

**CHARACTER FORMATION IN CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE'S
PURPLE HIBISCUS AND KAIANE AGARY'S *YELLOW-YELLOW***

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TITLE PAGE

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to Our Lady of Perpetual Help, the Queen Mother who is the prototype agent of formation and to all Mothers who are agents of formation to our contemporary youths.

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Human reasoning is timid but with you is wisdom that knows your work, that was present when you made the world and is aware of what is pleasing to you – dispatch her from your holy throne to work beside me (wd 9:10). I owe my unalloyed gratitude to you Eternal Wisdom through Jesus the Saviour your only son and my confidant and director the Holy Spirit. You gave birth to this work, the Queen Mother whose perpetual benignity not only sustained me throughout this arduous journey, but inspiringly inked the white paper using my jerky hand as a pencil in the hand of the creator. Humbly do I appreciate the self sacrificing attitude of my supervisor, Prof. Damian Ugwutikiri Oyata. Words cannot convey my sentiment as this Thesis owes immense regard to your contribution in initiating this topic and shaping my ideas. For painstakingly reading the work, your patience, never getting upset, tolerating, accommodating my feebleness and carrying me along so as to chisel life (academic) out of me. Indeed, you are a father, a brother and an educator. To my mother General, mother Jane Frances Okafor, thanks so much for your concern, support, and encouragement. To my Fr. Founder, Very Rev. Fr. Prof. E.M.P.Edeh C.S.S.P, may Jesus the Saviour bless, strengthen and reward your efforts towards human growth and development. I deeply appreciate the untiring effort of Mr. Kingsley Ugwuanyi, for proofing my work and always being there for me. Thanks and may God reward your kind gesture. I am grateful to my lectures Dr. C. Onukwuo and Dr. Obiora Eke for your advice and moral support. Mr. Dele Maxwell Ugwuanyi was so wonderful in the way he assisted by arranging materials for me, thereby inspiring me to a greater height. To my sisters Jeph, Lima, Eleo, liberata, Andrea and Val. S.J.S. in Akpugo community, I remain grateful for your prayers, love and encouragement. I appreciate the concern and support of my parents and my siblings by caring and providing for me in different ways. I deeply thank Godwin for his brotherly love and financial support throughout the programme. May God bless and reward you all.

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ABSTRACT

This work analyses two novels by contemporary Nigerian female writers ó Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and Kaine Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* as a representative of Bildungsroman which traces the growth and developmental trajectories of the principal characters from childhood to maturation. The study explores the various ways in which the writers re-adopt the sub-genre as a vehicle by means of which the characters of our contemporary Nigerian youths are formed. It acknowledges the existing German model and precursor, Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister Apprenticeship* up to British Bildungsroman as well as African female Bildungsroman, which has become very popular among contemporary female writers. Chapter one serves as the general introduction. It explains the meaning and the processes of character formation, it equally shows the plot pattern of the genre, the interrelatedness of psychology of personality formation with Bildungsroman, and the feministic trends in the novel of formation with emphasis on female Kunsterroman. Chapter two is the review of the available literature on Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* as well as points of view of various critics on Agary's *Yellow-Yellow*. This chapter points that the existing research work by various critics has not been able to substantiate the key elements responsible for change and transformation in the characters. The study therefore seeks to explore such factors that influence formation of characters in the focal texts. Chapter three forms the theoretical framework and methodology. It establishes the defining feature that characterises Bildungsroman as transmutation. It also describes the feministic criticism in Bildungsroman, showing the relevance of the genre to the topic of our study, its characteristics and distinguishing between the male and female Bildungsroman

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1.1 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In recent years, some of the innovative and formative trends that dominate the 21st century African literature focus extensively on character formation. In literary parlance, a novel of formation also called Bildungsroman or coming-of-age story is a literary sub-genre that focuses on the psychological and moral growth of the protagonist from childhood to maturation, and in which character change/transformation is thus extremely important. The emerging development covers the creative hiatus of colonial and postcolonial experiences that previously dominate African literary canon. Hence, contemporary writers have been ingeniously and eruditely locating the coming of age ethos to emphasize that growth and development are universal human phenomena. Talking about the resurgence of growing-up motif in contemporary Africa, especially Nigeria, Maxwell Okolie opines that:

This privilege phase of growing up is often used as intimate, passion-packed subject matter in fiction; to render poetically, its complex vision was once the yearning of some African novelists who consider it essentially not only to the understanding of African personality but also to the remaking of Africa (141).

By implication, the writers are clear in their ingenuity to locate the process of human growth and development as germane to understanding human personality. More writers are subscribing to this ethos, as will be featuring in the focal texts: *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Adiche and Agary Kaine's *Yellow –Yellow*. The texts present characters that come of age by virtue of their transformations. Kambili in *Purple Hibiscus* transforms from a stuttering voiceless teenager to a self-asserting adult, while Zilayefa in *Yellow –Yellow* transforms from a village teenager to a gorgeous coquettish and profligate woman.

Human character can be bewilderingly complicated. In order to appraise the dilemma of the 21st century Nigerian child, the writers, as the conscience of society, have adopted the Bildungsroman dialect to investigate the protagonists' trajectories in their processes of becoming. The hallmark of our study is the contemporary Nigerian youth (as reflected in the texts) who are caught in socio-psychological comatose. In a situation where growing up in consistently modernizing Africa (Nigeria) has meant a gradual but steady departure from the ethos of nobility and innocence, one would not hesitate to question the benchmark as well as the blueprint for the formation of these characters in their journey from infancy to adulthood. Character, according to ancient Greek scholars such as Plato and Aristotle, is predicted on a person and it must be acquired and cultivated. By implication, one learns and acquires good character when one recognizes an ennobling role and wishes to practise it. Character formation entails the acquisition of habits. Broadly, it is the expression of the personality of a human person which reveals itself in his/her conduct. In a narrower sense, character implies a certain unity of qualities with a recognized degree of constancy or fixity in mode of action. It refers to the fixed, repetitive, and organized psychological formations, which is determined by the person's values and find expressions in and through the overt and covert aspects of his or her life. When a person has developed a character, he/she can accomplish something by him/herself. Character comes from the mind and enables the person to carry out a task with self-direction. The interaction of nature-nurture dichotomy dictates to a large extent the pattern of character formation and manifestation.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The birth of the Bildungsroman is normally dated to the publication of *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* by Johann Wolfgang Goethe in 1795. Etymologically, it is German in origin,

comprising two words: *Bildung* meaning 'formation' and 'roman' meaning 'education'. The term therefore describes the novel of formation or novel of education. The term was coined in 1819 by the philologist, Karl Morgenstern, in his university lectures, and later famously reappraised by Wilhelm Dilthey, who legitimized it in 1870 and popularized it in 1905. Although the genre arose in Germany, it has had extensive influence first in Europe and later throughout the world. Thomas Carlyle translated Goethe's novel into English and after its publication in 1824, many British authors wrote novels inspired by it such as: Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*, George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*, Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*, James Joyce's *The Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man*, Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage* and a host of others.

The genre is further characterized by a number of formal, topical and thematic features. The term Coming-of-Age novel is sometimes used interchangeably with Bildungsroman, but its use is usually wider and less technical. Within the 20th century, it has spread across the seas of Germany to Britain, France, and several other countries around the globe. A pertinent question has been about the origin of Bildungsroman in Africa. Its origin in Africa has been a controversial issue similar to the origin of feminism. Recent researches by African scholars in contextualizing the Bildungsroman concept draw attention to the predominance of the Coming-of-Age motif in African oral narratives. Teresa U.Njoku observes that 'Although the term Bildungsroman is German, narratives which deal with the development of a character and his society through the informal education process existed in Africa even before colonialism' (271).

One would say emphatically that Bildungsroman structure has its root in Igbo folktale such as *Nwaenwe Nne* and *Iduu na Oba* from the Nigerian Igbo lore before its use by modern African writers. It is evident that these new writers have grabbed the Bildungsroman tradition from where

the oral tradition stopped. There are reasonable numbers of works that feature Bildungsroman structure in African novel, such as Camara Laye's *The African Child*, Mongo Beti's *Mission to Kala*, Buchi Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen, The Slave Girl, Double Yoke* Christ Abani's *Becoming Abigail*, as well as Sade Adeniran's *Imagine This*.

Consequently, there are great many definitions of the literary sub-genre, Bildungsroman. The *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* defines the Bildungsroman as "a novel about the moral and psychological growth of the main character" (2009). It can be defined as a novel whose principal subject is the moral, psychological, spiritual and intellectual development of a usually youthful main character. It could also be seen as the novel of personal development or of education. Susanne Howe on her idea about formation defines it on the basis of what she terms the "Apprenticeship pattern" while Franco Moretti in his classic *The Way of the World: The Bildungsroman in European Culture* locates the genre on "transient pattern" that describes a process of development through different stages. Therefore, Moretti, interprets Bildungsroman as "a symbolic form by which Europe rethinks the advent of modernity" (5). Moretti's inference suggests that the need to give meaning to change made the youth the most meaningful part of life. This is to say that the youths are the most relevant and indispensable form of human existence, since they are growing and have the suppleness to adapt and discern change. Therefore, a novel that is characteristic of the Bildungsroman genre describes a young protagonist's developmental trajectory, or overall development, from childhood to maturity. Encyclopedia Britannica defines it as a German literary term, a class of novel that deals with the maturation process; by investigating how and why the protagonist develops as he does, both morally and psychologically. The literary prototype of the Bildungsroman protagonist is the German author Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe's 19th century hero, Wilhelm Meister, who

embarks on a spiritual journey to seek self-realization in the service of art (9). The aim of the young artist's quest is self-development through a series of hardships encountered along the way. However, the focus of this work will be the Bildungsroman, or the novel of growth and development. The paradigmatic expansion of Bildungsroman has engendered its divergent definitions by various scholars. M.H. Abrams locates the emergence of the Bildungsroman tradition in the eighteenth century German and describes it as the novel whose subject is the development of the protagonist's mind and character, in the passage from childhood through varied experiences and often through a spiritual crisis into maturity, which usually involves recognition of one's identity and role in the world (201).

There are many variations and subgenres of Bildungsroman that focus on the growth of the individual. A lot of controversies about the definition and delimitation of the genre have their interpretations on the word *Bildung* (formation). It is imperative to distinguish between the three subtypes of Bildungsroman and their variations: Entwicklungsroman (novel of general growth), represents novels about different types of development or novels of development in general. The Erziehungsroman like Bildungsroman has to do with the novel of educational development and the Künstlerroman refers to the novel of artistic realization. The basic subtype of Bildungsroman is Künstlerroman which M. H. Abrams situates as a subtype that represents the growth of a novelist or other artist into the stage of maturity in which he recognizes his artistic destiny and masters his artistic craft (121). Scholtz also distinguishes more specifically between the variant forms of Bildungsroman in what he terms (pedagogies-roman). While Bildungsroman refers to the character's growth more generally, Erziehungsroman focuses on a deliberate inculcation (often by a master) of life lessons by means of a particular pedagogic structure. Hence, if we limit the genre to include all forms of development, Bildungsroman then

encompasses most of the novels ever written. Bildungsroman within the context of our study rather has to do with special forms of development with the proviso that a protagonist develops passing through the key elements and factors that influence such formation.

The major feature of the Bildungsroman or the Coming-of-Age motif, for Abram, is the recorded socio-psychological progress of the protagonist from an early stage of physical and emotional development to other life phases. For the purpose of this work, we situate the Bildungsroman as the novel whose principal interest is to investigate the problems and confusions of the contemporary youth at cross-purpose, who is morally and culturally challenged and suggest that growth and development as a universal phenomenon is conditioned by socio-cultural context, religion, the political environment of the time as well as familial relationship. Hence, exploring the issue of character formation, the writers adopt to re-work Bildungsroman form to articulate the importance of female bonding /personality role modeling as a strategy for attaining transformation or change in the life of our growing youths.

1.3 THE PLOT PATTERN OF NOVEL OF FORMATION

Bildungsroman tells about the growing up or coming-of-age of a sensitive person who is looking for answers and experiences. The genre evolved from folklore tales of a dunce or a youngster (son) going out in the world to seek his fortune. Usually, in the beginning of the story, there is an emotional loss which makes the protagonist embark on his journey from countryside to a metropolitan region. Jerome Buckley describes it thus:

A child of some sensibility grows up in the country or in a provincial town, where he finds constraints, social and intellectual, placed upon the free imagination. His family, especially his father, proves doggedly hostile

to his creative instincts or flights of fancy, antagonistic to his ambitions, and quite impervious to the new ideas he has gained from unprescribed reading. His first schooling, even if not totally adequate, may be frustrating insofar as it may suggest options not available to him in his present setting. He, therefore, sometimes at a quite early age, leaves the repressive atmosphere of home (and also the relative innocence), to make his way independently to the city. There his real education begins [and] his direct experience of urban life. The latter involves at least two love affairs or sexual encounters, one debasing, one exalting, and demands that in this respect and others, the hero reappraise [s] his values. By the time he has decided, after painful soul-searching, the sort of accommodation to the modern world he can honestly make, he has left his adolescence behind and entered upon his maturity. (17-18).

On the other hand, Susanne Howe attempts a definition of the Bildungsroman plot, despite the fact that Buckley in his omnibus, *Seasons of Youth*, creates a more multifaceted plot pattern that could be applied to both German and English Bildungsroman. Howe postures Bildungsroman as :

The adolescent hero of the typical apprenticeship novel [who] sets out on his way through the world, meets with reverses usually due to his own temperament, falls in with various guides and counselors, makes many false starts in choosing his friends, his wife, and his life work, and he finally adjusts himself in some way to the demands of his time and environment by finding a sphere of action in which he may work effectively (4).

Her definition seems to be rather vague and incomplete when put side by side with Buckley's definition. Buckley's definition characteristically outlines the essential facet of the hero who is portrayed as "a child of some sensibility" with "constraints, social and intellectual, placed upon his imagination" and "after a painful soul-searching" he can make "the sort of accommodation to the modern world."

In a Bildungsroman, the goal is maturity, and the protagonist achieves it gradually and not without excruciating difficulty. As a result, it often features conflict between the main character and society. According to Annie Eysturoyð "The protagonist [in a Bildungsroman] has to measure his or her emerging self against the values and the spirit of a particular social context, representative of an age and a culture" (6). Typically, the values of society are gradually accepted by the protagonist and he/she is ultimately accepted into that society--the protagonist's mistakes and disappointments are over. In his own description of the rigorous adventure of the protagonist, Robert Harris talks about:

A process where the protagonist is initiated into adulthood through knowledge, experience, or both, often by a process of disillusionment. Understanding comes after the dropping of preconceptions, a destruction of a false sense of security or in some way the loss of innocence (2).

Harris postures the protagonist's trajectory as that involving movement away from ignorance to knowledge, innocence to experience, false view of the world to correct view of the world, idealism to realism and immature responses to mature responses. The beauty of the novels under study consist in the fact that our protagonists, by their very nature as Bildungsroman characters, show

life and philosophies of life as something moving, changing and dynamic. In other words, the varied and rigorous experiences of the protagonists lend a hand in their ability to construct unique ideas that form the driving force in their lives. Such ideas keep the individual towards the desired direction that gives him/her recognition, identity and makes the individual accepted in a given social context.

Having been accepted in his/her society, the protagonist is able to reach out and help others after achieving maturity. The protagonist's formation according to Annie Eysturouy evolves from the socio-cultural milieu. Thus, the emerging self becomes a reflection of the values and the spirits of a particular social context, representative of an age and a culture (6).

1.4 Research Problem

Growth and development are universal phenomena. Igbo axiom has it that, *Ifu nwoke naakpa nka, odi ka ona adu iru* (when you see an artist making a portrait, you would think that he is carrying an angry face). In like manner, character formation has remained an interesting area in the literary world. Creative writers have extensively delved into the sub-genre of Bildungsroman as a way of studying human growth and development and also a means of unveiling why the characters grow, develop and change in their characteristic manner. Most of the contemporary African (Nigerian) writers equally focus attention on the issue of character formation. Specifically, Nigerian female writers have successfully adopted the sub-genre of Bildungsroman to re-define and/or re-trace the growth and developmental trajectories of the protagonists in their works as well as in most novels of the 21st century. The available reviews

on literary texts show that a lot of people have worked on Bildungsroman sub-genre to trace the growth processes of the protagonists; others have employed the genre as an allegorical tool through which the growth of the nation or society is examined.

However, no study has been carried out on the key elements and factors that influence the characters, thus causing transformation and change in the life of the protagonists. Therefore the problem which this study poses as a research question is to find out what are the key elements and fundamental factors that are responsible for the way a character behaves, and how or to what extent these factors intertwine with the native endowments of the individual so as to unleash the protagonist's ideological concept. The emerging ideological concepts of the protagonist in the end establish their unique personality, individuality which at the attainment of maturity makes lucid the quintessentiality of the character of the protagonist showing their capacity of being accommodated in the spirit of a particular society.

1.5 PSYCHOLOGY OF CHARACTER FORMATION

A cardinal feature of the novel of formation is its emphasis on the psychological process at work in the protagonist's transaction with his /her society. Although the physical growth remains a defining feature of the genre, its prominence is only defined and determined by the psychological development of the character in parallel to the physical growth. The physical growth therefore has to correlate with the psychological development. According to Buckley, what goes on in the psyche is more important than what goes on around the protagonist's external world (6). This is because the inner self determines the outer self. Previous research has shown that the best way to understand the character of the generic man is to psychoanalyse the character. This can be done by identifying the background/ key factors that influence the

character's behavioural patterns. Such factors as socio-psychological, spiritual/moral development, physical, emotional and socio-cultural factors play a vital role in character formation. Character as a unified entity, incorporates the following: personality, identity, and individuality of the human person.

To study the formation of one's character, these components that sum up the covert and overt operations of the individual should be properly examined. It, therefore, behooves the researcher to examine how personality is formed.

1.6 FEMINISTIC TRENDS IN NOVELS OF FORMATION

Carol Christ writes that "Women's stories have not been told: and without stories, there is no articulation of experience, without stories, a woman is lost – she is closed in silence" (34). In the same vein, Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar write that "Women will starve in silence until new stories are created which confer on them power of naming themselves" (54). Similarly, Adrienne Rich comments on the importance of female artists in literary tradition when she says that "Writing is re-naming" (2052). Feminist critics began to examine the phallogocentric grounds of traditional novel that dealt with them. They draw attention to the link between aesthetics and ideology, rhetoric and reality and thus, delve into the field that was exceptionally neglected by earlier Bildungsroman scholars. A groundbreaking work as well as the landmark of this genre is the anthology, *The Voyage In: Fiction of Female Development* edited by Elizabeth Abel, Marianne Hirsch, and Elizabeth Langland. In the introductory part of the work, the critics demonstrate how Jerome Buckley's taxonomic definition of the term *Bildungsroman* negates

female experience from the genre. They posit definite questionable conclusion about George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*, which Buckley interprets as a narrative of the (Bildung) formation of Tom Tulliver, rather than that of the heroin Maggie, the protagonist of the text. In consequence, the critics present an alternate model and a contrast canon of female formation. The authors have the same opinion that social pressure directed feminine development in the nineteenth century interiorly and towards spiritual realm. They, therefore, strive to re-contextualize some of the themes that previously dominate scholarly work of nineteenth century Bildungsroman and aver emphatically that social conditions in the nineteenth century stifled female expression.

A cardinal theme of contemporary women's fiction is the quest for authentic female self-development. This process is both environmental and psychological, and it entails coming to terms with multiple (multifaceted), external as well as internal socio-cultural forces, that infringe upon the path towards female individuation and an understanding of the individual self. Rites of passage are depicted either as the adolescent protagonist's coming-of-age, or as the mature woman's awakening to the reality of her social and cultural role as a woman and her subsequent attempts to re-examine her life and shape it in accordance with her new feminist consciousness. The process of becoming, whether it is that of the child and adolescent or the somewhat older woman, is a recurrent theme in minority women's literature.

African female writers have ingeniously adopted the subject matter to re-work Bildungsroman genre, the viable literary form traditionally used to portray the process of self-development. Eldred observes that "African authors have consistently returned to childhood to find their personal as well as racial roots" (7). One would say without mincing words that it is not solely a search for identity that engages female writers in general, but rather an exploration and

articulation of the process leading to a purposeful awakening of the female protagonists. In the case of the child and adolescent protagonist, the emphasis is on social and environmental influences on their rite of passage, whereas narratives with more mature protagonists tend to be more confessional in nature, emphasizing the re-examination of the past through the re-collection of past experiences in order to arrive at an understanding of the femaleness of such protagonists. In both cases, the emphasis is on the education of the self emerging from the interaction between the self and the world. This is because life experience is the greatest tool for the formation of the protagonists who learn and adjust accordingly towards acceptable behavioural code that give them identity as adults in a given society.

Every artist conceives and visualises their object interiorly prior to its actual production when it is made visible to human eyes. However, the path towards self-development or self-definition is in some cases portrayed as intimately connected to the process of creation; thus the act of writing or creating becomes essential to discovering of self. This particular aspect of the genre's intersections of self-development and creativity, postures some Bildungsroman as *Kunstlerroman* (artistic novel). Such novel as Susanne Howe's *Wilhelm Meister and His English Kinsmen* is a typical prototype of *Kunstlerroman*. It is a form of the Bildungsroman that portrays the development of an individual who becomes, or is on the threshold of becoming an artist of some kind. It is the particular perspective of the protagonist, his or her inner development, and not necessarily an identifiable structure, that defines Bildungsroman. The development of the protagonist emerges from the interaction between the protagonist and the world. It is the protagonist's response to his/her particular environment, the interplay between social and psychological forces, which determines the direction of each individual process of self-development. Society then becomes the locus for experience and to some extent the antagonist

of the female Bildungsroman. This is because the protagonist's experience of the social and cultural environment depends on several interrelated factors such as gender, class, race and ethnicity, all of which determine and complicate the individual's position vis-a-vis the social context. As both critics and women writers have consistently shown, important distinction exists between the male quest of the Bildungsroman and the female quest of the "coming-of-age" because conditions for self-development are vastly different for women (psychologically and culturally), the process leading to selfhood and creative self-assertion consequently varies from that of the male counterpart.

The female writers / protagonists examined in the focal texts confront all-embracing questions concerning female identity and education / development; each has a concerted focus on the way in which race, ethnicity, and gender dictate and complicate the female protagonist's quest for actualization and authenticity. The intimate connection between the quest for self-development as well as female artistic creativity is a sine qua non for the female Bildungsroman. The concept of artistic creativity which remains a mechanism for the writer's self-discovery and mastery of her artistic dexterity is the basic theme of many female Kunsterroman. The female artist has to connect with not only conforming social and cultural definitions of her role as woman, but also with the very concept of herself as an artist. The female Kunsterroman is parallel to what one of the feminist philosophers Mary Daly, regards as women coming into her "new space". By virtue of the writers coming into new space, opportunity is being created where the various female experiences are explored by the writers who at the same time through this process attain the zenith in mastery of artistic creativity as their destiny. Daly's coming-into-new-space invariably has to do with women's movement out of their own sense of quantitative reality of patriarchal institution to entry into qualitative reality of "new space" Daly writes that:

It should be apparent, then, that for women entrance into our own space and time is another way of experiencing integrity and transformation, to stay in patriarchal space is to remain in time past, the appearance of change is basically only separation and return---- cyclic movement (43).

Despite the recurrent mythic depictions of male figures as the creator, the female *Kunsterroman*, written by and about woman, describes the psychological and sociological burdens of a patriarchal society and its myths. This is what Grace Stewart identifies in her study as *A New Mythos: The Novel of the Artist as Heroine 1877-1977*. Myths generally left valuable period in human life, and because the quest for self carries mythic connotations, Stewart has taken an archetypal approach to the question of female struggle for artistic self-fulfilment. For that reason, we bring to a close this section by submitting that the female artists of the two texts under study, Adichie and Kaine Agary, re-adopt Stewart's concept of female *Kunsterroman* to articulate the experiences of the protagonists which are instrumental in the formation of their characters, and equally identify with other female artists in fostering female traditions of novels of growth and development.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 REVIEW ON ADICHIE'S *PURPLE HIBISCUS*

According to Aristotle, character must either be noble or base. In view of the fact that human characters regularly conform to these distinctions, all of us are different in character because of some qualities of goodness and evil. Allwell Abalogu Onukaogu and Ezechi Onyerionwu are

among the various critics that have studied characterisation in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*. The critics aver that Eugene Achike, fondly called Papa, is a dictatorial character. Allwell and Onyerionwu also say that: "Papa is an allegorical character, a representation of, and exploration of contemporary Nigerian socio-political experience" (23). Onukaogu further submits that "against the backdrop of Adichie's intention of a story of physical and psychological development and change, Eugene is characteristically known as a tyrant and a dictator" (152). He justifies his assertion by juxtaposing Eugene's character with the "military leader who unleashes all manner of terror in the wider fictive world of Adichie's impressive novel" (152).

On the other hand, Heather McElhatton aptly describes Eugene as "both evil and loving, both benevolent protector and emotional terrorist" (1). In another review, we are told that:

Papa is an interesting character study--a person so completely sold in the superiority of the Western mode of thought and action, especially through religion, that he will stop at nothing to see it enforced in his own house, he is at once consumed by raw extreme of passions--extreme love and, worse extreme anger" (90).

Eugene's character is not out of place, but subscribes to scholarly assertions of a realist character in a fictional text. Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle argue that a realist character, is one "who should have a number of different traits or qualities which may be conflicting, or contradictory" should be, to some extent, unpredictable, his/her words should appear to originate in multiple impulses" (65). Eugene, therefore, is a dimensional (lifelike) character. Lauren Gold aptly observes that in Adichie's novel, "Every character has dimension" every description resonates like cello music" (1). Sequel to Heather McElhatton's presentation of

Eugene as "evil, loving and benevolent protector", Helen Chukwuma submits that in spite of Eugene's negative attributes, Adichie presents him as a monstrous representation of the modern African man. She justifies her analysis of Eugene's character on the basis of two important principles. These are the principles of *harmotton* and *homoios*. The first principle implies that a character should be endowed with traits appropriately related to the action, while the second principle underscores that the character should have idiosyncrasies and be like an individual. In terms of *harmotton*, we would infer that the critic presupposes that Eugene indeed is overblown. He has authority but his actions and motivations render his authority questionable. In terms of *homoios*, Eugene does not at some moments behave like an individual. His relationship with his aged father, Papa-Nnukwu, is typical of such negation in his character. This adds up to the overall negative effect of Eugene's action in the text. Allwell and Onyerionwu report that "the impression the audience already has for him is that of a tyrant, a domestic equivalent of the military devil under whose grip Nigerians are being dehumanized" (148).

Consequently, Charles Larson submits that "Eugene is a surveillant figure, a personality, who takes control in what happens in his family and completely subjugates other family members to his wishes and demands" (1). Citing Ayo Kehinde and Christopher Onman Larson argues that "Eugene symbolizes the ruling dictator and the rest of the families-- Kambili, Mama and Jaja- the oppressed victims" (4). He agrees that Eugene is a dictator who uses various methods to remain in control and makes his family members follow his rules and wishes. In such methods, Larson sees Eugene as a philanthropic character; a man who gives vast amount of charity, and a religious extremist who blindfolds his family into believing him without questioning. Hence, the religious inclination forms the better part of his character and as such influences his conscious and unconscious activities. To reiterate Heather's description of Eugene

as “both evil and loving, both benevolent protector and emotional terrorist”, it is characteristically obvious that these tensions, contradictions, multiplicity of impulses aptly cohere in a single character of the personified. Salmon Rushdie faults Heather by excusing Eugene and giving reasons for his actions. In view of Eugene’s temperament, Rushdie maintains that “He is not a bad man, but rather acts out of love towards his children despite the fact that his desire to succeed at all cost through the western system of capitalism ultimately pulls his family apart. Rushdie therefore describes Eugene’s life as a “translated man” who according to Anthony Oha “gets things mixed up because of obstinacy and translation of values” (201). “Values” by inference in the context of our study refers to the norms Achike admires while he leaves with the white missionaries as a growing child; there presumably, he develops a deep belief in Catholicism.

Accordingly, Onyerionwu and Onukaogu, citing Kevin Densely, note that Eugene is a religious extremist. Densely views Eugene’s character as “a very strict Catholic who dominates his family for much of the novel by imposing a harsh religious regime in the family home” (2). For Chukwu Chidiebere, Eugene is a fanatic and engages in human right denial. She buttresses her claim by pointing how Eugene denied his father, Papa-Nnukwu the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Egbele Ebinelita Petrina deviates in her opinion of Eugene’s character. In her study of Adichie’s *Purple Hibiscus*, Petrina reports that Eugene is a fundamentalist. She buttresses her point by citing the author’s voice in an interview with Wale Adebani, where “Adichie salvages Eugene’s character by noting that Achike’s religiosity is not over-represented and neither is the religious fundamentalism in Nigeria understated” (18). For Mercy Abam Oduyoye, Eugene is a Christian fundamentalist, a stereotype of colonial self-hatred and patriarchal oppression who seeks to do right in many spheres” (8). In the words of Cheryl

Stobie, Adichie ðoes not portray Eugene simply as a hypocritical villain, but reveals complexities and contradictions in his character showing ways in which he is principled, courageous and justly honouredö(425).

Unlike most critics, but like Onukaogu and Onyerionwu, Julia A. Tigner, avers that ðEugene is an Eurocentric character who embodies the postcolonized lifestyle. In her view, Eugene's character is a representation of the supremacy of modernity over tradition and values of the Catholicism over Igbo religious customs. She therefore tags Eugene a violent patriarch. In view of his extremism, Julia reports that Eugene is a Catholic patriarch, while Onyerionwu and Onukaogu in support of Julia's claim, submit that ðEugene succeeds in raising a spotless Catholic home, being a beneficiary of the magnanimity of the church himselfö (148). Julia's position is compared to Royle and Bennett's, citing Nietzsche and Freud who argue that ðGod is a projection of the human ego on to the surrounding environment or universeö (189). Freud is more precise in his assertion; he proposes, ðGod is exalted fatherö (399) ðfigure of authority, the great progenitor, the Daddy who is sometimes angry, *Old Testament*, sometimes lovingö, *New Testament* (189). Thus, Eugene's character has been formed and highly influenced by the religious orientations, norms and values of Catholic faith. He is a belligerent character, and this makes his personality and religious consciousness questionable.

Consequently, Anthony Chennells argues that, ðEugene represents Eurocentric Catholicism as he is careful not to let any Igbo culture influence his faithö (29). He substantiates his point by describing St. Agnes's Church where Eugene's family worships to have European design which makes the protagonist believe that God is more present there than in any other churches in Nigeria. To Jane Bryce, Eugene is a deity (god-like statue). What Chennells is saying in actuality is that Eugene's religious extremism results from the role language expression

perform within the discourse rather than interpreting it from his ostentatious religiosity. Brenda Cooper maintains that Eugene is a sycophantic anglophile, slavishly mimicking white ways and narrowing church doctrines (2). In his words, Eugene is a Eurocentric character, brainwashed and indoctrinated by Fr. Benedict, the white missionary priest. The narrative voice, Eugene's daughter, reports that whenever he talks about native songs, his straight-line lips turned down at the corners to form an inverted U (4). Eugene, according to B. Cooper, therefore, becomes an undignified mimic when he changes accent so as to sound British. Cheryl Stobie argues much like Chennells that Eugene represents a conservative Catholicism that is arrogant and refuses to accept differences or even listen to people who disagree with him (423). In view of Eugene's religious temperament, Stobie parts from other critics like Anthony Chennells, Julia Tigner, and infers that Eugene is an absolutist in faith and a direct product of colonial church. According to Stobie in comparing the pre-colonial and postcolonial religion, Papa-Nnukwu's character in Stobie's opinion represents a sympathetic and forgiving person as opposed to Eugene's character which represents the colonial religion (424).

From the above review, it is apparent that Papa-Nnukwu's character is so humane; though a traditionalist, he has the capability of becoming a memorable father-figure, a role model in the formation of other characters in the text. Thus, Papa-Nnukwu is an affective character that influences other characters positively and brings about change and transformation in their growth progression. Meanwhile, his son, Eugene, remains an awkward character that never changes, especially mentally, in the narrative. Anthony Chennells further portrays the character of Eugene as an imitative and mimicking man. He maintains that Eugene represents a mimic man that Homi Bhabha describes as a native in colony, that works for the empire as a supervisor to preserve British values and retain colonial hierarchies: Eugene has been conditioned by

colonialism and new-colonialism, so he considers Western cultures and values superior to his indigenous Nigerian cultures (26). Madelaine Hron argues that Eugene is Homi Bhabha's colonial subject caught in mimicry, repeating rather than re-presenting British culture (31). Madelaine likewise calls Eugene "somewhat of a paradox, while Daria Tunca similarly uses the language of paradox to describe him (122). Sophia Ogwude sees Eugene, as "socially fanatically successful but flawed personality, representing the ambiguous gains of the converted African" (115).

In another work, we are told that Eugene is an imitative character, where "submissiveness and dependence towards authority is forced upon the learner, whereas in contrast. Aunty Ifeoma's character and that of her children – Amaka and Obiora embodies an intercultural pedagogy where characters like Amaka and Obiora are encouraged to develop their own identities and critically examine and question the world around them" (23-24). Mercy Oduyoye identifies Aunty Ifeoma as a redemptive character. She is much like Susan Strehle who argues that Ifeoma "de-colonise [s] the home, the African body, mind and soul" (114). She further observes that Papa-Nnukwu is welcomed and honoured in Ifeoma's home and Kambili's cousins take part in numerous traditional Igbo rites of initiation. Mercy aptly points that "Ifeoma's family practises Igbo Catholicism full of critical thinking, humour, and even joy" (12). In view of Aunty Ifeoma's character, Seidi Tuomaala asserts that "she is a symbolic representation of, and embodiment of intercultural education in the novel. Seidi buttresses his point by noting that Ifeoma teaches her children to become critical thinkers and unique individuals with their own views in the world" (31). Adeleke Adeko, unlike Seidi Tuomaala and other critics, asserts that Aunty Ifeoma's character is a symbolic representation of "mother Africa, very different from the one Kambili and Jaja know as the children of Eugene

Achike (4). He defends his argument by portraying an ideal Nigerian: proud, resilient and educated as exemplified in Aunty Ifeoma's character. Adeke views Ifeoma's journey to the US as an important factor of intellectual growth and development that is germane to Bildungsroman tag of the characters and equally a reference point to the growth and development of most literary figures in African fiction (10). Oduyoye cites VanZanten Susan's conversation with the authorial voice and reports thus: "Adichie herself has commented on the positive nature of Ifeoma's balanced faith, telling Susan VanZanten that Ifeoma represents the possibility of a middle ground. She's ostensibly a happy Catholic, but she still respects her culture and doesn't see it as a zero sum game. There's room for everything for her" (92).

Judging from the varied opinions of critics like Adeleke, Beilke, Heather and Okuyade, one can infer that Kambili, the protagonist and the narrative voice in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, portrays the connection that Adichie establishes between the violent atmosphere that pervades the home of Achike and the climate of fear sustained by the brutal Nigerian military regimes when *Purple Hibiscus* unfolds. Adeleke, puts it thus:

Kambili is a voiceless character, a symbolic representation of ruled citizenship in Nigeria without a voice. Kambili's voicelessness and the silence in Eugene's house is a rhetorical device for the Nigerian people suffering under the repressive rule of Nigerian governance, a phenomenon which Okuyade cites in what Wole Soyinka describes as the art of stealing a nation's most precious asset---its voice (251).

Okorafor Mbachu and Ekwe-Ekwe in appraisal of Kambili's character argue that "in view of consistency in narrative voice of Kambili, she is such an emotionless and dispassionate character" (4), while Washburn sees her character as a "flat, unreflective voice" that recounts

traumatic events "without judgment" considering the personality of Kambili at the outset of the story. Chukwu observes Kambili and her brother Jaja as mere admirers. She substantiates her claim by describing an episode in the text: "Kambili receives the gift of Papa-Nnukwu's portrait from her cousin Amaka which both characters admire when Papa comes in and breaks the picture into pieces"(33). Meanwhile, Chukwu's stance of tagging the characters as mere admirers lacks vitality. She fails to locate the psychological growth process that Kambili's identification with the portrait unleashes in the protagonist's developmental trajectory.

, Prince Chibueze Orié situates Kambili's character as a representation of voicelessness (160). Eluem Emeka Izeze agrees with Chibueze's view in saying: "the fact is that societies are built when the people are given a voice" (160). By implication, Kambili can only come into woman being or what one of the critics refers to as *raison d'être*, (reason for living) when she gains her voice. Simoesda Silva sees Kambili as a submissive character whose illogical devotion to Papa makes her appear intellectually stunted (10). In view of her voicelessness, Oduyoye citing the narrative voice reports: "Kambili seldom speaks, and when she does, she often stutters or whispers. She does not laugh or smile. Throughout her story, she repeats the phrase, "my words would not come" (48, 97, 139, and 141). As Hewett notes, "Kambili's silence puts her in a long tradition of women writers and protagonists whose abuse disallows language until they can struggle against their oppression in order to come into voice" (82). The young woman's tongue is literally scorched and figuratively bound by the rule of her father, whose power mixes pain and love.

For Lalami Kaplan, Kambili is a tongue-tied character. The various passages of the heroine's muteness such as "my lips held stubbornly together" (141) and "my legs í did not do what I wanted them to", illustrate the pervasive presence of silence in the novel (165). Karen Bruce

unlike other critics is different in the assessment of Kambili's character. For Bruce, Kambili's voiceless character suggests that silence is not merely a form of oppression in the heroine's life, but a characteristic mode of resistance to her violent father (14). She supports her argument by saying that while Kambili and her brother Jaja rarely talk aloud, their *õ asusu anyaö* (language of the eyes) (305) allows them to speak about subjects which their father might disapprove. In Rose Ure Mezu's opinion, women's voice, even when vocally silent can yet make powerful statement through silent actions (271). Okuyade identifies cultural and religious limitations of Kambili as what emerges her empty silence. To expatiate on this point, the protagonist as it were have a false perception of God-figure ably represented in her father, Eugene, as the all-powerful father who chastises his people at the slightest provocation. In view of Kambili's silence, Nwagbara in agreement with other critics mentioned above conclude that *õthe Nigerian state has historically used violence to silence its opposition and maintain a status even among those it rules over (133).*

It is appropriate at this point to infer from our review on the characters of Eugene and Kambili that they are allegorical characters through which the state of society and her citizens are portrayed. Kambili's character communicates the Nigerian people's collective angst concerning the socio-political state of their society. Eugene remains a flat character, whereas Kambili the dynamic character that she is, changes throughout the novel. Eugene and Kambili are intriguing characters, driven by some forces. Eugene uses his religious extremism to justify his behaviour; educated in western thought, he is psychologically a complex character that abhors traditional values. From our review so far, it is pertinent to say that Eugene is perhaps a helpless character, a prey on the web of his scrupulous existential bearing. Adichie, however,

attempts to redeem him as part of the recognition of the role of men in the struggle for freedom. In an interview with Wale Adebani, she says:

Kambili's father, for all his fundamentalism, at least has a sense of social consciousness that is expansive and proactive and useful, so while his character may be seen as a critique of fundamentalism, the God-fearing public in Nigeria can learn from him as well (1).

The authorial voice as well as most of the critics that salvage Eugene's fundamentalist mindset has failed to consider the negative effects of such personality in familial relationship, where the children unquestionably mimic the elders or the parents. Since our concern in this research is the character formation of the growing child; and being conscious of the fact that formation starts first in the familial relationship, Eugene undoubtedly is not the ideal prototype for such long-term commitment. Nadaswaran Shahin aptly observes that "Kambili is a fearful, obedient child, whose obedience stems from the ever presence of father-figure in Eugene that moulds her inner mind and characteristically twists her psychological power into undue admiration of Papa" (10).

In view of Father Amadi's character, Chennells argues that he belongs to the "progressive acculturative faith; where Igbo songs are allowed, respect to indigenous religion is shown and a more liberal way of life encouraged" (269). Oduyoye argues that *Purple Hibiscus* recounts Kambili's changed life, catalysed by the time within Ifeoma's household and under Father Amadi's spiritual guidance. Mercy's standpoint, as numerous critics argue, infers that Father Amadi is a liberating force in the young woman's life. Accordingly, Onukaogu and Onyerionwu have this to say about Fr. Amadi:

í perhaps the most significant agent of transformation is Fr. Amadi, the young Catholic priest with innovative ideas about how to impact the life of people in the Christian way. With Fr. Amadi, Kambili discovers the expressive and emotional powers that are hidden inside of her, serially repressed by a rigid combination of Fr. Benedict. Fr. Amadi is the only one that cracks Kambili's shell to retrieve conversation and expression of true feelings from her. Fr. Amadi is a young revolutionary missionary who utilizes a flexible charm in his bid to win the world over to God (156).

From the above review, it is worth noting that the place of the ordained is indispensable in the formation of contemporary youths. Of great importance is the cultivation of moral ethics, the platform upon which other factors that influence the formation of one's character are built.

Ogaga Okuyade opines that Beatrice, fondly called Mama, is an embodiment of the traditional African woman, content with the economic security her husband guarantees, but that she, by poisoning her husband, fractures the patriarchal social structures (255). It is obvious that Okuyade argues from a feminist perspective. He notes that Kambili's calm narration of Eugene's violence towards her mother shows the reader that his actions are nothing out of the ordinary, and that beating one's wife is normal. On the other hand, Kehinde associates Mama's poisoning of Eugene to a revolution against a tyrant (19). Abalogu and Onyerionwu state that Amaka, Auntie Ifeoma's daughter like her mother, is another culturally assertive and patriotic of Adichie's female characters. They further argue that "for a young girl of sixteen, Amaka's ideological temperament is worthy of attention" (225). They support their point by citing Amaka's deeply-felt interest in things Nigerian and the Nigerian nation as a whole, her preference for the original Nigerian music/songs, such as those played by Fela, Osita Osadebe

and Onyeka Onwenu is so intrusive. For Anthony Oha, Amaka "seems to be one the strongest female voices in our contemporary fiction" (205), politically vibrant, and an agitator for the sustenance of human rights.

In summary, Chukwuma Ignatius views Eugene Achike as a man whose staunch religious beliefs have helped to make a domestic dictator (2). Chennells writes that "the missionary tradition in which Eugene has been raised, encouraged mimicking of all things for Eugene, because these possessed a particular power to invoke the true God" (4). Of Ifeoma, Chennells submits: "Ifeoma's God transcends the religious division of different cultures" (6). Her Christian religious tradition inclusively blends in elements of her Igbo heritage. Abalogu affirms that "Fr. Amadi is the most significant agent of transformation for the protagonist, Kambili, while she later transforms from a shy, innocent and morally protected girl to a young woman who goes out of her way to seek affection" (157). From the above work, however, it is both strategic and noteworthy to locate the protagonist, Kambili, as a Bildungsroman character in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*.

2.2 REVIEW OF AGARY'S *YELLOW-YELLOW*

However, in the course of our research, there is limited or no substantial reading from critics about the characters in Kaine Agary's *Yellow-Yellow*. Most critics like Okuyade Ogaga, Akujobi Remi, Abalogu and Onyerionwu focus their reading on the thematic stance of the text rather than reviewing the individual characters. In view of this unavailable records and information on the textual character, our survey will focus basically on the various points of view of critics about *Yellow-Yellow*. We also intend to adopt the position of some renowned critics

concerning the appraisal of characters in fictional texts, like E.M. Foster's *Aspects of the Novel*. Aristotle argues that "character is in literary work for the sake of action" (40). Henry James poses a reverberating question "what is character but the determination of incident, what is incident but the illustration of character" (174). Likewise Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royel argue that "our knowledge of people is determined by writing, by the 'character' of written words, essential qualities of a person and/or the personality of a human being" (64). The above information will, therefore, constitute the focus of our review in the formation of characters in Kaine Agary's *Yellow-Yellow*.

Akujobi locates his reading on "Re-evaluation of Female Inferiority, The Image of Women in Agary's *Yellow-Yellow*". Akujobi argues that "the challenges of environmental degradation, poverty and lack of infrastructure evident in the Niger Delta have great impact on Agary's women folk" (91). Onukaogu and Onyerionwu argue that Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* presents a character in Zilayefa who "comes of age" by virtue of transformation from a village adolescent to a beautiful urban young woman (141). Abalogu and Onyerionwu's opinion of Zilayefa is quite different from other critics. Their presentation of the protagonist's growth trajectory captures vividly the Bildungsroman temperament of the text. This is because a cardinal feature of any Bildungsroman novel is the mobility of the principal character from countryside to metropolitan cities. This is where Adichie's text differs significantly from other Bildungsroman texts. In *Purple Hibiscus*, the protagonist's growth pattern starts from Achike's houses in Enugu to Nsukka--- a rural setting. Critics like Onukaogu and Onyerionwu citing Willem Jacobus criticise Adichie's work for not following linear structure inherited from the original European Bildungsroman. They (the critics) forgot that mobility/growth can equally be psychological and not only physical as seen in the life of the protagonist Kambili whose real

growth starts in Nsukka, the supposed rural setting of Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*. Meanwhile, both critics equally fail to capture the specific factors or elements that influence the protagonist's character and unleash change and transformation in her life.

Ignatius Chukwuma views Agary's protagonist Zilayefa as a "Pleasure Code character" (1). In his appraisal of Zilayefa's character, Chukwuma submits that Agary uses the protagonist's voice to posit a heated polity that yields a discursive formation that constitutes the background for the behaviour of the principal character as well as other characters in the text. In his explanation of "Pleasure Code Character", the critic maintains that Zilayefa's attitude of hibernating under the super-structural image of the male person, like an unseen shadow "over and above" motivates her actions (2). Both critics examine the character of the protagonist to indicate what motivates her inner actions. Onyerionwu and Onukaogu differ from Chukwuma. They emphatically assert that "the personal and internal conflict characterises the fiction, and the individual is more or less the centre of action" (119-120); thus, echoing Aristotle's assertion that characters are included "for the sake of the action" (40). Onyerionwu states that Agary's tale is that of Zilayefa, a young Niger Delta girl who is fast growing into a woman against the backdrop of the volatile socio-political and economic environment of the Niger Delta.

Usmalia in an interview with Agary reports on the author's intention for creating the character of her protagonist. According to the authorial voice "the main story is just this girl [Zilayefa] getting to a point where she has to define for herself what her future is going to be "that of self realization" (10). From the above works, it is pertinent to note that Zilayefa is a Bildungsroman character, an adolescent in the threshold of growing up from childhood to adulthood. To reiterate Onyerionwu's emphasis, the struggle takes the form of engagement with forces--environments, sub-human's, learning and conflict of identity. E. O. Simon observes that

Kaine Agary has joined the new crop of African writers like Promise Okekwe, Chris Abani, Sefi Atta, Helon Habila with the publication of *Yellow-Yellow*. Simon concurs with the authorial voice that *Yellow-Yellow* doubles as the book's title and the protagonist's name given her by the villagers because of her complexion (4). Simon aptly recognizes the symbolic importance of giving a name as mark of social prejudice, citing the narrative voice of the biracial children are given different name tags, like "Mamy water," "born troway," "African profit," "ashawo pikin," "father unknown" (4). Name in this context is a signifier, pointing to the personality or character of the signified [person].

Joy M. Etiowo locates the protagonist's character in *Yellow-Yellow* as a "Sex Object". The critic interrogates the moral consequences of the situation in the Niger Delta and concludes that the young girls become easy sex prey to the white oil workers and expatriates. Yellow (the major character) herself is a function of such social malfunctioning, and, unfortunately, later finds herself being also a sex object for self-sustenance. Agary therefore advocates girl-child education as a panacea to this problem.

Christiana Barbara in view of bi-racial character in literary works and/or children of mixed colour, observes that "the effect of miscegenation is tragedy; regardless of what other positive characteristics the mulatta might possess" (16). Oke Ibeanu in appraisal of Zilayefa's character vi-a-vis her social milieu makes allusion to the structural violence that characterises the Niger Delta and describes the character as being in such conditions as exclusion, deprivation and poverty (10). Precious Ona argues that Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* characteristically "has victimised character in twofold sufferings: 'the women in the hands of foreign oil expatriates and in the hands of local men who discriminate, subjugate and relegate them to the background'" (35). It is evident from the above reviews that most critics like Akujobi Remi, Precious Ona and Ignatius

Chukwuma observe that the female characters in *Yellow-Yellow* exemplified in Zilayefa wear one or more images which bring to mind Chukwuma's assertion that:

The female character in African fiction is a facile lackluster human beings, the quite member of a household, content only to bear children, unfulfilled if she does not and handicapped if she bears only daughters. Docility and complete submission of will is demanded and emanates from her ...image of woman as indeterminate human beings, dependent, gullible and voiceless stuck (131).

Onyerionwu remarks that the protagonist highlights the kind of western sexual exploitation that occasions the disjointed maturation of young Nigerian girls such as Zilayefa. On the other hand, Allwell Abalogu reports that *Yellow-Yellow* relives how the populace, especially the masses came under the suffocating stranglehold of the military lords. In his review of *Yellow-Yellow* Onyerionwu observes that:

Probably to highlight a fundamental stand of the havoc the crises over material resources, Agary puts the growth and development of the Niger Delta youth in social focus. that the average Niger Delta youth is a potential criminal or prostitute implicates a most painful kind of loss in the oil wars. Thus Agary is not only passionate in portraying the loss of the present but of the future (7).

Consequently Ogaga situates his reading of *Yellow-Yellow* on "Eco-critical reading: Regaining African Landscape". Ogaga observes in the protagonist the representation,

construction and imagination of the relationship between the human and non human world. In view of preserving the lives of the present and the future, Royel in "Eco-criticism: Ethics of the Future" reminds us that ecocriticism demands a rethinking of ethics, extending the notion of our responsibility for others unpredictably into the future since these others include people yet unborn (144). Ojaide agrees that the "situation in the Niger Delta has attracted creative writing and criticism in and from the area like some notable creative voices like Ken Saro-Wiwa's *A Month and a Day*, *The Activist* by Ojaide and Agary's *Yellow-Yellow*. To the malfunctioning character that unfortunately becomes self-substance, Agary therefore interrogates through her character the moral consequences of the situation in the Niger Delta. Onukaogu and Onyerionwu submit that the crisis in the Niger Delta is political, economic, social, ecological and moral, all rolled into one. It manifests in political oppression, social neglect, environmental degradation and devaluation of moral precepts. Solomon O. Azumurana argues that Agary's major character, Zilayefa like other female characters, is propelled in her actions and inactions by her gendered exclusion within the socio-cultural specialty. He points out that even though Sisi knows little or nothing about the eponymous heroine Zilayefa, she accommodates her because she wants to create herself phallographic space and responsibility as a way of interrogating the stipulative position that attends her being in her environment" (8).

From the above reviews on what critics have written on characters in *Purple Hibiscus* and *Yellow-Yellow*, it is obvious that there are pertinent issues that demand scholarly attention. Perhaps, it has not caught the attention of critics. Most scholars have adopted *Purple Hibiscus* and *Yellow-Yellow* as Bildungsroman novel or an allegorical text, through which they examine the growth and development of the nation. According to Chinyere Egbuta, people of same society respond differently to the same social circumstances. Likewise, people respond

differently to the same stimuli. Between a stimulus and response, there is a gap which the individual ought to fill. The skill to fill the gap results from his/her ability to make freely a rational choice that has infinite value and is germane to the existential bearing of the individual. Therefore, in our review, characters in Adiche's *Purple Hibiscus*, such as the protagonist, changes from one psychological state to the other. Kambili is a dynamic character that changes from a mechanical style of life, voicelessness, to a strong female assertive voice, and from immature adolescence to adulthood. On the other hand, Eugene from our findings never changes; he remains the all-powerful ruler in the family, and a rigid custodian of the social and religious worldviews that shape his personality. Also, Agary's protagonist, Zilayefa, undergoes transformation and changes as a result of experience. In view of such discernible changes and transformation in the lives of the protagonists, the existing research work on character formation by various critics have not been able to substantiate and provide substantive factors responsible for such growth and transformation. Therefore, in this research, the gap we intend to fill is to articulate the factors and that influence the formation of the textual characters as Bildungsroman characters.

3.1 CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework used in this study is Bildungsroman. Bildungsroman within the framework of our discourse chronicles the formation of character, the story of education (informal and formal), the narrative of formative years, growth and apprenticeship of the protagonist towards self-individuation and agency. In this case, Bildungsroman provides the framework that showcases the developmental trajectory of the protagonists. It equally indicates

the key elements and essential factors that necessarily influence the formation of the characters and at the end explains how each protagonist attains maturity sequel to the internalization of these factors. The literary tradition of Bildungsroman portrays, among other things, the development of the protagonist from his/her childhood until adulthood. Apt attention is given to the various elements and key factors that determine the growth and development of the protagonist towards maturation, self consciousness and agency. It is pertinent to say that the defining feature of Bildungsroman in the present study is transmutation. By this, we mean a gradual but steady change in the life of the protagonist from lack of knowledge to awareness. Such awareness is exemplified in a metamorphic stance that enables the protagonist to imbibe the ethical principle of ingenuousness and nobility to guide his/ her thoughts, actions and habituations.

The landmark of English Bildungsroman literary criticism traces its history to Jerome Hamilton Buckley's classical study *Season of Youth, the Bildungsroman from Dickens to Golding* which discusses extensively the English Bildungsroman. Tobias Boes submits that Buckley's *Season of Youth* presents a set-list of characteristics, which are "childhood, the conflict of generations, provinciality, larger society, self-education, alienation, ordeal by love, the search for a vocation and a working philosophy" (18). Buckley's classic engenders criticism from scholars, especially from feminist quarters. He was criticised for focusing exclusively on male novels of development thereby omitting and neglecting the development of the female Bildungsroman. However, the re-definition of Bildungsroman genre as a novel of formation that integrates personal to historical development first appeared in the seminal work of Mikhail Bakhtin in 1986, "Bildungsroman and its Significance in the History of Realism". Bakhtin argues that "Bildungsroman presents to the reader the image of man in the process of becoming

and situates the protagonist on the threshold between different historical eras (19). Bakhtin's essay by implication suggests that the foundation of the world is changing, and man must change along with them. In view of this fact, various definitions tend to portray a variant form of the genre; each culture has equally developed its own specific features and characteristics within its literary tradition. Thus, the English Bildungsroman has not only been formed and changed over the years, but has acquired particular features according to the gender, ethnicity or race of the protagonist. African literary tradition is not left out of this. African literary tradition has adopted its variant to appropriate the concern of new generation writers within the post-colonial African context. We hope to return to this point later in detail.

According to Buckley, the term *Bildung* consists of several connotations, *picture* or *portrait* as well as *shaping* or *formation*, referring to the shaping and creating of the hero's self through formation and development (14). Boes citing Dilthey notes that the various stages of experiences of the protagonist forms part of the character's development for *each of the stages has its own intrinsic value and is at the same time the basis for a higher stage* (232). In English literary terminology, the word has had broad application; hence any novel dealing with a *coming-of-age motif* of the hero can be designated as Bildungsroman. This is what Boes describes as *the free-floating use to which the term Bildungsroman has been put in English-speaking world* (232).

Sequel to this development, Richard K. Priebe notes that:

Over the past twenty-five years, a good number of the best narratives being produced by African writers have focused on children, sometimes

fictional, and often a mixí they focus on the early years of the child and sometimes take us from childhood through adulthood (41).

It is worth noting that most of the works by the contemporary Nigerian writers feature Coming-of-Age of the protagonist, but deal distinctly on identity formation and the issue of growing up in multicultural and transcultural world. The sub-genre therefore connotes different name tags as: African childhood, identity formation and coming-of-age motif. The most representative of African Bildungsroman are Camara Laye's *The African Child*, *Mission to Kala* by Mongo Beti, *Martha Quest* by Doris Lessing, *Houseboy* by Ferdinand Oyono, *Ake: The Story of My Childhood* by Wole Soyinka, *Nervous Condition* by Tsitis Dangarembga, *Devil on the Cross*, and *The River Between* by Ngugi wa Thiongo and a host of others.

Fundamentally, literature mirrors society, and re-echoing one of the female critics, Mary Ann Ferguson, literature reflects reality. The novelist similarly is the conscience of society, unequivocally a representative of his/her people and more importantly, the creator who fashions the characters that populate society. Accordingly, Helen Chukwuma avers that the novelist does more than simple story-telling in a beautiful manner, ðhe arouses in the reader a true sense of himself, evoking his past and linking it to the presentö (VI). Albeit the variableness of the genre within postcolonial African context, the thematic preoccupation of every Bildungsroman remains more or less the same as the genre charts the growth and development of the principal character towards self-individuation. Meanwhile, African Bildungsroman from its first appearance is markedly at variance from its Western counterpart. Hence, reconnection to the past and socio-human connectedness remains a cardinal facet of the African sub-genre. We shall return in detail to this point while discussing African female Bildungsroman.

3.1.1 BILDUNGSROMAN IN FEMINIST CRITICISM

Bildungsroman developed a feminist tone in the nineteenth century when feminist scholars began to investigate the phallogocentric grounds of traditional novels of formation. A landmark of this sub-genre from the feminist critics is the omnibus classic, *The Voyage In: Fictions of Female Development* edited by Elizabeth Abel, Marianne Hirsch, and Elizabeth Langland. In this anthology, the editors concur that "social pressure directed feminine development in the nineteenth century inwards and towards the spiritual realm" (234). Other female proponents that delved into the genre within twentieth century are Susan Fraiman's *Unbecoming Woman* in 1993, Rita Felski's essay on *The Novel of Self-Discovery* in 1980 which according to Felski focuses on the "historical process of women coming to consciousness of female identity as potentially oppositional force to existing social and cultural values" (131). Susanne Howe, Roy Pascals as well as Mary Ann Ferguson and Labovitz Esther made an in-depth contribution towards the success and expansion of the genre.

In her classical study, *The Myth of the Heroine: The Female Bildungsroman in the Twentieth Century*, Labovitz Esther emerges with a ground-breaking text that recaptures the missing female heroine in Bildungsroman genre and eruditely casts the beam-light on the development of the female protagonist. Accordingly, she enumerates various features of the female novel of development as "self-realization, inner and outer directedness, education, career, sex roles, attitude toward marriage, philosophical questions, spiritual crisis and autobiographical elements, which testify to the different developmental processes of the female protagonist" (8). Labovitz equally emphasises the significance of role model and gender roles as a defining feature of the female Bildungsroman. This basically differentiates the narrative structure of female Bildung from its male form. Consequently, the female protagonist often indirectly indulges in

self-education through her role model, in a more secular and contemporary term, female bonding through which she acquits herself to larger society, and thus achieves agency. Female bonding is a cardinal point in the formation of female protagonist's trajectory in African Bildungsroman. This process of self-education through role modeling is what Labovits refers to when she talks about a process she terms "Shedding". In her words, Shedding is "a significant act whereby the heroines rid themselves of excess baggage as they proceed in their lives' journey; thus, it is connected with the female protagonist Bildung and general growth process" (253). Within the context of our study, we reconceptualise the process of "Shedding" as being synonymous with purgative process. By this, we mean those acts through which the protagonist purges or liberates herself of psychic yoke; ranging from guilt feeling, fear, self-hatred resulting from inferiority and bi-racialism, to familial bonds and issues relating to ideological concepts or religion that overwhelms her personality and stunts her growth. In view of the issue of role modeling and female bonding, Rita Felski observes that "the model of female community offers an alternative form of intimacy grounded in gender identifications" (132). It is worth noting that through close relationship with other women by modeling herself on other female figures, the young heroine acquires increased self-knowledge and assuredness of her gendered identity. Hence, the female curve of Bildungs within the context of our study charts her way through friendship, female bonding, familial relationship, spiritual guidance, career, education, love and sometimes mimesis. This will be extensively explored in the life of the protagonists in the focal texts.

In an anthology by Elizabeth Abel et al, Mary Ann Ferguson talks about gender differences as regards the pattern for male and female novel of growth and development. In male Bildungsroman, the protagonist's development is spiral at the end of the novel; the

protagonist usually achieves self-realization after his spiritual and psychological journey in the external world. On the other hand, female protagonist's development is circular; she remains at home in order to learn the way of her mother; this traditional approach limits her opportunity for self-development in the external world. It is obvious that the female protagonist gets schooled by her mother who in this process is not only the principal formator but also the custodian of cultural heritage who initiates the child into the rudiments of what it takes to be a member of a particular community. In the long run, the protagonist gets socialized and develops the capacity for role experimentation and afterwards accommodated in society. Sequel to this expansion, most modernist writers of the twenty-first century have given attention to minority group and postcolonial literature, and specifically the third world literature. In a nutshell, the Bildungsroman genre has become more inclusive and thus changes its character, from being a nineteenth century white male hero centered to include the development of female protagonists in post-colonial Black protagonists and the minority world. Since our study is not geared towards comparative analysis of male and female Bildung, we intend to focus exclusively on the development of the female Bildungsroman. Among the various critics that have delved into Bildungsroman studies in recent times, Tobias Bose remains the rhapsodic voice whose work is so controversial. In his article "Modernist Studies and Bildungsroman: A Historical Survey of Critical Trends", Bose asserts that "the novel of development has mainly been regarded as a phenomenon of the nineteenth-century, but that the rise of feminist, postcolonial and minority studies during the 1980s and 90s led to an expansion of the traditional Bildungsroman definition" (231).

Abalogu and Onyerionwu note that "Nigerian Literature of the twenty-first century has understandably patronised the Coming-of-Age dialect with much greater intensity than any

other phases in Nigerian literary history. They maintain that several factors are responsible for such dialectical shift to Coming-of-Age genre, such as the foregrounding of the individual at the expense of the social in the narrative field; the continued interiorisation rather than exteriorisation of characterisation (141). Evidently, there is a marked departure from focusing on the societal issues to in-depth study of the psychological process at work in the development of the individual, usually the protagonist. It becomes imperative to articulate the category of texts that fall under the umbrella of African Bildungsroman and how the writers have adopted the sub-genre to explore the developmental trajectories of the principal characters. Most 21st-century Nigerian novels have such propensity such as Helon Habila's *Waiting for an Angel*, Christ Abam's *Becoming Abigail*, and Sefi Atta's *Everything Good Will Come*, Sade Adeniran's *Imagine This*, Kaine Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*, etc. These novels capture the features of growing-up motif. Okunyade Ogaga in "Growth and Transformation" notes that one can see how the crisis of growing-up in Nigerian campuses force those writers to use their gift of writing for psychological release (1)

3.1.2 THE RELIVANCE OF FEMALE BILDUNGSROMAN TO THIS STUDY

It is necessary at this stage to ask pertinent questions concerning the objective(s) of Bildungsroman in literature. Fundamentally, Bildungsroman sets out to achieve certain purposes in literary world. The major objective of every Bildungsroman is to present a quest for soul-searching, a process through which the protagonist acknowledges the basic elements that are intrusive in character formation and how these elements interweave to constitute an ennobling

adulthood of worthy character. Accordingly, Chikwenye Ogunyemi identifies the specific objectives of Bildungsroman narratives when she writes that it "educates while narrating the story of another's education intriguingly, both the protagonist and the reader benefit from this education" (15). It is this education that Bildungsroman narrative intends to achieve. On the other hand, Wordsworth places much emphasis on the recollections from childhood, for according to him, "a child is the father of the man" (4). Later on, Buckley explains that the qualities of a child's character form the basis for his stability as a mature man and adds that to Wordsworth as well as to the authors of English Bildungsroman "the child was an entity in himself, responsive to experiences that might alter the entire direction of his growing mind and eventually influence, for better or for worse, his whole maturity" (19). Hence, Bildungsroman locates how the protagonist maps out his/her place in society. The protagonist achieves this through reconnection to past as well as ardent search for the primal connection of the child in most cases; the mother is usually the object of such quest. Bildungsroman educates the protagonist on the need for individuation as well as self-fulfillment with the requirement of adaptation to a certain society or socialization. Bildungsroman seeks to guide and provide the protagonist with insights in the complex quest of deciding his/her *raison d'être*. However, the genre substantially identifies the milieu from which the narrator weaves her story and unveils the protagonist's vicissitude concerning relationship, love or career and marriage.

Bildungsroman is relevant to our topic of discussion in the following ways. Firstly, the two texts under study agree with the structural pattern of every Bildungsroman text. Following the plot pattern, the principal characters grow, develop and change from childhood to adulthood and so meet with the criterion of Bildungsroman text. Secondly, the axiological place of language and culture in the formation of the protagonists remain a useful instrument and makes the genre

relevant to our study. Again, the socio-psychological workings of the mind of the protagonists could be explored through the genre. Bildungsroman as an established genre specifically focuses on the Coming-of-Age of adolescence by means of exploring the dialectic relationship between the growing child and his/her society in which she/he lives. This character develops and gains self-knowledge in her journey of becoming and adjusts accordingly through role experimentation in society. The genre, therefore, serves as an effective vehicle by means of which formation of characters in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* is investigated.

3.2 METHODOLOGY

This segment shows how the concept of Bildungsroman sub-genre is applied in our study.

Generally, in depicting the heroines' growing up and their subsequent maturation, Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* situate appropriately as female Bildungsroman. In view of this, the textual analysis explore how the novel deals with the recurrent sub-genre/motif of the female Bildungsroman -- the suppression of the heroine's self, her rebellion, influence of other female figures, the heroine's identification with nature and her quest for self-realization. Each stage of formation, either negative or positive, has specific influence on the formation of the heroine's character and lends a hand towards the character's maturation. This pattern correlates with Tobias Boes' citing Dilthey's emphasis that each stage forms part of the character's development for 'each of the stages has its own intrinsic value and is at the same time the basis for a higher stage' (232). An important principle employed is the need for the protagonist's development and growth to proceed from the inner realm as opposed to external realm. In the inner realm by implication, the study investigates how and to what

extent the indigenous milieu influences the personality of the protagonist whereas the external has link with the pop culture and its effect in the formation of the characters. We equally, through comparative analysis of the two protagonists in the focal texts, explore how their different milieus determine their characters.

However, Female Bildungsroman has four distinctive characteristics. To clearly appreciate why the novels, *Purple Hibiscus* and *Yellow-Yellow*, are appropriately under the domain of the female Bildungsroman, the discourse delineates the paradigm and explores the make-up of this genre of literature. Firstly in the course of the development, there is the awakening, when the character becomes aware that her condition of life is a limitation to her aspiration for a better future in her development. Soon, she starts to display tendencies of her resentment and dissatisfaction for her geographical location which she hopes to transcend. Geographical location in the context of our study has to do with both spatial settings as well as the psychological setting of Achike's house in Enugu and Abba, and Nsukka as will be seen in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*. Geographical locations in Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* include places like Zilayefa's natural home in Ijaw, seashore region, Port-Harcourt, Hotel environs and Lagos. This sense of awakening prompts the character to question her values as a woman being, her social status and her gender. Afterwards, she meticulously, through the help of other female figures, charts her way out of such starkness.

Secondly, the protagonist gains self-awareness through her relationships with the network of women, who guide and support her in becoming self-reliant and coming into agency in a patriarchal society. The major responsibility of these co-women is the provision of moral guidance to the principal character in the face of gender adversity. Some critics note that the protagonist's predestination to succeed is made possible by the guidance of secret forces, the

Society of the Towerö, that are responsible for his/her salvation by watching over him/her since childhood. This is also clear in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* when Aunty Ifeoma visits Kambili's ancestral house at Abba and takes the children out for tourism and in the same process avails them the opportunity to identify with their cultural moor. Thirdly, the heroine explores her femininity and begins redefining her identity as she journeys into adulthood. This moment usually requires decision making and choosing of career in one's life. Fourthly, as the protagonist reaches a point of maturity and agency, she takes the control of her transition and has the ability to respond to the demands of her journey of self-discovery. Of great importance is the moral support and guidance of the network of women who help the character to reach the zenith of her maturity. Maturity in this case is measured not only by physical development of the protagonist, but should synchronise with the mental development which the character exhibits through role experimentation in society.

In summary, it is worth mentioning that the formation of mature personality is provided by a systematic return to the basic values of existence via certain cyclical structuring of the narrative elements that are affective as well as effective in the formation of the character of the protagonists in the focal texts. Therefore, Richard K. Prieb's observation in *New Directions in African Narratives of Childhood*, that "in thinking about our children, real or imagined, we are impelled to think about future" (41), draw a parallel with our study of character formation which hopefully seeks to trace the root through which the formation of the character/personality of our contemporary protagonists could rest on the ethics of nobleness, innocence, character worthiness as against the spirit of secularism that drags one to dysfunctional lifestyle. To achieve this goal essentially means to have a sustained and an affirmative potential generation of spirited youths.

CHAPTER FOUR: TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

4.1 TEXTUAL ANALYSIS IN *PURPLE HIBISCUS* AND *YELLOW-YELLOW*.

Purple Hibiscus by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Kanie Agaryø's *Yellow-Yellow* feature as Bildungsroman texts. In this case, our train of thought is on the various elements, components and/or principal factors that influence the growth and developmental trajectories of the protagonists from childhood, towards individuation, and maturation. *Purple Hibiscus*

chronicles the psychological, spiritual, religio-cultural, educational/intellectual development and/or maturation of the protagonist. The plot captures the lives of the three characters--Kambili, Jaja and Mrs. Beatrice Achike tenderly called Mama who from the outset of the narrative were instrumental in the subversive activities against the flagellator, a fanatical and dictatorial father--Eugene Achike, adoringly called Papa. The story is revealed through the eyes of the young narrator, a fifteen-year old girl in her threshold of becoming. Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* despite its religious characteristics is domiciled in Bildungsroman quest. The religious tone makes its naked appearance in the various titles and sub-sections of the text. It is divided into three parts of various segments: Before Palm Sunday, After Palm Sunday, and A Different Silence--the present.

At the outset of the novel, we are introduced to the religious background of Achike's household that defines the family identity and its disintegration following Jaja's refusal to partake in the Eucharistic meal. Adichie weaves her story around Eugene Achike's familial relationship and casts the beam light on the psychological, moral and physical development of the young protagonist ó Kambili, who comes of age by virtue of her traidiaic movement from Enugu, the imprisoned and suffocating house of Achike; Abba her ancestral home; and Nsukka, the liberating abode where her aunty, Ifeoma, resides. She was born into a conservative Catholic family, with a belligerent and fanatical father, a humanitarian but not altruistic character. Adichie presents to us the socio-cultural context, from which Kambili, Jaja and Mama painstakingly create their emerging selves, distinct from what Papa makes of them. The agents that bring about the new selves are necessitated by their exposure to other environments, especially the Nsukka environs and above all Kambili's contact with Fr Amadi James, a trendy Roman Catholic priest who knows how to catch the young and impact their lives in a holistic manner.

On the other hand, the plot x-rays the character's vicissitudes concerning religion, familial relationship, love, marriage, socio-cultural dichotomies and motherhood, and analogous to these stories, their respective involvement in scheming against the coercive formation meted on them by their distortional father whose domineering character tilts towards child reconfiguration. We are first introduced to the religious context of Eugene's family life, through a view back in time when Jaja abstains from Holy Communion. His defiant attitude shocks the family members especially Papa, who could not condone any serious Christian from indulging in such unholy act, how much more his only son who should set the standard for others. The narrative voice captures Papa's erratic mood and the interrogatory scene and Jaja's rebuff: "Jaja you did not go to communion," Jaja stared at the missal on the table as though he were addressing it, "the wafer gives me bad breath" and the priest keeps touching my mouth and it nauseates me, Jaja said (14). Judging from Jaja's response one can infer without mincing words that the growing boy is at the risk of losing every sense and essence of the sacred and its custodian- the priest, which gives him life and identity in Papa's family and world view. His rebuffing attitude sets off a train of actions that forms the narrative plot. Jaja's action develops and precipitates Papa's cruelty, a reaction that culminates in his [Papa's] breaking of Mama's figurines. Jaja's defiant as well as insolent attitude and Papa's reaction give a free rein to a cloud of silence and anxiety that becomes one of the traits [characters] in Eugene's household. Papa's unreflective reaction is not out of ordinary---- his action and reaction result from his unbridled religiosity. As reported by Kambili, "when Papa threw the missal at Jaja, it was not just the figurines that came tumbling down, it was everything" (15). Everything by implication points to the catastrophic collapse of Papa's patriarchal regime in his household.

It is worth noting that Adichie employs the theology of particularism in her presentation of characters. This is evident in Papa's overriding and domineering spirit, as well as his smug attitude in things of and about God. Religiously, Papa is thus a bigheaded character. On the other hand, the rest of the family members, save Papa- Nnukwu, Auntie Ifeoma and her household, could not exhibit repudiatory attitude towards Papa's ideals about the relational nature of God. Papa's ideals automatically become the yardstick of religious practices for the rest of the family members, despite its deforming and depersonalizing effects on the worshippers. In her artistic dexterousness and jolted by the sensibility of her audience in a contemporary society, Adichie salvages her characters especially Kambili from religious indoctrination. She therefore employs the theology of *Universalism* to draw a paradigm of the concept of the personhood of God. Theology of Universalism in the study refers to the universal concept of God as a loving father who desires to salvage human persons unconditionally. Thus, through the portrayal of some of the redemptive characters like Auntie Ifeoma and Fr. Amadi, we become aware that God's salvation is for all and sundry. One attains salvation not by personal merit, or self-righteousness, but by the singular virtue of the benevolent and all-inclusive father whose character is love, and desires to save all from eternal damnation. In this study, therefore, the universality of our discourse aims at attaining the moral formation of the protagonist's character which, within the context of our study, is the platform upon which other factors of formation are subsumed. As a Bildungsroman text, change and transformation are the cardinal points in our discourse. For this reason, it is pertinent to structure the growth pattern of the protagonist as contained in the text, and how the oscillating movement of the young narrator influences and facilitates her metamorphic process. This process is captured at the following three levels:

- I. Socio-psychological formation vs. familial relationship: this is represented by Achike's house at Enugu and the socio-political climate of the nation.
- II. Abba: represents her ancestral home---where she gets immersed with the ancestral patrimony of Papa-Nnukwu.
- III. Nsukka environs vs. Aokpe: represents pedagogical center ----agent of spiritual re-birth,revolution, change and metamorphosis.

4.2 Psychological Formation of the Characters via Familial-Relationship in *Purple Hibiscus* and *Yellow-Yellow*.

Our families define us; we basically--consciously or unconsciously pick up our core values and ways from the family. Thus, our response to the joys and challenges of life ó all of this is heavily influenced by the kind of family we come from. It becomes imperative then to see how the protagonist's familial relationship influences her character. Agary's protagonist, Zilayefa and Adichie's Kambili and her brother, Jaja, live dependently on their parent's approval of do's and don't's. Within Eugene's house, religious zealotry remains the platform upon which other core values and norms are built. As Kambili grows and discovers what she yearns for in life, through the support of Aunty Ifeoma, she opts to join a new family where she can learn how to think independently and imbibe different values that can help her to attain individuation, self-assertion and maturity. The two families in the texts consciously or unconsciously influence the formation of the characters. While Achike's concern is on religious and educational indoctrination of his children, Ina Binieabi, Zilayefa's mother, pre-occupies herself with stern caution on appropriate behavioural codes, (socio-cultural patterns), and the importance of girl-

child education that guarantees a fulfilled life and agency for the growing Zilayefa. The protagonist remembers ða heart-tugging lecture she receives from her mother for dancing away her time in Mama Ebiye's house:

Yellow! Yellow, so you don't have anything better to do than to *gbeinmo* your backside like a jobless girl? ... from then until the day I left my village, I tried to occupy my time with activities that my mother approved of, dancing in public was certainly not one of them (17)

It is certain that Zilayefa and Kambili get occupied only in what their parents approved of: moral living, education and devoutness. The pressure in the familial space becomes too heated and thus ejects the characters out to different environments where their actual formations begin. While Kambili leaves for Nsukka, a rural area; Zilayefa leaves for Port-Harcourt, a metropolitan locale. Abalogun and Onyewere in view of Kambili's upbringing aver that ðboth have not only lived under the protective religiosity of their upbringing but also have been introverted to the world outside their domestic shield (148). Thus there is need for the characters to explore the external world outside their familial space that confines them to fragilely narrow and immature individuals. Meanwhile, Adichie presents in an informal setting, a formal procedure of daily living, making her characters susceptible objects of in-house and psychosomatic colonization under Papa's military surveillance. Kambili reports thus:

Kambili was written in bold letters on top of the white sheet paper, just as Jaja was written on the schedule above Jaja's desk in his room. I wondered when Papa would draw up a schedule, for the baby, my

newbrother, if he would do it right after the baby was born or wait until he was a toddler. Papa liked order (22).

In every Bildungsroman, the character's first step towards maturation is to become aware of their immediate conditions of life that limit their desired existential aspiration. Jaja's refusal to go for the Holy Communion precipitates the disruption of Achike's household and unleashes a wave of drastic change and Papa's draconian measure on the family members. This unpleasant incident thus, builds a web of quagmire that daily witch-hunt the family members. In view of the disquiet nature of Achike's family, one can infer that his household albeit its capaciousness, asphyxiates the family members. The narrative voice could no longer contain her panting breath when she rants that "Although our spacious dining gave way to an even wider living room, I felt suffocated" (15). She describes the entire compound in Enugu as a sizable compound that should ordinarily give way for the dwellers to grow and blossom naturally, but it turned out to be an inhibiting environment that restricts the inhabitant's growth, development and freedom of movement. The point we want to make is that Achike's compound naturally would have been an enabling environment where each character can be in touch with nature. Hence, Eugene's attitude towards the family members not only drains their psychological formation but constraints the characters' identification with Mother Nature. Annis Pratt and Barbara White articulate the kind of female Bildungsroman using two archetypes: the "Green-world archetype" and the "rape-trauma archetype" (17). The green-world represents the heroine's virgin world devoid of external incursion. She often reclines to nature which represents her kingdom and by possessing it she possesses herself. The green-world provides a consolatory role to the protagonist. Nature more often than not induces her into a contemplative ecstasy, arouses and unleashes a forceful creative power in her. This moment is transformational since the heroine in her aesthesia takes

cognizance of the sublime quality of her inner self which when spell out, brings to fore the quintessence of her character. The two characters in the focal texts as it were are not only physically constrained towards identification with Mother Nature but could not grow psychologically since the natural world has been raped by either parochial invaders of patriarchy represented in Papa in *Purple Hibiscus* or by ecological hazards of oil-spillage represented in the expatriates of oil company in *Yellow-Yellow*. In the former text, Kambili the narrative voice reports:

Our yard was wide enough to hold a hundred people dancing *atilogu*; spacious enough for each dancer to do the usual somersaults and land on the next dancer's shoulders, the compound walls, topped by coiled electric wires, were so high. I could not see the car driving by on our street (17).

Since the environment is not conducive and does not guarantee the physical and psychological growth of the characters, it becomes imperative for Kambili as a Bildungsroman character to embark on her outward mobility where her real formation will start. Meanwhile in Bildungsroman texts, the character's psychological growth should parallel the physical growth. In traditional African society, precisely among the Igbo, one can verify the essence of an individual character by tracing the family background of such a person. In *Purple Hibiscus*, Eugene Achike's household is distinguished for religious consciousness with no comparison in both Abba and Enugu. What informs the lifestyle of the family members is their keenness to religious observances as well as their religious consciousness. Hence, Abalogu and Onyerionwu submit that "Eugene has made his house an extension of church. Being a beneficiary of the white man's benevolence, he would like every member of the family to be part of paying them back" (148-149). To heighten Papa's religious zealotry, he interprets whatever happens in the family from a

religious perspective, even when such mishaps come from his erratic tendencies. A clear example is when Mama experiences series of miscarriages, resulting from Papa's pitiless butchering. The narrative voice recounts the frantic sound in her parents' apartment

I was in my room after lunch í when I heard the sounds, swift, heavy thuds on my parents' hand-carved bedroom doorí I sat down, closed my eye, and started to countí I was at nineteen when the sounds stopped; I heard the door open, Papa's gait on the stairs sounded heavier, more awkward, than usualí there's blood on the floor, òJaja said òwe cleaned up the trickle of blood, which trailed away as if someone had carried a leaking jar of red water colour all the way down stairs, Jaja scrubbed while I wiped (41).

Eugene brutally chiseled life out of Mama. The victim reporting to Kambili makes light the whole issue by saying that òThere is an accident, the baby is goneø(43). As if such an inhuman act is not enough, Papa exonerates himself from self-guilt and flagellates her innocent, helpless wife and children whose sinful condition to Papa is likend to a virus that extinguishes life when it is dearer to the owner. He, therefore, declares a remissive prayer for the family. To intensify the enormity of such reparation prayer, Papa trickily arranges the novena prayer, to begin on Trinity Sunday, involving Fr. Benedict into ritual cleansing of his family with holy water, and should the children show any sign of tiredness, they would start all over again. Kambili in her utter confusion laments that she does not know what Mama ought to be forgiven for, since she is the victim who is beaten half-dead. According to the narrative voice,

Papa said we would recite sixteen different novenas for Mama's forgiveness. If Papa felt Jaja or me beginning to drift off at the thirteenth recitation of the plea to St Jude, he suggested we start all over, we had to get it right, I did not think, I did not even think to think, what Mama needed to be forgiven for (43-44).

It is very obvious that Papa unnecessarily yokes his household with guilt consciousness and in so doing, exonerates himself as the only righteous person in the family. The sort of Catholicism practised in Papa's house presents God as a tyrannical figure, chastising his children unduly, a revengeful and discriminatory father who disassociates with people that do not identify with his religious ideal. This method of religious upbringing has neither allowed Kambili to come into personal contact nor develop a personal relationship with God; hence, she ends up adopting Papa's spirituality. Her mechanical spirituality is such that seeks the church's approval in whatever she does save the intervening grace of Fr. Amadi and Aunty Ifeoma who introduce her to a new brand of Catholicism that is built on love of neighbour, of God and love of self.

Mama equally grows out of bitter experiences under Papa's idiosyncrasies, to whom wife-beating is just normal. In view of Kambili's interaction with Mama, she discovers Mama's indifferent attitude and unwillingness to replace her idolized and broken figurines on the étagère. On Kambili's asking, Mama responds in her expressionless face *õKpa* she said, I will not replace themö (23). The narrative voice aptly gives reason for Mama's reluctance in replacing her deity (figurines):

Mama had realized that she would not need the figurines anymore; that when Papa threw the missal at Jaja, it was not just the figurines that came tumbling down, it was everything, I was only now realizing it. I lay in bed after Mama

and let my mind rake through the past, through the years when Jaja and Mama and I spoke more with our spirits than without lips (23-24)

The excerpt draws attention to the previous familial relationship characteristic of Papa, Mama, Jaja and Kambili. These characters, save Papa, remain flaccidly voiceless characters under Papa's patriarchal administration. It is worth noting that Papa practises master-servant relationship as against servant-leader attitude where the leader remains vulnerable for the sake of the people under his/her care.

In Bildungsroman, the crucial place for a character and the locus of experience is the family. It is perhaps within the family that the protagonist meets the initial failure; his/her difficult familial relationship is never satisfactory, and the character therefore starts with a tone of freedom and liberation. Judging from the harsh experience of the characters in familial setting, it is certain that Papa's house breeds tension, depression and phobia which ordinarily could incapacitate the growth and developmental trajectory of the protagonist, yet one could infer that the protagonist invariably undergoes a certain kind of formation intrinsically. Kambili as it were gets schooled by mere observation of what goes on the surface which transcends the surface to affect intimately her psychic state and as such causes a change of perception and rational thinking. According to Rita Felski, "travelling out of familiar environment is an essential feature of female Bildung" (123). In respect of character's process of mobility, both Adichie and Agary create their protagonists in a barricaded world and make them long for an alternative environment where new life blossoms. The narrative voice in *Purple Hibiscus* reports thus "Until Nsukka. Nsukka started it all; aunty Ifeoma's little garden next to the verandah of her flat in Nsukka began to lift the silence" (24). The garden in the context of our discourse represents Kambili's green-world (nature). Also, her identification with her natural environs transforms her

silent and voiceless character into a constructive tool for maturity. Kambili and Jaja's growth started to manifest following their journey to Auntie Ifeoma's home in Nsukka a different locality, (rural) compared to Enugu (urban), a municipal geography. Adichie metaphorically uses Nsukka in twofold interpretation: firstly to provide asylum for the characters; secondly, as a sign of the protagonist's quest to revert back to the natural state where the articulation of her femininity becomes realistic through the help of a network of co-women. Adichie perhaps draws from her inner knowledge as an artistic creator, having lived and experienced the hospitality of the dwellers as a growing child. This draws our attention to autobiographical propensity of Adichie's narrative--a kind of Bildungsroman that locates her artistic dexterity as a Künstlerroman. Thus, Nsukka harbours people with different mindsets and equally introduces a different familial experience that ultimately unveils the silence that makes Kambili and Jaja torpid characters.

Consequently, Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* x-rays the growth and developmental trajectories of the protagonist, Zilayefa who comes of age following her journey from the countryside of Ijaw to Port-Harcourt. She strives to free herself from the obsessive watchful care of Ina Binaebi, her mother as well as the disquieting effect of oil spillage on womenfolk of Ijaw in the Niger Delta. The story captures the psychological and/or emotional trauma of biracial children in their process of growth and development. The situation becomes worse when the father of such mulattos like Zilayefa is unknown. Zilayefa, a seventeen year old girl, narrates her experience as a growing child--a product of unwanted pregnancy and nurtured by a single parent. Ina Binaebi as an adolescent girl sojourns to Port Harcourt for a greener pasture. There she serves as a secretary to one of the businessmen in the city and subsequently falls for a Greek sailor who puts her in the family way and disappeared. Ina therefore becomes a pre-mature mother saddled with

the responsibility of raising and taking care of her child all alone. The narrative voice gives a clue of the emotional trauma of her mother, Ina Binaebi, who is caught up in unwanted pregnancy. Zilayefa is a product of infatuating relationship between Ina and the Greek sailor who abandons her without a word. She reports:

There was no word, no message; he was just gone, leaving behind his planted seed in my mother's belly, disillusioned, my mother went back to her village to face the shame of being an unwed mother with nothing but dreams about my future (7-8).

Ina Binaebi, the protagonist's mother, has suffered betrayal, pains and abandonment in the hands of a nameless Greek sailor, a hit and run-away figure, who could not take the responsibility for his licentious action. Ina painstakingly faces the challenges of family life singlehandedly, and responsibly attends to the demands of her situation. She, therefore, grows out of her bitter and unfortunate experience and thus, embarks on a journey of self-discovery. As a growing adolescent, she succeeds in freeing herself from guilt and shame. Ina eventually struggles to gain a sense of self by freeing herself from endless waiting for Mr. Sailor who has gone never to return. In the long run, she relocates from Port-Harcourt to Ijaw village where she has to face not only the challenges of single parenthood but her doggedness to nurture and give Zilayefa formal and informal education. Bibi, as fondly called, has lost education but deemed it necessary that her daughter, Zilayefa would make up the education she lost in her adolescent year. Ina therefore becomes a prototype of novel of self-Discovery, a kind of Bildungsroman where the growth process of the protagonist is often confessional in nature. She learns through her past mistakes. Articulately, Zilayefa says that "my mother used to tell me that I would be better than her, that as long as I was educated, I would be able to take care of myself" (8).

Education therefore gives her access to the external world and brings about self-liberation. Since education eludes Ina, her concern is to make sure that her daughter does not end like herself who learns and matures out of bitter experience. In order to give Zilayefa a better future, Ina consented to her daughter's proposal to leave for Port-Harcourt City; there her real formation starts under the guidance of a network of women---Sisi and Lolo, who see to it that Zilayefa gets employed and saves for her education.

Comparatively, the two protagonists under study mature as soon as they travel out of familial homes to different environments and get acquainted with new people. While Kambili has to travel from Enugu, to the rural area of Nsukka thereby deviating from the linear structure of traditional Bildungsroman, Agary's protagonist, Zilayefa, observes the normal Bildungsroman pattern. She journeys from countryside to a metropolitan city of Port-Harcourt. In view of growth and developmental trajectories of the protagonist, Agary follows the Bildungsroman linear structure, thus the protagonist's movement starts from the rural area of Ijaw as a rustic teenager to a reckless and coquettish lady in Port-Harcourt City. Zilayefa describes her inner struggle and anticipated hope of beholding the different environment that has the potency to transform her life. She reports thus:

However, when the day finally came, the reality of being on my own sat heavily on my chest and as the bus pulled into the car park in Port Harcourt that sunny morning in April, I knew my life had changed í even though I had no idea what kind of life lay ahead of meí (45).

It is pertinent that the protagonist has no idea of what sort of life awaits her in the city; her joy is to rid herself of the village life and her mother's over-protective tendencies that deny her access

to the larger world. On the other hand, Adichie's protagonist, Kambili, does desire to leave her paternal house and join Auntie Ifeoma at Nsukka, a rural setting but enabling environment. The journey to Nsukka is both strategic and catalytic in the growth and development of the characters. Comparatively, the two authors feature aspects of mobility as a prerequisite for female Bildung. Adichie is different. Her protagonist deviates from the normal Bildungsroman linear structure. Kambili, therefore, wobbly crisscrosses Nsukka locality; there her real formation begins following her new relationship with Fr. Amadi and Ifeoma's household. On the other hand, Zilayefa learns through the bitter experience in the hand of carnivorous Admiral who takes advantage of the poor innocent girl and aborts her aspired hope of better tomorrow. At the end, she realizes herself and opts for a more refined way. In her words "if I lived, it was an opportunity for a personal rebirth along with Nigeria" (177). The protagonist's remark concurs with Barbara White's opinion that the patterns of pain are present in the female Bildungsroman. It seems that Zilayefa has a failed formation, and thus experiences character diffusion. Personal rebirth by implication entails the entire process of transformation of the individual character given that all her faculties---mind, spirit and body are brought into conscious play. In most cases, the female Bildungsroman engages the heroine in the question of "renewal" that brings about the emergence of what Annis Pratt terms "the emergence of supra-human figure" (136-137). Zilayefa's character reflects the product of her social milieu and represents the value of Ijaw/metropolitan society--"luxurious value".

4.3 RELIGION AS A FACTOR OF CHARACTER FORMATION

Character formation literarily implies the moral formation of an individual. Before delving into how Adichie employs religion as a factor of formation, it is important to have a cursory glance at religion that is functional in our analysis. Religion etymologically derives from three Latin words: *Ligere* (meaning to bind), *Relegere* (meaning to unit/link) and *Religio* (meaning relationship). Religion, therefore, involves a relationship between two persons--- the human and divine person believed to exist (in the other). It is a bi-polar phenomenon involving on the one hand the religious man, and on the other hand, the transcendent being (divine), who he believes to exist and worships. The religious perspective of *Purple Hibiscus* has two dimensions: African Traditional Religion (ATR) and Christianity. Christian religion is further divided into Conservative Catholicism and noninterventionist Catholicism. Conservative Catholicism is represented in Papa and Fr. Benedict. Non-interventionist Catholicism features Aunty Ifeoma, Fr. Amadi, Amaka and at the end Kambili. Formerly, Kambili's idea of God comes from the ever presence of father-figure who hates the sinner more than the sin. Papa's religious practice disallows fellowship with other denominations; it segregates, breeds fear, imprisons, has zero tolerance for those he calls heathen or unserious believers and above all is judgmental.

Religious consciousness of *Purple Hibiscus* provides the infinite (real essence) dimensions of the character's lives. Judging from Papa's avid nature, one could infer that he strives to realize all his achievements and values through religious perspectives. Religious consciousness therefore provides the platform that is fundamental for the growth and development of Kambili and other characters. As a vital element in the formation of the characters, Achike's religious consciousness revolves on the concept of transcendentalism. His problem is that his approach to religious transcendence disallows the elements of humanization

of the character, but tilts towards the divinization of characters like Kambili, Mama and Jaja, even Aunty Ifeoma and Fr Amadi to becoming like God. The apt comprehension of human development is seen in man's ability to be in dialogue with God and with his /her fellow man. This relationship is made possible through the love of God and neighbour--such love lends hand in the formation of human heart (character), and thus encourages attitudinal change. Change is made possible simply because I listen and obey the one I love. To bring about human change, winning the growing character to the trainer's religious value system is germane for effective transformation. Logically, this accounts for the reason why Kambili fails to change and has no spiritual growth throughout her stay with Papa.

However, following Kambili's voyage to Aunty Ifeoma's home, she grows and acquaints herself with a different kind of Christianity that forms the blueprint for her spiritual maturation. Kambili's encounter with Rev.Fr James Amadi introduces the protagonist to a different concept of God as a loving father. Fr. Amadi is the catalyst that brings about the spiritual transformation of Kambili and thus opens up to the heroine the recognition of her sexual self as a treasure from God; the libido becomes a power bank and a forceful tool for creativity. Kambili, therefore, should ever remain grateful, and above all, strive to safeguard this treasure from external violators such as Papa and Fr. Ben. Fr. Amadi is a young energetic Catholic priest who prudently employs a dynamic approach in impacting the life of the youths as well as other Christians in a graceful way. Fr. Amadi neither compromises the Catholic doctrine as a noninterventionist priest, who Papa and his likes may term 'secular'. He awesomely wins souls back to God without infringing scrupulousness on the characters. Abalogu and Onyerionwu have this to say about Fr. Amadi's influence in transforming lives in a positive manner:

It is with Fr. Amadi that Kambili discovers the expressive and emotional powers that are hidden inside of her, serially repressed by a rigid combinations and expressions of Fr. Benedict and Papa, Fr. Amadi is the only one that cracks Kambili's shell to retrieve conversations and expression of true feelings from her (156).

Fr. Amadi as missionary evangelist understands the need of humanizing the characters before divinizing them. It is worth noting that Fr. Amadi's stance in spiritual growth suggestively infers that "one ought to be human, and then become holy". This should not be misinterpreted as some critics do-- that the young energetic priest is so secular and struggles under the web of promiscuousness. Fr Amadi rather is a paradigm of a spiritual guidance to the growing protagonist, despite Kambili's erroneous concept of her relationship with the holy priest; the Rev. prudently corrects her false assumption without condemning the poor girl as most believers like Papa would, or even clerics as Fr Benedict, who would "be holy before becoming human" do. The narrative voice distinguishes her inner experience relating with the two priests in the text:

I was always penitent when I was close to a priest at confession, but it was hard to be penitent with Fr. Amadi's cologne deep in my lung, I felt guilty instead because I could not focus on my sins. I sleep in the same rooms as my grandfather, he is a heathen, and I blurted out (182).

It is pertinent to say that most of the things Kambili thought as sin like sleeping in the same roof as her grandfather has nothing to do with sin. It is on this note that we draw the paradigm of the two kinds of Catholicism cum priests under whose hand Kambili grows. Fr.

Amadi's religious formation takes a liberal approach of an all-inclusive and universal God who loves all; while Fr. Ben and obsessive Papa's religious dogma forms the novice with conditionality. Hence, his religion breeds fear, scrupulousness and absolute adherence to strict rules. However, Kambili's contact with Fr. Amadi is transformational. It is inspiringly an affective encounter that arouses in the juvenile protagonist an aspect of her religious consciousness which transforms her holier-than-thou spirituality, availing her to the wondrous possibility of existence through sharing and loving care. She metamorphoses from a shy, innocent and morally protected character to a young lady who goes out of her way to seek spiritual direction even from the opposite sex. Kambili's spiritual growth is not devoid of spiritual crisis, a characteristic of Bildungsroman. In her first encounter with Fr. Amadi, she discovers that all her previous assumptions about God and how to become a devout Christian have been somewhat sycophantic. During her pilgrimage to Aokpe, she experiences spiritual transcendency that she rivetingly confesses the awesome presence of the blessed Mother Mary. The apparition has a link with Mother Nature since Kambili's vision started with her reverent gaze at the galaxy from which she gets enmeshed to Mother Mary.

4.4 CULTURE AS A FACTOR OF FORMATION IN *PURPLE HIBISCUS* AND *YELLOW-YELLOW*

The roles and status allocated to male and female, the various ritual initiations, ritual festivals, conventional and unconventional meals, as well as the symbolic use of language are central to the understanding of the cultural context prevalent in Igbo society of Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* in Ijaw of Niger Delta. Our concern here is to explore how

and to what extent the cultural traits of Southeastern Igbo and Ijaw culture of Niger Delta influence the formation of Kambili and Zilayefa. Culture, according to Britannica Encyclopedia, is "the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief and behaviour; culture thus defined consists of language, works of art, rituals and other related components" (784). The cultural context in the focal texts is unanimously summed in the environmental concept. Hence, there are similarities and differences in the cultural formations of Kambili and Zilayefa.

In every Bildungsroman, a characteristic feature that marks the growth of the protagonist is when the character embarks on rite of passage. Adichie eruditely makes her characters observe this cultural norm both traditionally and in its Christian form. We are drawn to the Christian rites of passage that initiate candidates of both baptism and confirmation into the family of God, mature to partake in the Eucharistic meal--Holy Communion. Kambili, the narrative voice, recalls the sublime nature of her initiation into the Church which automatically makes her the "bride of Christ" (change). In her words: "I remembered my own confirmation, how Papa had said I was a bride, Christ's bride and I had thought the Church was Christ's bride" (277). What happens is that this initiation elevates one to a higher phase of life. Christian rites of passage guarantee Jaja, Amaka and Kambili the entrée to partake in the Eucharistic meal. These symbolically give them new identity as new names are taken. Since name is both symbolic and significant, such initiations do influence the character's identity. On the other hand, Adichie presents the rite of passage of Auntie Ifeoma's son, Obiora, into the *ima mmuo* cult. The narrative voice re-echoes Ifeoma inquiry concerning Jaja as a boy in the threshold of becoming, and yet has not been initiated into the *ima mmuo* cult. "You didn't do the *ima mmo*, did you? Obiora did it two years ago in his father's hometown" (95). The locale of the initiation is not only vital but significant in the life of young Obiora since it suggests the character's re-trace of his family

rootô and by virtue of taking the initiation, identifies with his ancestral heritage which gives him new identity. The narrative voice regrets her brother's inability to endure the pain of being initiated into the spirit world since to the author, it is the first step towards the initiation to manhood. Kambili reports the reason for Jaja's disinterestedness: "Jaja fears because he thinks that boys were flogged and made to bathe in the presence of a taunting crowd" (95).

In both traditional and Christian rites of passage, important elements that bring about change in character are the issue of transcendences. Traditionally, Obiora like Papa-Nnukwu by virtue of *ima mmoinitiation* transcends to the spirit world where they commune, relate and identify with the cosmic powers. They therefore become superhumans, an extension of the spirit cult one embodies. Such transcendental experience brings about change of attitude, perception and new awakening that give the individual new identity. In Traditional African Religion, once an individual has been initiated into *ima mmuo*, the young man can join elders and participate actively by contributing meaningfully in decision making, becoming the custodian of his cultural values and norms and inculcating it in young ones and finally, keeping watch over the growing boys. Thus, a sublime character is being formed as the individual is looked upon as an elder and agent of formation for younger ones.

Unlike Adichie, Agary portrays the rite of passage of her protagonist as an aspect of female Bildungsroman. The narrative voice reports on the painful experience of some girls in the process of initiation into Ijaw womanhood:

The day, when I was thirteen years old, I took off with girls in my age group to *wokiri*, carrying soot we had collected from kerosene lantern over several weeks, sewing needles, razor blades, and charcoal we spent that day creating permanent

designs on each other's bodies we looked on with anticipation as we waited our turns and watched shaky, inexperienced hands try to reproduce the butterfly patterns identifying *Kolokuma* Ijaw women that we had seen on our mothers' stomachs, while the victim stood with her back against a tree and her hands stretched over her head, we laughed as some cowardly girls abandoned the ritual after the first cut into their skin (41).

The excerpt describes the arduous task the protagonist has to experience in her rite of passage from girl-child to womanhood. What differentiates the two characters is that while Jaja, out of fear, is not initiated into manhood culturally like Obiora, Agary's protagonist courageously receives her ritual initiation into Ijaw womanhood. A rose flower is not a rose until it opens its petals. Likewise, a caterpillar fulfills its destiny when it becomes a butterfly. As Zilayafe reaches a turning point in her life, she faces the challenges that accompany her rite of passage. She painstakingly endures a traditional design or mark on her stomach, and thus, is welcomed into another stage or phase of life that ought to prepare her for adult womanhood. She soliloquises about her focus of entering a new phase of life:

I was afraid to leave the comfort of all that I had known for seventeen years to start life in a new place without my mother, who had been my protector, my shield, and who would have been, if she could breathe for me, my life support. Nevertheless, the desire to start a new life far outweighed any fears I had. (41).

Zilayafe has been traditionally initiated and equipped to pass from girl-child to adolescence/adulthood. Sequel to this outward ritual, inwardly, the protagonist has to imbibe a

different value that orients her present state of life. This necessitates her mobility out of Ijaw village to Port-Harcourt City where she associates with Sisi and Lolo and struggles for her livelihood in a hotel. According to Ngugi wa Thiongo, "culture is not just folklore, but that which encompasses the entire spectrum of relations and activities in any given society" (78). One would infer without mincing words that the ritual activities in *Purple Hibiscus* and *Yellow-Yellow* influence the formation of the two protagonists towards becoming mature women, custodians and transmitters of their cultural values. This is well exemplified in the characters of Auntie Ifeoma, Amaka, Kambili and Zilayefa.

For Senghor Leopold, "culture is the bedrock of development" (51). Hence, the novelists aptly create the cultural context that forms the personality and/or character of their protagonists; they allow the readers to come in contact with roles, status, dressing code, as well as artwork of men and women in both Ijaw and Igbo communities. Hence, we see Kambili struggle to acquaint herself with such cultural values that define her in society. Prior to her visit to Auntie Ifeoma's home at Nsukka, she could hardly boil water; all kitchen and stomach management is left for Sisi and Mama. Sequel to Nsukka visit, Kambili develops her skill in culinary activities. It is surprising that Kambili is a complete novice when it comes to making of conventional meals. For instance, during one of the visits to Nsukka, Amaka scolds Kambili for wasting yam unnecessarily and has to teach Kambili how to peel yam. The narrative voice recalls Amaka's scolding: "Kambili; Amaka snapped "Ah! Ah! Is that how you peel yam in your house?" "Amaka *ngwa* show Kambili how to peel it" (141-142). It is unknown to Amaka that her cousin has not got the skill on domestic management that makes her a lady in her society. Amaka therefore takes the responsibility of training Kambili. The period of Amaka's

training and the ability of Kambili to learn how to cook is what one of the feminist critics, Susan Howe, refers to as "Apprenticeship Pattern".

Apprenticeship remains one of the tenets of female Bildungsroman. As Kambili grows, she learns and perfects in making conventional meals like ora soup, able to fetch water; and even Jaja goes out to slaughter chicken and even participates in working in Auntie's small garden. It is during their gardening that Auntie Ifeoma introduces Jaja and Kambili to her hibiscus garden, telling them that the flower does not need much water and much sun. It needs tender care. This draws the paradigm of parental system of child formation. Children are like the fragile hibiscus. They neither require extreme discipline nor insignificant parenthood for virtue stand in the middle. Unlike Kambili who has to engage in apprenticeship to become a good cook, Agary's protagonist from the outset has all it takes to make conventional/ native meals that characterise Ijaw rural dwellers. She demonstrates her capacity as a kitchen administrator. Zilayefa diligently employs her mastery of stomach/anatomy and kitchen power to keep her foreign boyfriend under her lifelong dream of running away from the village, a plan that eventually becomes futile since she thinks Sergio would have been her exit out of the village. We are told that Zilayefa has to prepare grill fish, plantain with palm oil during their escape to the *Wokiri* Island:

I í took the fish and the plantains from the basket, and placed them on the grill. I then cut some banana leaves and put them into the basket in anticipation of the grilled fish and plantain. í poured on some palm oil í cut a morsel of fish into plantain, and dip it into the palm oil, all one hand (25).

Zilayefa is knowledgeable in culinary activities. This clearly differentiates her from Kambili who neither knows how to make ora soup nor enjoy such meals. For Zilayefa, a village brought up, she acquired the skills of home and /or kitchen management for typical Ijaw woman but struggles to adjust to urban style of living and has to take bread and tea for her meal in place of grilled fish, roasted plantain with peppery palm oil. Comparatively, there seems to be exchange of living style for the two protagonists. While Zilayefa migrates from countryside to urban setting for her real education, Kambili relocates to Nsukka to master the way of life in the countryside. The important thing is that each character is moving from what is familiar to unfamiliar to get knowledge that facilitates growth and development towards maturity.

Another important cultural factor that influences the protagonist's character in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* is the issue of 'communalism' or 'oneness' among the Igbo. Adichie demonstrates in her work the very fact that Igbo people think communally. This is evident in how the experiences of the protagonist in her nuclear family are very often interwoven and have subsequent effect on the experiences of the members of her extended family, specifically Auntie Ifeoma's household. The latter's familial relationship remains the catalyst of transformation in Kambili's life. Change only becomes possible when Kambili and Jaja are given the opportunity to proffer solution that could outweigh their challenging circumstances. According to the narrative voice 'we all changed after Nsukka--even Papa--- and things were destined to not be the same, to not be in their original order'(25). Auntie Ifeoma's home in Nsukka provides the characters with the opportunity of developing the spirit of cultural awareness. Hence, during Christmas celebration, Adichie shows the level of interrelatedness that exists among the Igbo. For instance, in Eugene's house at Abba, Mama has to help the wives of *Umunna* in cooking. Auntie Ifeoma agitates that 'the wives of our *Umunna* can look for the salt themselves and find

(81). It is obvious that these wives are accommodated as bona-fide members of Achike's household and therefore share the culinary activities with Mama. Social cordiality finds its way as a cultural trait that brings Adichie's characters together and influences the characters emotionally. For instance, certain expressions like *nwunyem*, as Aunty Ifeoma addresses Mama in one of her visits is germane to Mama's psychological growth. Mama's emotion on hearing such soothing words convinces her of being accepted as a good wife among her husband's kinswomen. Also words like *Umum*, *Nnanyi* and *Nwannem* referring not specifically to one's siblings or biological child, but to member(s) of a given community deepens the character's knowledge about the cultural attitudes and obligation one has towards the other. These traits are instrumental in the formation of the character's sense of responsibility to her society and the need to inculcate certain cultural values that guarantee their being accepted and accommodated in community or society. This is what Annie Olivia Eustorye intended when she says that a Bildungsroman character comes to be when he/she ceases to be self-centered and grows towards being society centered. This process so to say stands as a decisive factor towards the adaptation of the protagonist to a given society. Culture defines society and society remains a web of social relationship--the interpersonal relationship that connects men and women and invariably molds the personality of the individual without his/her conscious effort. Meanwhile, the cultural activities apart from influencing the personality of the protagonist, to a large extent, lend a hand in directing and re-shaping the protagonist's life. Kambili's socio-cultural formation, therefore, emerges through her contact and interplay with factors that underpin her growth and formation such as her interaction with socio-cultural milieu of Nsukka, development of her language expression and acquisition of skill in home management.

4.5 EDUCATIONS AS A FACTOR OF CHARACTER FORMATION

The cardinal function of every institution of learning (formal and informal) is the (moral) formation or development of the individual. Bildungsroman has three variations of which Erziehungsroman deals with the education of the protagonist as its principal concern. Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* follows the pattern of the typical female Bildungsroman, seeing that formal education is given a great deal of space in the discourse. Kambili is shaped by the formal education at Daughters of Immaculate Heart. She experiences difficulties retaining what is taught in school. Probably her psychological depression resulting from the psychic condition of living with Papa might have drained her memory. Kambili reports that "the words in my textbooks kept turning into blood each time I read them even as my first term exams approached, even when we started to do class reviews, the words still made no sense" (45). Kambili eventually takes the second position which adversely affects her self-esteem. She sees herself as unsuccessful student, "I had come second; I was stained by failure" (47).

Meanwhile, she has got the reputation and admiration of some of her teachers and the principal: "my form mistress, Sister Clara, had written 'Kambili is intelligent beyond her age, quiet and responsible'. Sr. Lucy, the principal of her school in authorial report writes: "A brilliant, obedient student, and a daughter to be proud of" (46). It is worth noting that Kambili's education at Daughters of Immaculate Heart under the stringent surveillance of Papa puts her into life--challenging situation that confronts and limits the growth of her inner self, save the presence of Mother Lucy who not only appreciates her self-struggle to learn, but also recognizes her capacity in oral performance. Mother Lucy must have discovered her innate abilities largely suppressed by the ever presence of her belligerent father-figure. She therefore calls her to start the pledge in assembly as a means of eliciting her stuttering nature. This awakens a sense of

relevance and belongingness in Kambili, and assures her that there is something good she can offer. Thus, her teachers (sisters) really affect the formation of her intellectual development through a participatory approach of learning by doing. The competitive nature of Kambili's classmates makes her to go the extra mile in self-reading or a kind of self-development typical of female Bildungsroman.

Zilayefa in contrast to Kambili's formal education receives in informal education. Firstly, she gets schooled under her mother, Ina Binaebi, through various experiences of domestic chores and /or home management. Zilayefa's dexterity makes its appearance as she works in her mother's farm, searching for a way of preserving it from ecological mishap and oil spillage. The narrative voice captures the degradation of the womenfolk in Ijaw of the Niger Delta following the presence of foreign expatriates and oil companies who violate their natural world without compensation:

a group of people, painted in black as my mother, some covered from head to toe, was marching to *Amananaowei*, the village head, I joined them to see what had happened. They were marching to *Amananaowei's* house to report the matter and demand that he take it up with the oil company some were crying; others were talking about compensation. I ran to my mother's farm. I saw what crude oil looked like. (4).

The above excerpt captures the protagonist's connection with her green world, and the extent she associates with the feelings of Ijaw women suffering amidst Nigeria's oil boom. The situation of the womenfolk in Ijaw is ironical. This is because the presence of crude oil in their region despite its ecological hazards would have enhanced their living state as they share

government dividends. Unfortunately, such was not forthcoming. Zilayefa equally learns how to paddle canoe, prior to her voyage to Port-Harcourt to be tutored under Sisi and Lolo's care. According to Labovitz, a characteristic feature of the female Bildungsroman is that the protagonist has no choice but to educate herself. This is because in traditional Bildungsroman, the hero engages in formal education which rarely happens in female Bildung. Both Kambili and Zilayefa deviate from the prototype of female Bildungsroman pattern given that they have the privilege to be enrolled in formal school.

On the other hand, the protagonists follow the typical female Bildungsroman pattern since they make their choices for self-education as the only available option. For instance, Kambili wonders why Papa should register Jaja in a special school why she remains in Daughters of Immaculate Heart where she reads on her own and Jaja has to go for lessons after the normal school hour. It is noteworthy that the protagonists in the focal texts, in most cases resort to reading as an escape from the imprisoned world that limits their growth. By selective reading, the heroine gains knowledge and self-consciousness. The book takes the reader to the wondrous possibility of opportunities waiting for her in the outer world, and ignites in her the adroitness to explore such possibilities and widen her life horizon. Agary's protagonist from the outset believes her mother's advice that only education would make her a better person; so she therefore tries to occupy herself with serious reading:

In school, I had spent much of my time reading books that Mr. Diselye lent me. I read because the books took me to other worlds and made me forget my own reality. We talked about the books I had read, about school, and about the importance of *educashen* (31-32).

By reading, the initial ignorance is being expunged and a new self emerges. Hence the importance of the emerging self as a feature of female Bildung centres on the heroine's needs to develop a harmonized self. Since there is tendency that in growth process, the protagonist if not properly guided may develop a self at variance with society; through reading, there emerges a self in a socially related role as sister, a care giver, or friend, educator, wife or mother. Hence, there is an element of connectedness of the female protagonist which has intrinsic value in every female Bildung. This coincides with one of the Igbo axioms that *agwa bu mma nwanyi* meaning, 'Feminine beauty is measured in the worth of her inner character'. Hence, the protagonist's doings and/or role experimentation reveal her character.

However, Kambili's education in *Purple Hibiscus* takes a more complicated approach that makes her develop phobia for education. Back in Achike's house, Adichie presents the intellectual and educational development of her protagonist from a passive learner to an active learner with the help of Auntie Ifeoma and Fr. Amadi's pedagogical stance. Kambili's upbringing stunts every possibility of her intellectual development. In terms of tutoring, she only receives foisted education that has no room for second to the best in classroom. As a result, learning and development of the intellect become the conditions for acceptance as a human being ó Papa's approval which must be met. She therefore gets schooled by replicating herself ó wearing Papa's academic view, and imitating him to a fault. Kambili narrates the pedagogical ideas of Papa where true values are taught and cultivated by listening to her authoritative father and memorizing facts that make deep impression in her; she thus describes how lost in thought she is listening to Papa: 'I would focus on his lips, the movement, and sometimes I forget myself, sometimes I wanted to stay like that forever, listening to his voice, to the important things he said' (35). It is evident that Kambili engrossly listens to Papa in such manner that limits her

innate/ intellectual potentialities that ought to be developed. Since her interest is to imitate her father, she thereby limits her cognitive development, for imitation is limitation. In another moment, Kambili soliloquizes over her inability to internalize and master her books: "the words in my textbooks kept turning into blood each time I read them, even as my first term exams approached even when we started to do class reviews, the words still made no sense" (45). Kambili's education in Enugu remains counterproductive; the fear of not succeeding hurts her psychological and intellectual development. Papa's tutoring approach makes her illogical, a passive learner who gets all the more voiceless by the ever presence of father-figure that drains her innate intellectual potentiality.

In Buckley's view, the real education of every protagonist of Bildungsroman starts in the city. Adichie deviates from this pattern by creating a character whose real formation starts in rural home of Ifeoma's apartment in Nsukka. Hence Adichie's concern about the heroine's education goes beyond rural-city setting to suggest that enabling environment determines one's formation and not necessarily rural vs urban setting. That is to say that Papa's residence in Enugu urban is not an enabling environment while Ifeoma's house and the atmospheric influence of university environment on the characters make change possible. Unlike Adichie, Agary follows the Bildung pattern where real women like Sisi, Lolo, and Clare are very supportive and care-givers to the growing Zilayefa. According to the narrative voice, she sees in these women her desired life ambition: "I saw a future image of me in the likeness of Lolo, and that pleased me thus, I jumped into her shadow, accepting the possibility that this figure, who had instantly intrigued me, would envelop my personality" (52).

Lolo and Sisi are examples of Mary Kolawale's womanist character who attains agency in a social sphere. They are economically empowered and use their opportunity to educate

younger ones like Clara and Zilayefa. An important aspect of the woman's formation is that despite their inability to get schooled in formal education, they do not underestimate the power of formal education to the growing youth. Lolo emphatically warns Zilayefa that her education is a matter of necessity as that is her gateway to success in a contemporary age. The authorial voice reminds her thus: "the next thing is to get your degree" "It is very important to have that paper in your hand" "times are different now if you don't have your degree, it will be hard for you" (68-69). According to Bakhtin, the greatest advance of the Bildungsroman is that the genre for the first time manages to show people living and changing in time. People are many-sided and complex, they have psychological depth, and their psychology and identity are capable of undergoing real change (21). Sisi's warning synchronizes with the cardinal theme in every Bildungsroman, namely "change". The above excerpt points to the fact that the world is changing and the growing child should discern such changes, adjust properly so as not to live in the past.

It is obvious that Agary's protagonist grows and changes with the changing world. Her response to Sisi's long sermon is indicative of her openness to be schooled under Sisi/Lolo's tutelage, thus she accepts the women as both mentors and role models. The narrative voice reports that: Sisi's "over to you" was all it took for her to take me under her wings as a younger sister; we bonded immediately" (69). The bond between Sisi, Lolo and Zilayefa is reminiscent of Efuru and Ajanupu in Flora Nwapa's *Efuru*, Ramatulaye and Aissatuo in Miriam ma Ba's *So Long a Letter*, as well as Ifeoma, Kambili and Amaka in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*. Female bonding becomes a viable approach in female *Bildung*, a means through which the growing girl-child gets nurtured and empowered in various spheres of life. Through such bonding, Zilayefa

secures a job at the Royal Hotel as a receptionist. The savings she makes from her salary is kept to aid her in her university education and equally care for her mother.

Her dream of university education comes to an abrupt end following Mr. Admiral's intrusive encounter with Zilayefa who becomes a victim of sexual abuse, a situation that would never have come to be, if poverty has allowed her admittance into formal university education. Her vulnerable situation calls to mind Nkechi Okoli's claim cited in Oduaram and Bohola that "the education of the female heroines liberate them from the shackles of abuse, oppression, poverty, exclusion, harmful cultural practices and culturally based limitations on their rights" (431-32). Education therefore elevates the female status to partners in progress with men. This affirms Chioma Opara's view that "simply put, female education is projected as fillip to economic empowerment, which starkly contrast with poverty and deprivation" (98). Unlike Zilayefe, Kambili throughout her learning process in formal school and at home has been shaped by imitating and living up to Papa's approval which punishes her if she fails to take the first position. Papa would stop at nothing in demonstrating his disappointment at Kambili's coming second to the best in school. He therefore drags the poor child to school and interrogates her in front of the classroom. The narrative voice captures Papa's hurting question.

Where is Chinwe Jideze? Papa asked, when we got to the front of my class, "she is the girl in the middle." I said "how many heads does she have?" "one" Papa pulled a small mirror "look in the mirror" "how many heads do you have, *gbo*?" Papa asked "one" "the girl has one head, too, she does not have two so why did you let her come first?" (54-55).

Kambili from Mother Lucy's recommendation is naturally intelligent, but perhaps lacks the enabling environment that guarantees coming first to win Papa's approval. Her oppressive background adversely affects her cognitive development. She goes the extra mile to memorising her textbooks so as to avert Papa's punishment. Hence both formal and informal education in Papa's house proves abortive in Kambili's growth and development. Therefore while in Papa's house Kambili fails to meet up with the criteria of a female Bildung since her physical growth does not correspond with her intellectual and /or cognitive growth.

However, Kambili's salvation comes sequel to her dramatic change in Nsukka. Ifeoma's home provides an enabling environment with a new approach to learning. Aunty Ifeoma and Father Amadi, the young energetic priest, employ affective and effective learning approach that educates the young girl in unrestrictive manner. Kambili like Zilayefa gets intrigued by and lost in her new mentors (Aunty Ifeoma and Fr. Amadi), and starts to shed off the values that hitherto defines her life existence. She grows intellectually, through critical thinking and rational questioning. Hence, the shell of her silence gets cracked and she gets schooled under Ifeoma and Fr. Amadi's tutelage as is apparent in the change and transformational stance of Kambili and her brother Jaja.

4.6 THE USE OF LITERARY DEVICES IN *PURPLE HIBISCUS* AND *YELLOW-YELLOW*

Both Adichie and Agary show the zenith of their literary dexterousness in the way they manipulate words to convey meaning to their readers. Outstanding among such devices are metaphor, alliteration, allegory, allusion, personification, euphemism, irony and imagery. The

title of *Purple Hibiscus* and *Yellow-Yellow* are metaphorically employed to convey the main ideas in the texts. *Purple Hibiscus* is a metaphorical expression which shows Kambili's delicate metamorphosis. Like a hibiscus flower that needs tender care from the gardener, Adichie's character grows from childhood to adulthood under the watchful care of the parents. Like the petals of hibiscus buds are used for decoration, so does Adichie's protagonist blossom into maturation. On the other hand, Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* as a title is a metaphorical expression representing the protagonist complexion. 'Yellow' within Ijaw of Niger Delta suggests the issue of biracialism, a characteristic feature of Bildungsroman. As a biracial child, she carries a negative connotation in Ijaw society which stigmatizes not only her identity but truncates her psychological growth. She therefore has to struggle and create a new self and develop a sense of worth, through the support of network of women in Lolo and Sisi, Zilayefa attains maturity in her divided world. *Purple Hibiscus* is also a metaphoric expression that brings out the under-tone of freedom. Purple naturally has to do with royalty whereas rose petals that blossom represent Kambili's urge to bloom and come into realization of her femininity. Adichie employs concrete images and objects like the missal, figurines, portrait, blood, smell etc. Missal is a religious object that contains words that informs and shapes Papa's world view. Missal in our discourse evokes the ever presence of patriarchal figure of Papa. Figurines on étagère equally represents Mama's ritual idol, her green world which should be protected at all cost from external invasion. Mama's idol is a symbol of the presence of matriarchy in Achike's family. Adichie's eruditely unveils the clashes between patriarchy and matriarchy using the two figures of authority that make themselves agents of self-destruction.

The image of the portrait represents Papa--Nnukwu's patrimony and ancestral spirit. Kambili's affiliation with the portrait indicates her acceptance of Papa-Nnukwu and all that he

stands for---namely the protagonist's return to her ancestral root. "I shrieked, I dashed to the pieces on the floor as if to save them, I lay on the floor, curled tight like the picture of a child in the uterus" (216). Kambili's refusal to let go the pieces of portrait shows how she uses the object as a means of rebellion against Papa and his values, while clinging to Papa- Nnukwu's value as a way of balancing her philosophy and/or ideology. There are ironic situations when characters like Auntie Ifeoma, Amaka, Kambili, Jaja and Mama deceive Papa into believing that they are going out for site-seeing. Auntie Ifeoma wants to take the children to Ezi Icheke to watch masquerades at Aro Festival. She tells Eugene that she wants to take the children to just look around, but Eugene does not know that the children have gone to watch masquerade---a thing Papa would never approve. Papa also believes that the children's main purpose of going to Nsukka is for religious pilgrimage at Aokpe, whereas Auntie Ifeoma uses religious reasons to lure him into doing what other characters want of him. There abound religious satiric occurrences in the text. Adichie employs religious satire to ridicule and humanise Papa and Fr. Benedict's religious zealotry. She lures them into "self-divinization" and makes them vulnerable to public criticism. Hence, Auntie Ifeoma criticizes Papa for doing God's work.

Adichie uses an animate object like snail to symbolize Kambili's quest for freedom. The action of Mama Joe of throwing back the snail into the basket and the movement of the snail coming out of the basket is symbolic. It symbolizes the protagonist's attempt to set herself free from Papa's repressive dependence. Mama Joe's act of throwing the snail back into the basket is symbolic. It symbolizes Papa's restriction of his children from travelling out of Enugu. Each movement away from Enugu, he brings them back or follows them with daily schedule and tele-guiding their activities. Adichie employs symbolic action to demystify patriarchal structure. Jaja's defiance and insistence on calling Holy Communion "wafer" symbolizes his rejection of

Papa's value and ideology. Thus, both Kambili and Jaja separate their values from what Papa wants of them. Jaja's name is an allusion to King Jaja of Opobo who rebuffs the British colonial rule and was sent to exile just as Jaja was sent to prison.

The text also features images of nature such as: rain, sun, flower, harmattan, mud, and rainy season, air smells of hills, gold dust, garden, clay and snail. Adichie's use of natural images is germane to the character's growth progression which brings to the fore the Bildungsroman temperament of the text. This image evokes powerful sense of potentialities formerly repressed by Papa and Enugu. The animate object of snail struggling to crawl out of Mama Joe's basket at Ogi Market represents the protagonist's struggle for freedom and liberation. The images of ðharmattan, rainy season, air smells of history, sunlight that turns into gold dust give a picture of Nsukka as an enabling environment which according to the narrative voice's articulation infers that ðNsukka could free something deep inside your belly that would rise up to your throat and come out as a freedom songö (303). Adichie's use of imagery shows the innate potentialities of the characters and also stands as a sign of hope for Kambili and Jaja. She therefore ends with an undertone of freedom and positive aspiration: ðAbove, clouds like dyed cotton wool heavy low, so low I feel I can reach out and squeeze the moisture from them, the new rains will come down soonö (310). Adichie uses euphemism while referring to Papa-Nnukwu's death. Such as ðEwu, so he has gone to rest, Ewuö (197), ðEwu, he has fallen asleep, he has fallen asleepö (189). Finally, *Purple Hibiscus* is an allegorical text, where the various events, growth progression and experiences of the characters mirror the growth of Nigeria as a nation and the experiences of Nigerian citizens.

However, the protagonist's nick-name in Agary's novel, ðYellowö, symbolically represents the level of loose living and children who are products of unwanted pregnancy--a

common trait in Ijaw of Niger Delta and a consequence of sexual abuse among women from the expatriates in oil companies. Agary's portrayal of her protagonist's struggle to rid herself of the harsh realities of life that characterize Ijaw woman is a symbolic representation of the level of female degradation, ecological mishaps resulting from oil spillage as well as effects of poverty in the area. Agary employs symbols like the oil spillage that destroys Ina Binaebi's farm from the outset of the text to represent the major ecological factors that ravage the lives of Ijaw women. There is concrete imagery of oil-spills, acid rain and gas flares that make lucid the atmospheric condition of Ijaw women and how it saddles them with psychological restiveness and impoverishes life.

Agary further explores the participatory role of Ogoni boys who make themselves victims of sacrifice in order to fulfill Ken Saro-Wiwa's last injunction *Aluta Continua* meaning "the struggle continues" as an allusion to the noble death of the patriotic figure in Wiwa's *Diary: A Month in One Day*. Agary equally employs ironical statements to demonstrate people who live in riverine zone, and yet lack good water for drink; there are rivers for fishing, yet they go on starving. In her use of personification, we see words like: "the cool salt water breeze from the ocean touched our faces, and the moon and stars called on us from above" (92). Agary draws attention to the relationship of the character and the natural environment which is germane to the formation of every female Bildung. The protagonist gets loose to the wondrous galaxies that beautify her "green world", in this case (Island), and desires to depart no more. She reports, "All we needed, if we were going to spend the night at the beach, were mats to spread out on the sand, where we would lie until the morning sun chased away the hospitable night sky." (92) In her use of personification, we have words like: "the books took me to other worlds and made me forget my own reality". Hence excessive reading becomes a prerequisite for female Bildungsroman. In

her use of alliteration, Agary unveils the ecological disaster that displaces the means of livelihood of Ijaw women, leaving them psychologically and physically handicapped. Zilayefa report thus òí the thick liquid spread out í it just kept spreading and I wondered if it would stop, how far it would spread, then there was the smell,í it was strong-so strong it made my head hurt and turned my stomachö (4).

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

In the introductory part of our study, we discussed character as those traits that distinguish one person from another. It refers to the quality that reveals itself in the overt and covert habituations of the individual. We concur that character formation includes the acquisition of good virtues, the practice of which will liberate an individual to make rational choices that have intrinsic value and are socially acceptable. The individual is thus accommodated in society since she/he reflects the value and spirit of the community which represents their culture and age. In order to attain this height, the individual is expected to follow a particular blueprint that guarantees her authentic formation through the inculcation of certain socio-cultural and ethical values that intertwine with the native potentialities inherent in the individual. In our literature review, the two texts have received critical attention from various scholars. Works by previous researchers have discussed *Purple Hibiscus* and *Yellow-Yellow* in the light of religious fundamentalism, hybrid identity, acculturated Catholicism, female interiority and women degradation in Niger Delta as well as effects of ecological mishap among womenfolk in Niger Delta. To ascertain the reasons responsible for the various ways the characters behave, we submerged character formation under Bildungsroman sub-genre. To reiterate what we have said in the introductory chapter, Bildungsroman traces the psychological and moral growth of the protagonist from childhood to maturation and in which character change and transformation is important.

In this study, the various methods of formation have been explored using the Bildungsroman literary sub-genre, the prototype of character formation. For clarity, we

employed the feminist theorization of Bildungsroman to investigate the growth and developmental trajectories of the principal characters. It is evident that our characters grow and develop from childhood to maturity via certain elements and basic factors that are catalytic in their formative years. Such factors that are responsible for the transformation of the characters include socio-psychological nature inherent in familial relationship, education-(formal/informal), religion and culture. The influences of these factors in the formation of the protagonists are examined in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and Agary's *Yellow-Yellow*.

It is suggestive of the analysis in this study that there are basic and/or underlining principles that direct and pattern the way the character of an individual is formed. In Adiche's text, Papa as the head of the family is a flagellating and a belligerent character. As a character, his father-figure presence in familial relationship strangulates the psychological growth of Kambili as well as other characters in the text. The protagonist for that reason becomes a reticent character. Her uncommunicative approach to life makes her so vulnerable to her peers who call her òa backyard snob and illogical to public criticism as Amaka likens her behaviour to that of *Atulu*. As a flagellator, Papa coercively subjects Kambili and the rest of the family members to religious indoctrination via his conservative Catholic ideals. Owing to this method of spiritual formation, Kambili throughout her stay with Papa turns out as not just an obsequious character, but a gullible Catholic devoid of any spiritual vigor. In order to redeem or salvage the protagonist, Adichie presciently makes Kambili desire to leave for Nsukka. Such mobility out of familial zone provides her with catalytic experience that is both effective and affective and brings about the emergent self. The author equally provides her with a redemptive character in Aunty Ifeoma and Fr. James Amadi who have the responsibility of tutoring and guiding Kambili throughout her stay in Nsukka.

Furthermore, the absence of the father-figure in Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* attributively causes the malformation on the protagonist. Zilayefa's existential aspiration needs to be educated so as to take care of herself and provide for her mother. As a character in the threshold of becoming, she struggles to fill in the gap of father-daughter love relationship that eludes her. In *Yellow*'s desperate search, she soliloquies that "an out-of-towner would be my ticket out of my desperate existence, until Sergio's unceremonious exit forced me into a dungeon of tortured soul-searching"(34). Her soul searching comes to an abrupt end as she casts herself in Admiral's shadow hoping to recover her second self (her absent father) in the frivolous character who at the end puts her in a family way. Zilayefa despite all her mother's efforts is claimed by the same fate that strikes her mother though in a fashionable but amoral way.

5.2 Conclusion

Adopting the feminist theorization of Bildungsroman to re-work character formation is viable in understudying how basic issues like familial relationship, socio-cultural, educational and psychological formation of the protagonist can intertwine with the innate potential to bring out the quintessentiality of the character. Also, the place of the network of women is very essential in the formation of the character. Agary's heroine's quest is underlined by her conscious attempt at self-development of her powers and skills which is especially manifested by her excessive reading. As a result, she very often lets the fictive penetrate into the reality as such fictive ideas further influence her life. This is evident in her desire for mobility. She quickly bonds with the other women--- Sisi and Lolo who take her as their younger sister and nurture her towards maturity. Adichie's protagonist's final achievement of her goals is to a great degree

made possible by the guidance of a strong female--figure and a spiritual director (guidance) ably represented by Fr. Amadi. That which eludes her in the familial relationship is provided by the family she finds in the larger world. This should be a reminder to all women that the ðother womanö next to you is your second self. This creates a better chance and environment for women as the agents of formation of our youths. It also reminds women the folk of their original capacity as not just that of progenitor, the mother of yesterday, today and tomorrow, but stands as the quintessential progeny in our contemporary society.

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