

AN INNOCENT GIRL CHILD ARCHETYPE IN ADIMORA- EZEIGBO'S SELECT FICTION

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Abstract

The African Society is replete with girl-children that are seemingly adherent to keeping their parents' instruction and cultural norms. The essence of grooming such innocent girl children that exhibit cultural nuances with the acceptable beliefs and norms is, to have a near perfect posterity that would take over the affairs of the state from the older generations. This paper investigates the innocent girl-child archetype as the stage of life where she operates in the state of purity and innocence of a new life that is devoid of contamination.

The study employs Carl Jung's Archetypal Theory, which describes archetypes in fiction as that controlled by the individual personal experiences that are deeper and more universal; a repository of repressed innate materials, inherited thoughts and feelings that reside in the impersonal and collective unconscious. Purposively selected fictional works of Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo are used for the study. Issues related to the innocent girl-child are subjected to critical textual analysis.

Findings reveal that the innocent females have the potentials of delivering their parents, culture and society from their predicaments. The innocent girl-child if she is adequately guided by the family and adults group residing in the society is susceptible to taking care of her parents more. Adimora-Ezeigbo represents the girl-child in her sense of innocence with a burden of the adults who are held spell-bound by the usual insight and incredible wisdom exhibited by her. The innocent girl-child is highly endowed with spiritual and physical powers that could weld the family and society together with sustainability and proper achievement. Besides, the innocent girl-child archetype enforces the right conscience, her in-born innocence trait, to curb out the spirit of lying in other children in her family and environment; a habit they acquire during the period such children get trapped in the bad gangs and cults found everywhere in different societies.

Keywords: An Innocent girl-child, Archetype, Adimora-Ezeigbo, Girl-child radical resistance

Introduction

Every human being is a moral agent endowed with ‘will’ and the ‘freedom of choice’ of his or her actions. Literary artists and critics (Eagleton 1983, pp. 4-6; Driver 1982, p.203; Adichie 2013, p.85; etc) capture this pattern of display of free will in the character of female or male writings. The creative artist uses his or her created characters to address, lampoon, punish, castigates, correct, cleanse or rehabilitates the society. To cultivate and sustain a healthy society or culture with positive attributes; there is need for archetypal probes. Adimora-Ezeigbo captures the pattern of behaviour of the society with regards to mentoring young people particularly, the girl-child.

The innocent girl-child is a naturally unique creation, who, in her state of purity, perfection and peace, is an important human figure endowed with creativity and optimism. She has a strong will to take decisions which can be affected by her level of socialisation. When compared to her male counterpart, the girl-child is a being with a higher tendency to be close to the parents (Jung, 2010, p.86); and by this proximity, she unconsciously imbibes the patterns of life they place before her. The parents, therefore, are positive mentors showing patterns, approved kind of behaviour and manners such as honesty, love, care, affection, trust worthiness and hard-work in all her guided endeavours.

To understand the nature of the girl child, a psychological examination of recurring features and issues registered in her fragile and vulnerable characteristics, gathered in the collective unconscious is necessary. Educationists [Baber, (1939, p.315); Banret- Weiser, (2015, p.15) and Brown, (2011, p.50)] have noted that female children are always limited in their behaviour, attitudes, and they are equally expected to dress in certain ways, and as Ellefsen (2015, p.14) puts it, girl-children behave, “as if there were only one way to be a girl”. The way society contributes to the crises young female children face in real life and literature coincides with what Fitzgbbons and O’ Leary (2012, p.36) depict about them that “they are restricted in their opportunities to assert themselves as members of the society they belong”. Girls are always reminded by the society that they should not participate in

activities that are believed to be exclusively for boys – boxing, football, talking politics with men, and looking straight into a man’s eyes. They are also prone to being used to only pink colours, while other colours are reserved for boys alone.

The restrictions impose upon girls heighten their fears. Adichie (2017, pp.11-16) passionately emphasises this marginalisation when she points out that, it is dehumanising to women when they realise the role of society in reducing the integrity of females; and saddling them with the task of raising the girl child who believes she is forever inferior to men. She insists that the girl child should be raised with the ‘will’ to reject the notion of being “likeable” (Adichie, 2017, p.26) (it means being groomed and shaped to live other people’s popular demands of likes or wants).

Furthermore, Lopore (2014, p.191) posits that, the girl-child is the ultimate representation of womanhood, as well as the “psychological propaganda for the new type of woman who should rule the world”. She admits that the ‘norms’ of the society, which set limit on girl children, are those stereotypic rules which the male hegemony prepares and mandates them to act as mistresses, domestic servants, children manufacturers and brutish sexual perverts; since they would certainly become the future wives and mothers, based on that knowledge the mother figure should endeavour to guide the female children right.

The term “Psychological Propaganda”, according to Crawshaw (2015, p.10) is the archetypal symbol fashioned to deliberately influence women and girls. Williams and Lyons (2010, p.50) succinctly puts:

Not even girls want to be girls so long as our feminine archetype lacks force, strength and power. Not wanting to be girls, they don’t want to be tender, submissive, and peace-loving as good women are. Women’s strong qualities have become despised because of their weakness. The obvious remedy is to create a feminine character with all the strength of *Superman* plus all the allure of a good and beautiful woman.

The entire adult humanity owes the girl child love, care, protection and training, by setting up an exemplary model for her to follow; if she must grow up as the mother figure who would manifest

the hidden virtues: honesty, godliness, modesty, and integrity, in what Jung calls, the “collective unconscious”, which he assumes persists through generations (Leitch 2001, p.998). Of course, Adimora-Ezeigbo does not propound principles that differ from that of the mentoring processes; but admonishes womenfolk to tread with wisdom to ensure that they continue to fit into the endearing role of advisers, managers and mother figures archetypes that act as models and rehabilitators to the younger generations of females (girl-children).

Archetype Defined

The term “Archetypes” are defined by Jung (1963) as characteristic patterns that pre-exist in the collective psyche of the human race that repeat themselves eternally in the psyche of individual human beings and determine the basic ways that we perceive and function as psychological beings (Neustadt 2010, p.8). Jung explains that they (archetypes) are not only inherited ideas or pattern of thoughts, rather, they are predispositions to respond in similar ways to certain stimuli “...they (archetypes) represent inherited forms of psychic behaviour” (Jung 1961, p. xvi).

Jung succinctly projects that these psychic instincts:

...are older than historical man...have been ingrained in him from earliest times, and, eternally living, out-lasting all generations still make up the groundwork of the human psyche. It is also possible to live the fullest life. When we are in harmony with these symbols; wisdom is returned to them (Jung 1961, p.42).

Jung classifies archetypes as “an inherited form of psychic instincts” (Jung 1961, p. xvi), because they are “social phenomena” transferred from generation to the next through several sacred rites. Moreover, the externalised kinds of archetypes are shaped by cultural images and narratives that are adopted into archetypal framework. Schlegel *et al* (2009, p.475) state that archetypes might be classified as the true self-concept with, “a cognitive schema representing those aspects of the self that are considered, by the person, to be most emblematic of his or her nature.”

Archetypes are what Zhu and Han (2013, p.324) refer to as “the archaic remnants” or “primordial images”. These scholars posit emphatically that such variable representations are never inherited because Jung also situates some typical archetypal events: birth, death, separation from parents, initiation and marriage as those far from inheritance. Jung adds that the archetype of initiation is strongly activated to supply a useful transition which is a “rite of passage” from one stage of life to the next. There are generational features and patterns of behaviour that are believed to be unconsciously transferred into the psyche of progeny or posterity to continue the processes of development known to specific people and culture universally. This archetype harmonises both the conscious and unconscious elements to bring about a total being. Archetype, according to Jung (1960, p.35), is “the sub image principle which surrounds the collective unconscious in an individual. It inhibits the genetic image schemes that produce the archetypal images of emotional and personal experiences.”

By considering archetypes as a literary construct Gibson (1988, p.177) explains that: “Archetypes provide foundations to build on and allow an endless variety of stereotypes by assuming all members of a group share similar traits.” She clarifies that a character should not be dismissed because he or she is stabilised in an archetype, as he or she is always found in the fantasy genre. Archetypes are flexible, open to multiple readings, and can be used to subvert expectations about gender roles. Dobson (2005, p.2) agrees with this assertion that, Jung provides a means of explaining archetypal literary theory to its critics without dismissing their valid concerns. Dobson assumes that this synthesis would contribute to situating archetypal theory in a way that it allows archetypal study to remain important and relevant; in the light of postmodern critiques that illustrate the natural realities of female enterprising, men always look down on women. This standard ignores man-made fables that glory in belittling female’s achievements.

Archetypes according to Jimenez (2012, p.1) are universal, which by identifying them, create meanings out of certain inexplicable symbols and literary texts. Archetypes, she adds, allow authors or writers to re-interpret the stories that had flourished in the past in order to relate them to new stories which are socially, economically and politically significant and possibly universal in scope. She also states that archetypes make possible, the embodiment of heroes (heroines) as

the valuables of their communities and societies. This illustrates that the usefulness of archetypes is to expose the varieties of human nature and to educate us on certain issues about life, ourselves and culture, to forestall a repetition of the errors of the past. This connotes that these archetypes lead to impactful awareness about the innocent girl-child and her motifs as far as our working and living in the human society is concerned in relation to literature (fiction).

The concept of ‘archetype’ according to Gordon (1973, p.28) is “a meta-psychological model to account for the recurrence and apparent universality in man of certain experiences and images, the archetypal images” This portrays that archetype is primarily concerned with the archetypal images of characters and the processes which involve not necessarily the subject matters – persons and processes – but also concerned with the formal elements and structures. All these psychological processes are intimately associated with the art of literature (fiction) and the aesthetics impulse which links or binds persons, identities and achievement into the structure of the forms of society.

Prochaska (1984, p.17 explains the patterns of behaviour that manifest symbolically as archetypal images. He writes:

An archetypal symbol rises from the deepest layers of unconscious ... where it occurs is recognized by the sense that the expression transcends specificities of time and space and ‘speaks’, to common human experiences...Cultural expressions must transcend the boundaries of their own cultures to become genuine archetypal symbols which are recognizable as such in other times and in other places.

The implication of this claim is that, the collective unconscious is associated with archetypal memory that is linked to the psychic evolution which can be equated with the physical development.

The components of archetypes according to Neustadt (2010, p.9) are “imprinted and hardwire into our psyche”. These hardwire archetypes could be adopted to explain the dynamics of the category from twelve or more archetypes identified by Golden (2016, pp.:2-7) that innocent girl-child character operate in. The paper draws its

analysis from some of Adimora-Ezeigbo's Children fiction – *Red One and the Wizard of Mula* (2005) *My Cousin Sammy* (2013), and a novel – *Roses and Bullets* (2014) to buttress Adimora-Ezeigbo's opinion about an Innocent Girl- Child archetype as the type with clarity of vision, diligent, creative, intelligent, as well as possessing the valiant spirit and the ability to evoke empathy in the generality of the needs of the individuals within a particular culture.

An Innocent Girl- Child Archetype in Adimora- Ezeigbo's Fiction. An Analysis

The innocent girl-child is the character that symbolises the earliest stage of every human consciousness. She operates in the state of purity, perfection and grace. This stage of life in the innocent girl-child, indicates a true image of human perfection before her confrontation with difficulties and weakness which life and society pose to her. Adimora-Ezeigbo captures the innocent state of life in *Red One and the Wizard of Mula* (2005). Red One is a little innocent Princess of King Opoko and Queen Arit of Ubungu, whose innocence is completely unique. She is packaged and displayed in a cage for people to behold her peculiar feature that nature has endowed her with – “red hair”. She trusts that the essence of what her parents have done is for her own good to protect her. Unfortunately, this super-protection is tampered with when the mysterious bird with mighty wings; “dived into the cage ...lifted Red One and shot into the air like an arrow...on her fifth birthday” (*Red One and the Wizard of Mula*, pp.16-24).

Red One's stage of innocence is brought to fore after the Wizard of Mula kidnaps her. He waves his magic stick over her head to make her forget about her parents and her past. She comes to trust in the Wizard as though he is her biological father. Adimora-Ezeigo portrays Red One as operating in the spiritual and physical levels of life in the Wizard of Mula's house, up to the age of twenty-one years. Mulana, as she is renamed by the Wizard, becomes a source of wealth to him through the act of fortune telling. After the first five years of living with him, she reads peoples' palms and reveals to them their fortunes and misfortunes. As she is doing this, the Wizard would be extorting money from the people. The innocent love and trust Red One showers on the Wizard make her to obey and accept him without complaint. She extends this state of innocence towards other people as she weeps and

sympathises with them depending on what she sees about them. (*Red One and the Wizard of Mula*, pp.51-64).

However, her innocence is further displayed during the Wizard's sickness, when Red One shows much affection for the Wizard of Mula, and nurses him out of ill-health back to sound health and life: "Papa, I don't want you to die!", cried Red One. Tears formed in her eyes and dropped on her pretty cheeks.... " (*Red One and the Wizard of Mula*, pp.77-79). Red One could have used this opportunity of the Wizard's sickness to escape from his house and attain the much-needed freedom from the teeming population that come for counselling, which in turn generates money that make the Wizard wealthy. Though Red One, an innocent girl, is associated with riches as the Wizard puts it: "No, you cannot stop what you are doing...It's your destiny ..." (*Red One and the Wizard of Mula*, pp.69-70); but she is always sad. When Mulana clocks twenty-one years of age, she comes to the total realisation that the Wizard is not her biological father. And she pleads with him to set her free: "Papa, I want to be free... I'm unhappy. I want to do things other than what I do in this room all day" (*Red One and the Wizard of Mula*, pp.63 – 69). When Mulana sees that the Wizard resists her freedom, she seeks for further explanation if she is not the Wizard's true daughter; and if that is the case, why is she denied her freedom (*Red One and the Wizard of Mula*, p.70).

But Mulana's upbringing and comfort does not allow her to run away and at age twenty-one she obtains her freedom from the Wizard of Mula, not by eloping with Mansa, rather she asks the Wizard to help the young man (Mansa) to return to Ubungu. Shortly before the appearance of Mansa, the Wizard received a prophecy that a young man would come to his place to set Mulana (Red-One) free. On the day that prophecy would be fulfilled, he, the Wizard of Mula would be sick and might not recover until he helps the man. However, the Wizard is not "willing to help the young man". (*Red One and the Wizard of Mula*, p.100). It is because his destiny had planned beforehand that the abducted Princess Red One, now Mulana should be freed. The Wizard hears the same voice that spoke to him some years back in the past, speaking to him again: "...The voice ...commanded him to help Mansa get to Ubungu and to set the Princess free. Her captivity was over and she should return to the kingdom of Ubungu". (*Red One and the Wizard of Mula*, pp.110-112).

Princess Red One stages of innocence are ordered by “a divine force” which she-Mulana- in her innocence could not explain. This confirms what Bergen (2007, p.23) states: “All character archetype fit together with a specific set of other character archetypes, and it is the interplay between these secret lives that makes the story”. The Wizard at the time of abducting Red One, could not believe then, there would be an involvement of other characters that would bring about the deliverance of the innocent girl-child, Red One – from his imprisonment, and returns her to her father’s palace at Ubungu. This perhaps is the greatest shock of his life that complicates into further sickness which he experiences.

In *My Cousin Sammy* (2013), Adimora-Ezeigbo depicts Ene the innocent girl-child as exceptionally different in her conduct, character, behaviour, speech and intelligence. She is also spiritually sound like Princess Red One. She once had a dream that projected into the future of what would happen in her family. A couple of days after she had the dream, she overheard her father, telling her mother that his brother’s son (his nephew) would be coming to live with them. Beginning from the moment which she realises that the subject of her dreams is fulfilled, she innocently makes up her mind to receive her cousin, and to show him much affection when once he arrives in her family. She is very inquisitive, seeking to know the reason that warrants Sammy coming to live with them in Lagos. (*My Cousin Sammy*, pp.-13). Ene as a little innocent girl, accepts Sammy without reservations. She follows Sammy to his room, and assists him to arrange his things. In her innocence she becomes very emotional when Sammy tells her:

...our father Papa...and our mother Mama ... are both dead and gone...I felt sorry for him and his sister... oh, Sammy, do not cry.... I’m sorry that your father and mother died, but don’t worry... Dad and mum will take care of you, we all will... (*My Cousin Sammy*, pp.17-19).

As a little girl of just eleven years old, who would have given her a clue about life triggering problems so that she quickly understands Sammy’s predicament and identifies with him? To portray the stage of purity in which Ene lives, she fears nothing because she does not harbour iniquity or unwholesome intentions in her heart. Ene being

moved with sympathy sneaks into Sammy's room to comfort him despite her father's caution that she should not follow him. She does not mind the resistance and hostility of Sammy when he rebukes: "What do you want? Go away and leave me alone", he continued with a hostile voice ... "Why are you here? To see me cry? Go away! I don't want to live here" (*My Cousin Sammy*, pp.20-21).

The innocent girl-child is always full of care and affection for others just like the good mother figure archetype does, when relating with her children, husband and others within her jurisdiction. Instead of Ene to be angry with Sammy to leave him alone, she appeals to his sense of unity: "Sammy, this is no way to be friends, I want to be your friend: Will you let me?" (*My Cousin Sammy*, p.21). Ene is never tired in exhibiting love and care towards Sammy in all things. For instance, she educates Sammy on the food; spaghetti, when he is first presented with it. She makes him to understand: "Sammy...this food is called Spaghetti. Have some, you will like it". (*My Cousin Sammy*, p.24). She stands by him and encourages him when her mother and Adaka – her brother, are not ready to show such understanding (*My Cousin Sammy*, pp.24-25).

The characteristics of the innocent girl-child is in full glare here when Ene, expresses her feelings towards the orphaned cousin without reservations. She exposes the state of relationship that her mother and Adaka- her brother, share with Sammy as the type that is laden with bitterness, grudges, malice and hurts. Ene's mother states:

Look, Sammy... There is no other food in the house ... don't expect to choose what to eat and what not to eat in this house. You eat whatever food is prepared at any time. Is that clear? ... (*My Cousin Sammy*, pp.24-25).

Ene is endowed with the natural perfection of innocence, but this type of negative emotion displayed by her mother is enough to make the innocent girl who seems to be looking forward to the adult generation for models, to conclude that this is the way adult women behave. But Ene's father is a good archetypal model to her always. She illustrates:

... Ene's mother is equally cautioned by her father with love. "My fair lady, it hasn't come to that... Sammy has just come. I'm sure he will get used to the food we eat

here soon. Won't you Sammy? (*My Cousin Sammy* pp.25-27).

What is Adimora-Ezeigbo advocating here? She highlights that in African cultures, both parents have a hand in inculcating values of love, care and respect, good human relations into the children. It is also seen that the father can also be a positive role model to his up-growing girl child. For instance, Ene learns the act of cheerfulness from her father, and not from her mother. She compliments that it is much easier for her father to praise, console and encourage Adaka and herself than her mother.

I was thrilled because Dad called me a clever girl, I liked it very much. When dad praised me, he did it easily. He praised Adaka too, when he did well, Mum was different from dad, she hardly praised Adaka and me. But she was generous and bought us nice things... (*My Cousin Sammy*, pp.31-32)

A close look at this archetype – an innocent girl-child – reveals the true identity of human beings in their purity before the society and culture pollute them. At this stage, Ene, the little girl does not have anything to hide from the reader. She speaks her mind on issues without being afraid of any person. It is from her cousin Sammy that Ene learns the act of prayer – communing with God in times of crises and difficulties – and not from her parents. When Sammy had not come back from school one day, after living with her family for about one month; Ene, the little girl shows so much concern that she refuses to allow any member of her family to rest that evening over Sammy's absence. She refuses to go school the next day because Sammy, her cousin had not returned home the previous day. She resists taking to her heart her mother's threat, instead she burst into hot tears when her parents pretend not to understand her plight – missing a beloved orphan cousin (*My Cousin Sammy*, pp.62-65). Ene, the little girl expresses much concern and pity on the fact that the police officers could not trace Sammy's whereabouts. When her father's phone calls to some hospital accident wards have not yielded positive results, she quickly remembers that Sammy had once taught her how to pray. Ene resorts to prayers after realising that her parents are handicapped to help at the present moment:

“... I went to my room, knelt down and prayed for Sammy: “Oh, God, make Sammy come home soon. Please, God, send him back. Let nothing happen to him, I miss him very much” (*My Cousin Sammy*, p.70).

It is as soon as Ene finishes her prayer, being a fervent, broken and contrite prayer from an innocent heart; God answers her prayers by bringing Sammy home. It is a stranger who introduces himself as Kola Shittu, a Railway Inspector, that discovers Sammy wandering about at Marine Beach and leads him back home (*My Cousin Sammy*, pp.71-74). What if this positive virtue of committing every difficult situation into God’s care has not been introduced into this little girl’s life; it means Sammy would have lost forever. Though everybody in Onyibe Market, Metu abuses Sammy but Ene’s innocence archetype trait does not give her room to join others in the psychological and physical molesting of the orphan boy. Ene reflects:

Daddy was angry “Stupid boy! You are as stubborn as your father... “Shut up, you imp,” mum scolded, “You are lying. What happened to your uniform and schoolbag? How do you expect us to believe you lost your way?... “village boy”, shouted Adaka “...Get out of here,” Dad commanded (*My Cousin Sammy*, pp.75-76).

This virtue of prayer is also exhibited when Ene’s mother becomes sick, Sammy prays for her by her sick bed at the hospital. He has not considered the cold reception his aunt, Ene’s mother, shows to him when he first arrived in that home. He states “Auntie, you will be well very soon... I always pray for you. Ene and I pray for you together” (*My cousin Sammy*, p.90). Besides, Ene uses her in-born innocence trait to make Sammy to stop lying, a habit he acquires during the short period he got trapped in the bad gang of Bode, Aziba and Ade (*My Cousin Sammy*, 79). She reminds Sammy that God would not like the fact that he has started telling lies. It is Ene who tries her best as the innocent girl-child archetype to enforce the right conscience in Sammy to curb out the spirit of lying in him.

The innocent girl-child archetype is projected in *Roses and Bullets* (2014) as a new breed of radical female. When Ginika, a motherless girl who lives with her Auntie Chitto and her family at Enugu; learns through a letter her father sent that he proposes to take her

away from Enugu to Mbanda, she confides in Auntie Chitto: “Auntie, I don’t want to return to Mbanda. Perhaps I will later, but not now.” “I like what am doing here, It’s all I want to be doing now. Auntie, I want to stay and help...” (*Roses and Bullets*, p. 4). The essence of Ginika being very plain and open to her Auntie Chitto and uncle Ray is for them to have an upper hand in persuading her father from taking her away to the village- Mbanda.

As an innocent girl, Ginika learns a lot from her Auntie Chitto and this affirms to her enterprising ideal. She hopes and wishes that “one day, perhaps she would also be a wife and a mother. But that would be much later, after she would have completed her education and secured a good degree like her aunt” (*Roses and Bullets*, p.5).

The decision making and taking still belong to the patriarchal hegemony, to decide on issues relating to their families. Little does Ginika know about the world of adults and their strong determination to break all rules and act the way they want. What does this mean? Auntie Chitto addresses this question when she sounds it to Ginika thus: “You know your father, getting him to change his mind on any issue is harder than climbing *Ugwu Nwosu*...that dreaded hill in Ama-Oyi.” (*Roses and Bullets*, 5). Auntie Chitto as a woman still believes so much in the patriarchal supremacy and dominance. But the innocent girl-child – Ginika belongs to a new realm of existence and ideology. She believes that the traditional- female way of peaceful negotiation should be done away with in the Twenty-first century. The new-age female should apply force, militancy and coalition to obtain what she wants from patriarchy. Ginika reflects:

Ginika was determined to fight for what she wanted. She was not giving up so easily. She would make her aunt see how important it was to her to be allowed to remain in town. How her happiness depended upon it... if Papa forces me go with him, I’ll run away from home... (*Roses and Bullets*, pp.5-6).

Adimora-Ezeigbo is portraying that, it is the new female character(s) (an innocent girl-child) that the Twenty-first century feminists need to be able to establish her visionary statement. Ginika believes so much that as an evolved young female, her own

consent/opinion should be adequately sorted for before any decision is taken on matters that involve her person. The novelist reflects:

Ginika...was irritated by the prevailing situation. She deeply resented their presence in the house because the tribe had come to take her away willingly, as if her opinion in the matter counted for nothing...Papa, I don't want to return to Mbano. Please let me stay with Auntie Chitto and Uncle Ray. I am helping with making packed lunches for our soldiers. Please, Papa, let me stay. (*Roses and Bullets*, p.8).

An innocent girl-child is a fragile member of the female kingdom. She has wishes and aspirations. She wants to influence her world for a change. But how can she obtain this when patriarchy is still dominant in his decision to annex every female class. Patriarchy, irrespective of the relationship – father, husband, brother, uncle and boss, acts on the same note – dominance forever. Ginika has hope on Auntie Chitto that she could make a difference. But she is weakened, when Auntie Chitto on her own does not want to confront her brother-in-law, Dr. Ubaka, because of his assumed hard stands on issues bothering on his family. Ginika sees the way her father speaks aggressively with a deep frown on his face which makes her to surrender hopelessly: “Papa is completely unapproachable, utterly impossible...” (*Roses and Bullets*, p.6). This suggests that Ginika's father does not listen to anybody when he's resolute about any issue. Ginika reflects further: “...her father had a self-satisfied smirk on him. He was now in his element. No one could ever hope to win an argument against him” (*Roses and Bullets*, p. 9).

In the literary circle, it is uncontroversial that culture is dynamic. And if feminism is dynamic too, the feminist proponents should take a stand to abrogate male dominance and then install female supremacy. But how can this be carried out practically when matriarchy still finds it convenient to beg to be allowed to live? Auntie Chitto obliges;

Doc, please let her stay a little longer. She is doing a good job with many of the young women in town. You need to see what marvels they are achieving to appreciate

them. I promise, we'll bring her back to Mbano in the next couple of weeks if you wish. (*Roses and Bullets*, p.8).

This simply implies that, it is only the “wish” of patriarchy that women are abiding with. Adimora-Ezeigbo weaves the woman and man together when it comes to the upbringing of the African child. She and other African feminists summon the two parties into dialoguing on a cultural stool of peace and harmony. She claims that the patriarchal and matriarchal unity might not be something that do not exist, but should be cultivated by necessity based on men's and women's equality in right and status; in what Arndt (2008, p. 42) describes as “a transformation of existing gender relationships must inevitably come first”.

Auntie Lizzy – Ginika's stepmother and Auntie Chitto belong to Elaine Showalter's “Feminine phase”. The Feminine phase dates back from 1840 to 1880 “women wrote in an effort to equal the intellectual achievements of the male culture, and internalised its assumptions about female nature.” (Showalter1996:106). They believe that the status quo cannot change no matter what it takes. Auntie Chitto struggles at first to defend Ginika by insisting that her-brother-in-law, Dr Ubaka must accord due respect to the absent head of the family- her husband still sheltering Ginika. She posits:

...that the umbilical cord of the basic family decency and its sense of decorum must not be snipped off at will... She tried to make them understand her stand on the matter. That was Ama-Oyi tradition, and he needed to be reminded of it in case he had forgotten....” (*Roses and Bullets*, p.10).

The point the novelist is making here is that, patriarchy is a traditional cord that harmonises formalities. Auntie Chitto would not want Ginika's father to carry Ginika away without her husband – Ray, being aware. Moreso, Auntie Chitto is still abiding by patriarchal principles of dominance. She assumes that peace should be given a chance if one must complete her days of live on earth without much stresses. She chides:

Ginika, my dear...I'm sorry, but I tried. Can anyone ever succeed in making your father change his mind? It is like making a man with an unsightly protuberance dance in the market square...Please, get all your things together and go with him. He is your father and you have to obey him...*Ozuone*, it is enough! Hold your head up and go with the ebb and flow of the tide, or it will drown you...Remember what I told you yesterday, always be set on being whoever you want to be...(Roses and Bullets, pp.10-11).

The African women critics – [Aidoo (2007, p.515); Emecheta (2007, p.553) etc.] are always of the opinion that patriarchy should be revered. Adimora-Ezeigbo also recognises the extent to which patriarchy uses his tricks to appeal to women after coercing them into obedience. Ginika reflects:

She hoped they would let her be without trying to draw her into a conversation. Her father always did that when he exerted his authority in an overbearing manner and knew he had put the other person on the spot. She was often his innocent victim. So too were her brother, Nwakire, and her stepmother, Auntie Lizzy. (*Roses and Bullets*, p. 12).

It is this excessive domination that has limited Auntie Lizzy, Ginika's stepmother that she takes sides with her husband and chides Ginika whenever she expresses her dissatisfaction with her father. "Ewo! Ginika!" Auntie Lizzy swiveled around to give Ginika a blank cold stare. She hissed at her to be quiet and turned around again" (*Roses and Bullets*, p.13).

Why does the novelist delineate an innocent girl-child who displays features of emancipation, if the culture permits her? Adimora-Ezeigbo is working with Showalters' Female-Phase- history of feminism (Dobie 2009, p.50). She reassures the innocent female that if she is bold, daring, reinvigorating and perhaps, "...Hold your head up and go with the ebb and flow of the tide..." as Auntie Chitto earlier put it to Ginika – the innocent girl-child; she might win the war against patriarchy and all

forms of its relegation. On their way back from Enugu, Ginika's father passes a comment:

Ginikanwa, you see the trouble you have caused me? It's because of you that I have to drive on this dangerous road at this time... I don't have to remind you that that you ought to clear with me before you travel anywhere again (*Roses and Bullets*, p. 13)

There is nothing here which her father says which is outside the type that a parent aggrieved by the arrogance and insults of his little girl cannot pass to his child. But, the manner which Ginika reacts to her father's comment is a clear case of an innocent girl involvement. She reacts:

Papa, you didn't have to come, so you shouldn't blame me. If you have to blame anybody, it is yourself! You should have left me where I was... "I'm tired, tired, tired of it all". She screamed "Why are you doing this to me? Take me back to Enugu... I don't want to go to Mbanu! Did you hear me? Take me back to Enugu. (*Roses and Bullets*, pp.13-14).

Dr. Ubaka is greatly shocked, when Ginika, his innocent girl-child speaks arrogantly to him as he rightly states: "...You see the way you talk back to me?... I will not tolerate it. As long as you are under my care, you will obey me. Remember this" (*Roses and Bullets*, p.13).

The point Ginika's father is frowning at is: "talking back" at patriarchy which seems to correspond with what Arndt (2008, p.17) refers to as "writing back" to mean the aspect of challenges of gender conceptions of African male hegemony. This means that Adimora-Ezeigbo employs the African women commitment to challenge the gender coercion. And this also confirms Emmanuel (2017, p.1) observation that: "Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo endows women with the power of speech as subject in their use of their linguistic features... (which deal) with women development and identities today and not otherness as patriarchy perceives it". This is one area where women in the past were faulty because they were not supposed to look directly into the eyes of any man addressing them. It was also a taboo then to reply a

man when he was speaking. But by Adimora-Ezeigbo creating strong female characters that talk-back to patriarchy, is one great area that she has contributed immensely to the development of what Okolo (2008, p.1) calls ‘New Writing...in Matters Arising’.

Besides, Ginika’s father getting shock at Ginika’s radical action, Auntie Lizzy rebukes her openly. “Ginika, be quiet” ... “It is enough. See how people are staring at us. Can’t you see the damning look on their faces? They think we want to harm you, that we kidnapped you” (*Roses and Bullets*, p.14). Auntie Lizzy is the heart beat of the respectful traditional/cultural wife, in Adimora-Ezeigbo’s fictions. She rejects the modern system of misplaced values. She does not support the idea where Ginika takes advantage of her naivety to be rude to her father, thereby defiling the tradition of their culture. Ginika impulsively retorts to her step-mother and father as she puts... “Did you not kidnap me? Wasn’t that what you did?” She started to weep uncontrollably” (*Roses and Bullets*, p.14).

Ginika’s youthful exuberance pushes her into actions that she is sure can bring about her freedom from all cultural forces. She does not want to recognise that as a little girl, she is not supposed to have addressed her father as if she was talking to her age mate. Ginika positions herself with the determination to follow the doctrine of Third-Wave- Feminism, to emancipate herself. This notion is affirmed in *Not My Mother’s Sister*, as it states:

“...third- wave- feminism can be viewed as the rebellion of young women against their mothers (fathers) and as their desires to have a feminism of their own, even though their political agenda...remains quite similar to that of their mothers. (Snyder 2008, p.182)

This implies that the third-wavers (for example Ginika) are sort of radical in nature because they are rebellious young women who are acting contrary to their mothers’ and fathers’ expectations more than their own wishes and desires are made. Little wonder Ginika puts on radical resistance by screaming and weeping profusely, demanding to be taken back to Enugu:

I will run away from home if you refuse to let me return to Enugu. If I do, you will never see me again, she

protested...Ginika, this time, was determined to annoy everyone else as much as they had angered her. To give as much as she thought she had received. She thrust her head out through the window nearest to her, and roared deafeningly. She let out prolonged and unrelenting yells... (*Roses and Bullets*, p.14).

The radical resistance of Ginika to issues that do not have positive benefits to her is equally carried over to relationships outside her family. In the case of Lieutenant Kanu Ofodile, toying around Ginika at Orié-Agu, where her father sends her to participate in military training. He thinks Ginika is a loose innocent girl, and he quickly wants to explore her youthful innocence as he displays his lust:

Ginika, you are beautiful, do you know? He asked, his eyes smoking with desires. "Do you realize how much I desire you? I just cannot get you out of my mind since the day I met you. Do you feel the same way about me?" (*Roses and Bullets*, p.14).

The novelist at this point is examining the role of the society- patriarchy, in the upbringing of the innocent girl-child. Lieutenant Ofodile is old enough, I suppose, to be Ginika's father and to give Ginika the all-round security- physical, psychological, financial, and morally she needs; but from the unhealthy action he puts forth as his debased statement indicates that, some men are not just good models to the innocent girl-child in the real sense of the word. No wonder Ginika is so subtle in realising what evil, Kanu Ofodile is up to and she rebukes him straight away:

Lieutenant Ofodile... Thank you, but please, don't say such things. You make me feel bad, because I have not thought about you in that way...Please let's go, my family will be wondering where I am...Please believe me ...There is nothing to think about. I don't want any such relationship with anyone at this time. Can we go now?" She refused to look at his face, not wanting to see the emotion there, whatever it was. (*Roses and Bullets*, p. 56).

Ginika is a true representative of the modern innocent girl-child who is ‘duly empowered by education’, as the feminist grandmothers and mothers had been advocating; and of course, the advocacy, is still very much alive. Ginika is conscious of the truth that she should secure herself and her up-coming female estate against patriarchal defilement. She does not want to be like Nneoma and Hannah, the one-time innocent youths in Adimora-Ezeigbo (2008) who let loose their prestige and dignity cheaply to men. Of course, it is because of the economic status of their family and they regret bitterly, when they deteriorate into tragedy archetype. (Adimora-Ezeigbo 2008, pp.23-25; 154-155). The main reason why Ginika is standing firm against patriarchal morally destructive force is perhaps due to the enlightenment processes Auntie Chitto puts her through: “.... Remember what I told you yesterday, always be set on being whatever you want to be...” (*Roses and Bullets*, p.11). This piece of counsel which Ginika gets from her educated and successful Auntie Chitto, serves as a guide to a certain extent of her life.

In conclusion, this study reveals that an innocent girl-child archetype possesses an enormous heart of forgiveness and unconditional acceptance of all. In *Red and the Wizard of Mula*, Red One (Mulana) forgives the old wizard and accepts him and still loves him when she finally realises that the Wizard kidnapped her from her parents at age five. This concept of forgiveness is equally cultivated in *My Cousin Sammy* (2013), Ene and her cousin – Sammy forgive her mother for the initial resistance and hostility shown towards him (Sammy) at the end. Sammy assures his foster mother while she is on the hospital bed that, he and Ene have been praying for her to recuperate quickly. Ginika forgives her father for forcefully taking her away from Enugu to Mbano because of the fear in her father’s heart about the war.

The findings portray that, the innocent girl-child lives up to her stage of innocence, the actual identity of a human being at a state of purity or sincerity (before the societal/patriarchy pollutes her). Ene, the little innocent girl speaks out her mind on issues bothering on the coming of her cousin – Sammy to her family without being afraid of anybody; even when Adaka, her brother exhibits hostility and resentment towards her and her cousin at the initial stage of his entrance into their home (*My Cousin Sammy*, pp.10;22-29; 89-93). Adimora-Ezeigbo is advocating that, the new generations of female archetype are creative, bold, daring, vibrant and radical in their innocence. Perhaps,

they do not want to make the mistakes that their mothers had earlier made, which culminate into oppressions and relegations.

This paper may not exhaust all the archetypal attributes of an innocent girl-child in Adimora-Ezeigbo's fiction but however the study has extracted and unveiled the core attributes of the innocent girl-child archetype in a few works of Adimora-Ezeigbo. The exhibition is hoped to immensely promote the quality of human beings in the society as it awakens the readers' understanding of virtue, creativity and quest; and also enhancing the readers' comprehension of fictional texts. The analysis has revealed the character and psychology of an innocent girl-child as she exists in different communities and cultures. The paper is strengthened by the exploration of various dialogues - physical, spiritual and psychological in the lives of the innocent girl-child archetype.

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