singh, Chakrabarti, P. 4).

We see similar engagement in the character of Senator Buba Maikudi, who represents the political class. He pretends to be playing a messianic role in the fight against those "incompetent idiots" – politicians - who "mortgage[d]" the future of the downtrodden like Hassan Reza "to rule this country by whatever means" (p. 150), yet he is an unrepentant recruiter of political thugs for personal gains.

But it is very important to note that '*A Study in Dualism: The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*' did not explicitly touch on the collocation between settings and places, another perspective this study dwells on to strengthen the complexity of human experiences which more or less contributes to dualistic nature of Hajiya Binta's character.

In her *Duality in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, The Picture of Dorian Gray, and Dionea* Lauren McDonald examines the duality of the main characters in the three works in terms of late-Victorian culture.

Lauren asserts that Steveson's novel, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, "incorporates duality in several ways. Some of these incorporations of duality are quite obvious to the reader, such as the duality of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, and others are more hidden throughout the text, such as the duality of the home where Jekyll and Hyde reside" (p. 3).

The duality in the existence of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde may be simple; but taking a deeper look into the characters one finds them intriguing. Throughout the novel, the reader sees them as two distinct individuals as the boundaries become blurred – one good and handsome and the other ugly and brutal (Lauren, p. 3).

Lauren argued, "The duality of good and evil in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* implicated the historical reader as well as the modern-day reader because we see that an individual, even ourselves, can be both good and evil." Additionally, the two are from varying social classes – one a product of the "respected upper class" and the other "murderous lower class".

Clausson asserts that "in [the] late-Victorian society [lower class] represented degeneration, devolution, and the 'criminal man" (Lauren 4).

Lauren believes that with the depiction of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde embodied in a single body, Stevenson's idea was to show that "there was not so much distinction between the classes of society and that everyone was capable of evil" (Lauren 4).

Another Victorian novel, Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is steep in duality. This is best demonstrated "in the struggle between good and evil in Dorian that is depicted through his body's youthfulness and the painting's ugliness", (Lauren p. 6.). Lauren said that the reader "finds out that both Dorian and the painting are both good and evil."

The novel, according to Lauren, also pushes out the idea of duality in the public and private lives it depicts. "Dorian was afraid of revealing his private self to the outside world. He took great caution in hiding and covering up his portrait, which showed his evil side. Dorian's good looks were the centerpiece of his public life" (Lauren 6). The idea is that "Victorians hid their sinful nature so they would still be seen as good."

Lauren argued that *Dionea*, a short story, "presents duality in terms of good and evil in a more subtle way" as the character of "Dionea" seems to embody both opposing aspects of duality" (Lauren 9).

In summation, Lauren McDonald's *Duality in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, The Picture of Dorian Gray, and Dionea* approximates this study's interpretation of *Season of Crimson Blossoms* even though it is lacking in the psychoanalysis of its object of investigation.

While the paper ties duality in three texts to Victorian Literature, this study anchor on Dualism to Nigeria's postcolonial situation as depicted in *Season of Crimson Blossoms*.

However, Daniel Chukwuemeka's *A Wetness in Dry Places: Sex and Taboo in Abubakar Ibrahim's Season of Crimson Blossoms* diverges from the trite "monolithic view of what sexual freedom or self-determination could mean," which has always capitalized on "prostitution narratives" to a more holistic analysis that appreciates "salaciousness" as an all-inclusive topic. And using the "feminist view of existentialism," Chukwuemeka examined "the existential tragedy of sexual freedom." This was treated side by side with what in Northern Nigeria, where the novel is set, is considered taboo or sexual freedom.

Chukwuemeka hinged his study on "Modern tragedy," which uses the commoner as its object, as we saw in the case of Hajiya Binta or Hassan Reza, who, Miller's words, "act against the scheme of things" and their actions "degrade[d] the."

The study seemed to have held a dissenting perspective of textual analysis of Binta's tragedy, which centers on "the struggle for the sexual freedom of the female," which denial leads to the "subject's dehumanization" and is manifested "in forms of mental, emotional and physical debilitation" just in the case of the widow-grandmother.

To hit his target right on the head, Chukwuemeka classified "Muslim northern Nigeria with its strict religious and moral codes as "dry places" the full realization and experience of" [Binta]'s sexual and sensual freedom" as "wetness," – "stimulation of desire" (Chukwuemeka, 2).

The study argued that "... she [Binta Zubairu] is caught up in a conflict between fully espousing the ideas of sexual liberation and pandering to societal standards of sexual repression."

Chukwuemeka believed that "the nuances of sexual relationships and their prohibitions and checks by society, using extant traditional practices, are therefore problematic, particularly when examined from the viewpoint of existentialism," indicative existentialist standpoint of life in which the individual is viewed as a responsible member of the society who is capable of making "rational decisions" (P.4). But the question here is: are Binta's, even Hassan Reza's actions, rational?

The study claims that Binta Zubairu and Hassan Reza's sensibilities "towards their sexual affair are variously portrayed in the ways they react to the socio-cultural and traditional prescriptions and expectations typical of the predominant Muslim northern Nigeria, which is said to be patriarchal.

Chukwuemeka established that "Binta Zubairu is also a victim of gender inequality and subjugation of women" since "early marriage deprives her a lot of such privileges to attain that image of a fulfilled self" (P, 10).

His study, on the whole, reveals the existential feature of *Season of Crimson Blossoms* in two folds: one, "at the twilight of her [Binta's] sexual life," and second, her "desires had finally been unleashed".

A Wetness in Dry Places: Sex and Taboo in Abubakar Ibrahim's Season of Crimson Blossoms heavily relies on feminist Theory and existentialism to hold patriarchal, which denies Binta the right to sexual expression. But even feminism and existentialism are not without their counter-memories – alternative narratives.

A Wetness in Dry Places: Sex and Taboo in Abubakar Ibrahim's Season of Crimson Blossoms overlooks the psychological ingredients of the novel most importantly the psychological factors behind the actions of the major characters: Binta and Reza; and also, how the author, Abubakar Adam Ibrahim approximates good and evil, settings and locations to represent complexity of human experience and thought process.

The paper simply states that Binta and Reza refuse to accept "what life has offered them", "to uphold the personal responsibility required of them," and undertake a journey "to freedom and pursuit of happiness" (p. 12), which results in their actions. This ushers us into another essay that discusses the theme of enslavement, in broader terms, in *Season of Crimson Blossoms*.

Zainab Ango's *Enslaved: Passion and Politics in Abubakar Adam Ibrahim's Season of Crimson Blossoms* is pervasive as it treats enslavement in a broader sense. The essay handles the notion of enslavement, in the sense of subjugation, "away from a physical denial of freedom, or a state of being subjected to servitude" to another dimension characterized by "psychological encumbrance" where the body becomes a slave to the prescriptions of ideologies – or what can be called intentional predicates – and emotions brought by neurophysiological change.

Zainab Ango's *Enslaved: Passion and Politics in Abubakar Adam Ibrahim's Season of Crimson Blossoms* did not stop there. In the second part, it employs the postcolonial trauma theory to argue that Abubakar Adam Ibrahim utilized "postcolonial dislocation, fragmentation, anguish, and despair" to align Binta, Reza, and other characters' travail to Nigeria's postcolonial experiences (p. 2). Ango argues that Ibrahim's major characters "suffer psychological distress from the loss of loved ones to gruesome violence and fragmented family structures" (P. 3). She said thus: As members of society, they are further burdened by the strain of bad governance with its attendant issues of poverty, infrastructural decay, political instability, criminality, and ethnoreligious hostilities. Trapped in an atmosphere inundated by loss, deprivation, and pain, they seek relief in a 'forbidden' love affair and powerlessly succumb to further humiliation and pain. (p. 3).

Ango's first tier of the argument believes that "*Season of Crimson Blossoms*," as obtainable in other literary texts in the African continent, brings forth, among other issues, "Africa's continued subordination." She argues that the continent is "Caught up in a dependency complex inherited from colonialism, Africa's elites" (p. 4). She asserts thus:

"Abubakar Adam Ibrahim shares this concern in *Season of Crimson Blossoms*. His depiction of misgovernance, underdevelopment, violent use of political power, and ethnoreligious hostilities interrogates Nigeria's post-independence socio-political landscape." (p. 5).

Of course, we see this in the character of Reza, who is a school dropout; also, in the character of Hajiya Binta's husband, Zubairu's constant complaints on bad leadership and democratic decadence that when "Mama Efe ... sent her daughter to buy kerosine at a filling station the other day and after spending half the day in the queue, the girl was knocked down by a bike" and this a country that produces oil, (p 95). In the characters of Senator Buba Maikudi and Baleri, ASP Baleri are chards of corruption.

Using the qualitative analytical method and adopting postcolonial trauma theory, Angelo's essay gives precedence to the psychological disturbances, which have their roots in colonialism that Frantz Fanon said in his *The Wretched of the Earth*, in which he provides a psychoanalysis of the dehumanizing experiences of colonialism, thus:

That imperialism, which today is fighting against a true liberation of mankind, leaves in its wake here and there tinctures of decay which we must search out and mercilessly expel from our land and our spirits, (p. 249).

Such dehumanizing treatment continues, as Ango tries to put it, even after independence in the form of neo-colonialism, where Indigenous Africans play the role the colonizers left off to massage the ego of imperialism.

Whether we view trauma theory from the psychoanalytical domain or cultural domain, as Ango fought to dissect (p. 6), we see "fracturing of society and the alienation and suppression of the masses" in *Season of Crimson Blossoms* that Ibrahim "characters vacillate between the two worlds of personal ordeals and public experience of injustice and oppression" (p, 7), Binta losses husband "in one of the

series of ethno-religious crises in Jos" (p.271) and a son to moral decadence; and she is sent parking from Jos; Reza family is torn apart and opts for street life. Even the young "Fa'iza suffers a bout of headaches, fights -off spirits, whimpers and cries like a dog, in her dream" (p 19). Ango argued that, like Binta and her niece, Reza rides on the pedestal of trauma that he is "Abandoned by his mother in infancy, maltreated and scorned by his stepmothers, Reza grew up a troubled child longing for his mother's affection and hating her for dumping him" and finding no way out, he "turns to the underworld where his skills earned him the respect of fellow criminals," (p 8). Certainly, *Passion and Politics in Abubakar Adam Ibrahim's Season of Crimson Blossoms* alludes to the sexual attraction between Binta Zubairu and Reza, which she said is akin to "Freudian romance" theory, that "She [Binta] sees in him [Reza] the son she lost. He catches in her glimpses of the mother he resents but whose love he deeply craves, (Ango 8). But the essay losses focus on "the problematic incestuous desire of an old woman towards a young man" which explanation lies in Raymond de Saussure's premises of the Jocasta Complex," (Das, p. 1), one of the crutches this study depends on to arrive at its conclusion.

Das (2021) argued that the "Jocasta complex is a variation of the oedipal theme which mainly operates between mother and son," as in the case of Binta Zubairu and Hassan Reza.

It is apparent that Freud spent more energy on the competition between fathers and sons or "oedipal longings from the point of view of the infant male", (Das, p. 3), at the expense of the point view of the women.

Even though Hajiya Binta is concerned about her reputation, she tells Reza, "I don't want you to make assumptions about me because of what happened. I am a decent woman, a respected woman" (p. 56).

Despite this appeal aimed at saving her buttered image, there is a clear indication that Reza takes advantage of Binta when he says, "I thought you despise me for taking advantage of you, and I had no idea what to expect if I came back," Traumatic experiences Binta repressed have reduced her to an advanced maniac. There is a nexus between the Oedipus complex and Jocasta complex in the way Reza and Binta's thoughts are portrayed by the author: Reza, after mating with Binta Zubairu, "Thoughts of his mother, the great whore of Arabia, whose musky fragrance still eddied in his memory, wafted before his mind like the cigarette smoke," and since the day Reza scales Binta's house and his hand rubs against her beasts and his

phallus against her butt "her long-abandoned womanhood...provoked by someone who reminded her Yaro." Binta's love for her son, Yaro, is now transferred to a new-found love, Reza.

Adopting qualitative analysis, *Passion and Politics in Abubakar Adam Ibrahim's Season of Crimson Blossoms* established that the sexual relationship between Hajiya Binta and Reza "wasn't just sexual desires but the yearnings of a mother to hold and care for her child taken away from her by the cruel bullets of the police. On his part, Reza had no qualms with the affair", a position which is not as blunt as this research's argument which is bold enough to conclude that Binta struggles with 'sexual feelings,' which Freud described as "dark continent" upon which Raymond de Saussure beamed his searchlight and came up with Jocasta complex. That is to say that Binta Zubairu is sexually attracted to Hassan Reza.

Zainab Ango's *Passion and Politics in Abubakar Adam Ibrahim's Season of Crimson Blossoms* spent much of its energy digging into postcolonial and trauma elements in the novel to show how her argument aligns with postcolonial Nigeria and the traumatic experience thereof if Ango's essay is another discourse analysis wherein intellectual energy is deployed to see how writers project their thoughts and beliefs.

Results and Discussions

Binta Zubairu

This study, *Dualism in Abubakar Adam Ibrahim Season of Crimson Blossoms*, finds that Binta Zubairu's character signifies duality in a precise way, the same way Lauren McDonald said of *Dionea* in her *Duality in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, The Picture of Dorian Gray, and Dionea*. Binta embodies two opposing elements of good and evil. This she straddles throughout the novel.

Binta begins as a purely decent woman or an ever-watchful guide. She is a former school teacher who is passionate about her profession and a committed housewife.

In many instances, we see Binta Zubairu as an avid "Madara" goer "where women are taught matters of faith" and as a constant companion of the "English Translation of Az Zahabi's *The Major Sins*" (p. 11). Both scenarios evidence Binta's virtue and purity as a responsible widow, but as the story progresses, her morality declines, and she graduates from a willing whore to a 25-year-old street lord, Hassan Reza.

Binta is apparently conscious of her sudden degeneration from 'good' to 'bad' after a sex session with Reza. "She looked at the mischievous light in his eyes and smiled. She shoved him away, and he fell on his back on the bed and laughed up to the ceiling. She, too, laughed. [and said] 'God, what have I done? I have corrupted this boy.' (p. 159).

Binta's image – physically and mentally – wears a twisted-about appearance, which is aptly put by Reza when "he turned and looked at her [Binta] perplexed face" after narrating to her his childhood experience, he said: "We are like clothes, you understand. We get rumpled, creased, and torn, sometimes irreparably. Some of us are stitched up; others are discarded. Some clothes are fortunate. Others are not. They are born into misfortune and ink spills and whatnots, you understand" (p. 180).

Binta's character embodies a binary of good and bad to the extent that she efficiently serves as a 'maker' and a 'destroyer.' She gives Reza every support to sustain the libidinal relationship between them even when Huraira becomes an encumbrance to their desire.

She follows Reza to the "Shagali Hotel" to satisfy her burning lust (p. 158). She guides him on how to obliterate traces of their lustrous relations that "Reza now had to call each time he was coming so she could leave the Madara at break time to find him sitting on her rear fence waiting," (p. 110).

From all indications, Binta pretends and continues to be good all her life, waiting for a perfect time to be bad, and Reza's emergence unlocks the dark side of Binta that she says, "I was just thinking how much like a flower I am. I have waited my whole life to feel ... No one has ever made me feel this way. But like that flower, after all those years of waiting, when I bloom, it doesn't feel right. I don't know if you understand me" (p. 179).

In another breath, this study established that Binta struggles with the *Jocasta complex* – as an alternative to Freud's Oedipus complex. Binta struggles with "unconscious motives, emotional disturbance, and repressed feelings", as Harsha H. Das found of Ursula in his *A Psychoanalytic Reading of the Problematic Nature of Desire in Charles Dance's 'Ladies in Lavender*.

There are salient indications in the text that Binta transferred the affection she has for Yaro to Reza. When the rogue gifts her Dutch wax, she "patted the bundle

of Dutch wax on her lap. For a while, she allowed herself the luxury of losing her thoughts in the intricate yellow-tinted horseshoe pattern scattered on the blue background of the fabric" (p. 101). This recurrent reminder of her son, when she looks at Reza, disturbs her. The space between this introspection and her silence is the first time Binta uses the word *lover* to describe Reza (p. 102).

Binta's psychological damage/, which transforms into an orientation, results from psychologically mediated experiences: the serious deprivations she suffers – the murder of her husband (p. 77) and first son (p. 148), communal crises in Jos and political turbulences characterizing Nigeria – almost the same way Matthew Elder said of Bigger Thomas in his *Social Demarcation and the Forms of Psychological Fracture in Book One of Richard Wright's Native Son*

Binta has experienced acute sexual deprivation for ten years. She is married off to a stranger at a young age, who doesn't know how to make love (p. 26). The sexual repression gnawing Binta's psyche causes psychological distress and low self-esteem in her character (Aloma 6).

Hassan Babale Reza

Also, this study found that Hassan Reza suffers from a maternal wound. He is a product of a broken family; this is the starting point of his bad character. Freud's discovery of the unconscious positioned him better to "understand psychological forces underlying hysteria and other distressing emotional and behavioral configurations," as we see in the character of Hasan Reza (Paulo 4).

Reza first meets his mother, "the great whore of Arabia who had birthed him and abandoned him to scorn" (p. 85), when he is playing football with his friends. Hassan hates his mother all this while. "If I had known that you were coming, I would have brought your stupid ring" (p. 85). Reza believes that his father "was the only one who ever cared about him" (p. 144), but scorn and maltreatment by his father's co-wives drive him to the street and then to San Ciro.

In principle, Reza lacks what Ernest S. Wolf called self-object – mother guidance – and Reza's fragments are bored out of excessive inner tensions as a consequence of faulty responses from lack of self-object (Wolf 6). He sees his mother since she breaks out with his father when he is ten, (p. 39.)

Social structure has enormously contributed to the making of Hassan Reza. Misgovernance and insecurity pauperize his father, Babale Mairago, who buys cattle from the Fulanis in the North and sells to the Igbos in the South, (p. 40).

"Social institutions provide the framework for the operation of the [Reza's] unconscious" (Roger 3), meaning the political turbulence, corruption-induced poverty, and lack of access to education create the complex matrix that becomes Reza. "Certain components of social class can affect [mental] health" (Esteban, Ana, p. 3). Some of such factors that influence Reza's behavior and actions include socio-economic status, mockery, ignorance, and tyranny.

Senator Buba Maikudi

Senator Buba Maikudi is used to represent the hypocritical political class in Nigeria. *Season of Crimson Blossoms* depicts how a binary of 'good' and 'evil' exists in this class of people who always have a skeleton in their cupboard.

Senator Buba Maikudi, a former "professor of civil engineering" who "owned Bulwark Construction, a company that has enjoyed favorable contracts under several governments" (p. 86), projects himself as a political messiah while in reality the social illnesses can be traced to his actions. In one of his deceptive attempts to convince Reza he said, "This struggle is for people like you, *ko ba haka ba ne?*" In another instance, he masterminds the assassination of Reza to cover up the busted kidnap of the niece of his political opponent.

Maikudi has been a senator and a minister three times, yet he sponsors political thuggery to impose his candidate. Politicians in Nigeria have made the government a private business.

Ibukunoluwa and Goodnews (2020) viewed corruption as any act of wickedness and treachery perpetrated by individuals who have been appointed or elected to serve. This unethical behavior we see in the character of Senator Maikudi "straddles every segment of any society in its spread, audacity and depth" (Ibukunoluwa, Goodnews, p. 11) Nige. Ria experiences political degeneration after years of independence.

Corruption created another binary between the rich and the poor. While the rich are clean and are living amidst excessive affluence, the poor suffer deprivation and live in squalor. We can see this in the difference between Maitama, where Senator

Maikudi's lavishly furnished residence – where "peacock walked the lush lawns" and "a large flat-screen T.V. showed Barcelona in a battle with Osasuna (p. 82) - is located and the chaotic San Siro – an uncompleted building with a nondescript entrance and where ganja-inspired philosophies are entertained and disagreements are settled through the power of muscles (p. 37) – which is a dirty and noisy den of drug dealers, abusers, and cheap sexual activities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study, *Dualism in Abubakar Adam Ibrahim's Season of Crimson Blossoms*, is a breakaway from the normative analyses on *Season of Crimson Blossoms* which centered on feminist, postcolonial, stylistic or cultural perspectives. It offers a fresh perspective which presents a window to look at the psyches of some of the major characters in the novel: Binta Zubairu, Hassan Reza and Senator Buba Maikudi.

The study has its roots in the concept of *Dualism* and *psychoanalysis theory*, which is a unique psychological framework that investigates/analyses unconscious, repressed feelings, thoughts, memories and desires.

By implanting the concept of Dualism in the novel, the study examined the binary of good and evil in Binta Zubairu and Senator Buba Maikudi's characters. The former is an examination of the polarity at an individual level, which can be said to be private. The latter is an exploration of the ambivalence at the societal level, which is public.

Freudian psychoanalysis theory presented this study with an opportunity to explore the psyches of the sample characters. This study spent considerable energy on the unconscious – the part of the human mind that houses repressed feelings, hidden memories, habits, thoughts, desires, and reactions.

The study examined how repressed feelings and emotions contributed to Binta Zubairu and Hasan Reza's downfall. Conversely, the study examined how social structure and the interactions between the individual and social institutions guided the actions of the characters.

From page one to the last, *Season of Crimson Blossoms* puts pressure on the complex interaction between the commoners, the oppressed, represented by Hassan

Reza and Binta Zubairu, for example, and the highly placed represented by Senator Buba Maikudi.

This study established that the unhealthy interactions between the individual, especially the lower class, and the social structure controlled by mediocre public officers has led to several social illnesses, which created tensions in the minds of the characters. Excessive poverty is placed side-by-side with affluence, slums with mansions, and abundance with deficiency.

Binta's character is very complex. Abubakar Adam Ibrahim used the Binta character to portray how the social transaction between the individual and the society affects the self and the environment.

We see in the character of Binta Zubairu how social ills, such as deprivation, poverty, and hunger, are embodied in individuals.

Deprivation of life and sexual desire Binta Zubairu has suffered and endured for years has negatively affected her mental well-being, and in the process, Binta loses self-acceptance and a sense of purpose and weakens her personal growth and self-image.

This study identified Binta with what psychologists will term mental fracture/damage – if not maniac. Binta is a kind of a double-edged sword: in one instance, we see her as a virtuous woman who guards her chastity and home with jealousy and, in another, a sex maniac and a willing whore to a young street lord. She is an embodiment of contradiction: her mind and body do not seem to agree with one another. Binta wants to be good, yet he craves badness.

It is safe to say that Binta, a character used as a manifestation of maturity and a complete housewife, is a subversive who consciously destroys her home for sexual gratification.

Binta's rigidity in sexual pursuits and her refusal to listen to counseling, especially Ustaz Nura, leads her to her downfall.

However, Hassan Reza – a street child who rises to the status of street lord after killing his master – suffers from a maternal wound. He lacks empathy and sympathy. He smokes his life away and unveils himself to unnecessary risks. Reza

symbolizes the process through which the degeneration of democracy can or does corrupt the individual.

Endemic corruption in Nigeria has bred abject poverty and sickness. It widens the gap between the rich and the poor. The lower class, the destitute, to which Hassan Reza belongs, has been negatively affected by misgovernance and political racketeering. These are some of the reasons Reza's parents separated.

Discrimination and mockery by Hassan's mother's co-wives force him out of his father's house. Reza's degeneration was aided by two things: the excessive desire to escape the system that creates his kind and Senator Maikudi's desire to hold onto power in any way possible, including thuggery and rigging.

Hassan Reza is used in *Season of Crimson Blossoms* to paint the pitiful picture of the wretched, who are robbed of every opportunity by the heartless political class in Nigeria. The political class requires the services of dissolute persons to establish power and loot.

Apparently, every inch of the debauchery by the likes of Hassan Reza is aided by the system. We see this in the relationship between the dissipated inhabitants of the notorious San Siro and the police station, where ASP Baleri bosses the office. Both ASP Baleri and Reza, despite their differences in motive, benefit from each other.

However, the activities of the political class represented by Senator Buba Maikudi have failed the masses. The country produces oil, but it has to be taken abroad to be refined and then imported, which is a quagmire that has aggravated inflation and economic hardship. This can be interpreted as a conduit of corruption designed by the political class. The education system has collapsed, and effective health care is beyond the reach of the poor. The roads are bad. Terrorists and kidnappers have displaced millions of people.

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