SOLITUDE AND LONELINESS IN FREDERICK DOUGLASS' *NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS* AND HARRIET JACOBS' *INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF A SLAVE GIRL*

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DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this Dissertation entitled "Solitude and Loneliness in Frederick Douglass' *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl"* has been performed by me in the Department of English and Literary Studies. The information derived from the literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and a list of references provided. No part of this dissertation was previously presented for another degree or diploma at this or any other institution.

Salisu Yusuf _____ _____

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CERTIFICATION

This dissertation, entitled "Solitude and Loneliness in Frederick Douglass' *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl"* by SALISU YUSUF, meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of M.A English Literature of the Ahmadu Bello University, and is approved for its' contribution to knowledge and literary presentation .

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late mother, Amina Yusuf and millions of mothers all over the world whose empathy makes the world a better place.

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ABSTRACT

This study is a psychoanalytic interpretation of Frederick Douglass' *Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass* and Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* in relation to solitude and loneliness. This is born out of the fact that previous studies in Slave Narratives have focused more on sociological aspect of slavery. This study examines solitary and lonely African American slave characters under trauma in the two texts and reveals how they psychologically cope and react in solitude and loneliness in their daily experiences. The specific objectives of the research are to demonstrate that slave narrative is an apt literary discourse for examining African American slaves' experience and that although solitude relieves the slave characters from social anxiety, it however, brings to the fore psychological conflicts in the slave characters. In the case of loneliness, a psychologically painful experience, it results into the loss of self, social fragmentation and despair. The study combines both the qualitative research methodology and interdisciplinary approach as methodology, in addition to the use of secondary sources. The study discovers that the slave characters lacking a social support base, exhibit neurotic trends and coping strategies that hold them back and hamper their progress. Consequently, they evince either a movement against, or away and towards other strategies. Male slave characters, on the one hand, exhibit a movement away and against others strategies by evading social network. Female slave characters, on the other hand, exhibit movements toward and away from others strategies by both evading and liking social contact - confirming the notion that male slave characters fight a lonely, aggressive plight to freedom while female slave characters identify with their respective family in their plights. The study explores Freudian and Horneyan strands of psychoanalysis in examining the characters' personality disorder.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

This research work examines comparatively through psychoanalysis the issues of solitude and loneliness in Frederick Douglass' and Harriet Jacobs' narratives. The study analyses solitude and loneliness in relation to trauma and neurosis; disturbances in one's relation to self and to others, and how African American slave characters cope with these conflicts that have become a hallmark of their daily life. This study establishes that slave characters who suffer from solitude or loneliness are inundated by trauma and neurosis and concomitantly by self-doubt, inferiority complex, despondency and depression. Consequently, the characters exhibit certain neurotic trends and defence mechanisms. The study adopts text-based (with emphasis on characters) Freudian and Horneyan strands of psychoanalysis.

From mid-17th century, when Africans were first taken to Virginia, America, slavery flourished as a trade. During this period and on-ward to mid-19th century which lasted for nearly four hundred years, millions of Africans were transported across the Atlantic in chains for labour in Coffee, cotton and sugar plantations with hundreds dying in the process. There were quite differences of practices in dealing with slaves. Briggs(ed), (1989:975), opines that while the Greek slaves had some legal protection, the Roman Empire agricultural (estate) slavery gave landowners absolute power over slaves. While the Arabian slavery gave slave masters absolute power over their slaves, the European slavery witnessed a lucrative, brutal brand of slavery.

Elsewhere, the slaves were treated mildly, slavery in America especially in the South exerted too much brutality and excessive, hard labour. thus, traumatized, runaway and exslaves wrote their own stories in form of slave narratives.

The term "slave narrative" refers to an account of the life or major portion of the life of a fugitive or exslave, either written or orally related by them personally. Edwards and Dabydeen (1991: XI) aver that the genre 'slave narrative' is one of the most influential traditions in America Literature, which has claimed increasing critical attention particularly in the United States and is acknowledged to be central to Black America Literature. In view of the above, American Literature did not only find its voice through a major medium being slave narrative genre, but it also became a literature that focused on the diverse nature of American society. Moreover, slave narrative brings to the fore, the issues of segregation, alienation etc. Therrien (2013:59) and Oguibe (ed), (1994:vxii) have all linked slave narrative tradition to issues such as segregation, detachment and social isolation.

In American Literature, the umbrella term 'social isolation' is often discussed in relation to racial segregation of minority groups especially the African Americans. majority of the mainstream white populations advocated for the white supremacy, an act which triggers a feeling of detachment. Oguibe (ed), (1994:xvii) avers that the "society itself incites detachment through collective stigmatization and otherisation. Under such circumstances, then, the sense of permanent rejection fosters a collective identity round the nodule of communal vulnerability, thus, reinforcing the feeling of otherness and the will for separateness."

Solitude as one of the key terms in this research is an intentional desertion by an individual psychologically or physically or both from his social relationship with other person/persons. Storr (1988:2) defines solitudes as the 'capacity to be alone for a healing psychological experience." Biordi and Nicholson (2004:8) define the term tersely as a "voluntary disengagement from social network". Solitude is usually a sought adventure for what Biordi and Nicholson (2004:84) call a "contemplative opportunity" in our own space. It is imperative to note that, even though solitude is sought, it however can devolve into psychological implications, which can hurt mental state, and it can translate into states of inertia, redundancy, causing trauma and conflicts within an individual. For instance, Burnham (1977:154) avers that Linda's solitude stems from the "absence of freedom, the physical hardship, the separation from children and family." Therefore, her solitude can be related to social anxiety, which is caused by what Horney (1950:20) calls neurotic needs and trends. Hers, is therefore, a defence mechanism in an attempt to blend into the mainstream and shrug off her real state. Douglass' solitude too is exacerbated by these social anxieties. They both shuttle between the Horney's (1950:19) movement toward and movement away from people". the characters enjoyment and repulsion of solitude explain their psychological state. They enjoy solitude because, through it, they are evading danger and relieve social stress, and they repulse it because it causes trauma, affects psychological state and brings them into states of inertia and incapacity.

Loneliness on the other hand, is defined by Klein (1963:300) as the "result of a ubiquitous yearning for an unattainable perfect internal state." Loneliness is therefore,

a perception that one's social network is not only inadequate but is static, it thus brings a painful experience, a desire for reconnection. Loneliness is toxic, and can lead to cognitive decline, mortality, anxiety, anger, depression, and a feeling of inanity. In other words, loneliness encompasses feeling of rejection, aloness, insecurity and lack of meaningful relationship (Peplau and Perlman in Biordi and Nicholson, 2004:88).

According to Biordi and Nicholson (2004:93), people perceive lonely because they feel disconnected from meaningful discourse with people important to them. Therefore, both Linda's and Douglass' perception of loneliness are shaped by the feeling of being excluded from the mainstream. Thus, they develop neuroses-what Horney (1950:19) calls 'two-selves" in a person; the possible self and the idealized self. The two selves, in conflict set in motion a process of self-alienation (Paris, BJ. 1999:3).

1.2 African American Literature

According to *New World Encyclopaedia* (1992:23), African American literature is "the body of literature produced in the United States by writers of African descent." The corpus began with the works of literary icon, Phillis Wheatley, an 18th century writer whose work was the springboard of what is called African American literature.For African American literature to be tagged so, it must directly explore the experiences as well as the view points of African Americans. Moreover, some of the themes and issues explored in such literature are the role of African Americans within

the larger American society, African American culture, racism, slavery and the question of equality.

However, Gates and Mckay (1997:XXVII) believe that African American literature tends to incorporate oral forms such as spirituals, sermons, gospel, music, blues and rap-concepts that are termed as vernacular tradition. While the vernacular tradition makes African American literature such a unique enterprise, leitmotifs such as those of slavery, oppression, and the mixture of African superstitious beliefs and myths make it a much more distinct entity.

From the onset, African American literature refutes the dominant white literary culture, whose preoccupation is the whiteman's world. Gates and Mckay (1997:XXVIII) called it "a literature indicting oppression, a literature created by the oppressed". Thus, African American literature has counteracted the mainstream white American literature, as it clearly articulates the plight of the black minority and justifies the black's struggle, their birth right as full-fledge American citizens. Gates and Mckay, 1997:127) opines that African American literature "challenged the dominant cultures attempt to segregate the religious from political, the spirit from the flesh, in so far as racial affairs were concerned". In other words, African American literature proved wrong the mainstream arm of American literature's assertion of segregating the black community in politics and other social aspects. Despite this claim, African American literature has grown mainly imitative of Euro-American literary tradition, with a mixture of African substance and thematically focuses on the plight of blacks especially in the South and becomes a sophisticated literary canon

whose forms and meanings coalesce to give it a distinct identity (Library of Southern Literature, 1989:28).

From the above, we can infer that African American literature unlike other literatures, emanates from a symbiosis of two cultures, Euro-American and African one. It is a child of Americans of African descent, written purposely to highlight the experiences and plights of African Americans especially during slavery and thereafter. To paraphrase Waren, K (2012:1) African American literature is a creative and critical work written by Black Americans within and against the strictures of Jim Crow America.

Scholars differ on what actually propelled the formation and growth of African American literature into what it is today. Samuel Livingston (quoted in Hornsby, 2005:222), believes that the literature is a historical phenomenon, founded due mainly to slavery and its after-effect. Warren, K (2012:1) considers it a post-emancipation phenomenon that gained its coherence as "an undertaking in the social world by the system of Jim Crow segregation that ensued after the nation's retreat from re-construction". For Gates (quoted in Warren, 2012:12-13), African American literature unlike almost every other literary tradition was generated as a response to 18th and 19th centuries allegation that persons of African descent did not, and could not, create literature. Thus, all the above scholarly summations and many more could form the bedrock of the literature; that it was written to highlight the ordeals of slavery, counteract the Jim Crow oppression, and thirdly, to upturn the common European stereotype that African Americans or rather, the blacks were superficial human beings.

1.3 Who then are the African Americans?

According to an online Encyclopaedia Britannica, (2016:20), African Americans are "largely the descendants of slaves – people who were bought from their African homelands by force to work in the New World. Their rights were severely limited and they were long denied a rightful share in the economic, social and political progress of the United States". The term refers to a racial group, usually black although there are light skinned African Americans. There are also black people of Caribbean and South American ancestry who are also classified African Americans. African Americans are alternatively and at various times of their domicile in the United States called Afro-Americans, Black people, or Negroes.

African Americans is a term for black people mostly the descendants of African slaves residing in the United States. They have been living all over the United States even though with a large concentration in the South, scattered for most part of their history on different plantation camps and later on in cities. According to Brown and Webb (2007:126), the vast majority of antebellum slaves, 1,815,000 out of a total number of 3,204,313 in 1850 worked on cotton plantations in the south, scattered on different plantation camps in the south. According to Enyclopaedia Britannica (2016:22), at the turn of the 19thcentury, more than half of the country's 36 million African Americans live in the south.

African Americans constitute the third largest racial group in the United States after white Americans, Hispanic and Latino Americans. Most Afro-Americans are of

west and central African descents, even though immigrants from African, Caribbean, Central and South American nations may or may not self-identify with the term.

There is a wider debate over whether an African American has a culture at all whether or not that he/she practices other cultures beside his/her own, or he/she is culturally inept and lonely. Gilroy (1999:9) opines that the African American practices other cultures besides his culture, he practices the Whiteman's culture. In other words, the African Americans is the children of a two-fold cultural practice, his African culture and Euro-American culture. But to Gate, (quoted in Warren, 2012:23), the African American is culturally lonely, because he is "sharing the culture that condemns him and seeing that a lust for trash is what binds the nation to his claims, is what sets storms to rolling in his soul." What Gate infers here is, beside the African American cultural loneliness, he suffers from psychological pain in his long, alienated odyssey. However, to Samuel T. Livingston (quoted in Hornsby, 2005:223), African Americans have no culture outside of that which imitated white culture. Eyerman, R (2014:2), labeled an African American, a person under "cultural trauma", a term which he defines as referring to a person who has experienced "a dramatic loss of identity and meaning". From the above different summations, we can deduct that African Americans as dictated by historical circumstances of colour and race, are also culturally lonely, because they have lost the pristine African culture for an alien, Euro-American culture.

1.4 Historical and Literary Backgrounds of African American Literature

African American literature is a corpus of literary writings produced or being produced in the United States by mostly black writers of African lineage. These writings focus largely on the plight of the black people in the United States of America. According to Graham, M. and Ward Jnr., J.W (2011:39), early writers of African American world grapple with two challenges; recount both the physical journey from slavery to freedom and also the more subtle struggle to write independently especially in the light of the prevailing, hostile racial attitude that distorts black authorship. Thus, writers of this literature ought to chart a new course in order to write. Like other literatures around the world, African American literature is characterized with thematic preoccupation ranging from racism, exploitation, alienation, identity to issues of citizenship. Furthermore, Graham and Ward (eds), (2011:39-40) opine that African American literature emerged as a distinctive historical moment, and its formal and thematic complexity arise largely from that moment. It is called a literature about movement; geographical, ontological and rhetorical. In other words, African American literature emerged due mainly to a historical moment of slavery, and it deals with issues of a particular people.

Early African American writings which started in the second half of eighteenth century emerged as an identifiable genre and made headways in the era of enlightenment. Thus, such writings focused on discourses such as natural right, philosophy, sentimentalism, affective norms of Christianity, and debates over the very nature of race.

Some of the early African American writers considered as pioneers in the literary tradition include Jupiter Hammon (1711 – 1806), who was considered the first Afro-American writer to have his work published titled: *An Evening Thought: Salvation by Christ with Penitential Cries* (1761). Others include William Wells Brown (1814 – 1884), the writer of *Clottel* or the *President's Daughter* (1853). Frederick Douglass best known for his famous *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845), Harriet Jacobs (1813 – 1897) who wrote *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861).

Graham and Ward (eds), (2011:40) aver that this period was marked by features of intellectual discourse that centered on the skillful management of the discourse of liberty and the critique of the African slave trade. In other words, writers' preoccupation was centered on freedom and the debilitating effects of slavery on black Africans. Gary Nash (quoted in Graham & Ward, 2011:41) argued that during the 1770s and 1780s, African American intellectuals logically imbibed the ideology of natural and inalienable rights, for instance, Venture Smith wrote his Narrative (1798), while Benjamin Banneka published many treatises around 1792 in a local newspaper in which he critiqued the subject matter of such rights.

Another flavor that characterized African American literary tradition is the two fold issue of oral and vernacular traditions. According to Lydia, (2011:4), African American literary tradition is marked by spirituals, sermons, gospel, music, blues and rap. Thus, the canon is marked and made unique by such features.

The institutionalization of slavery and the Jim Crow law with the stereotypical claim of some writers in the 18th and 19th centuries America, that Negroes could not produce a literature, have paradoxically forced Black Americans to write back and emphasize the African cultural past as the true heritage of African Americans. This acknowledgement and appreciation of the heritage according to Lydia, (2011:4) is a major tenet of the genre. Poets such as Phillis Wheatley, Jupiter Hammon and writers like Olaudah Equino, Frederick Douglas, Harriet Jacobs, Longstan Hughes, Sterlin Brown, Claude Mckay and Nora N. Hurston, to mention but a few drew inspirations from both oral and vernacular tradition.

African American literary tradition keeps evolving and changing from one thematic preoccupation to another to suit the ever changing dynamics of Afro-American life. For example, around 1780s up to the American civil war, the central motif in black writing was the distinction between property and humanity because, white slave masters then valued slaves as properties not human beings. Frederick Douglass employed this motif in his Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass (1845) for instance, he narrated the grueling experience of slave valuation during slave trade "there were horses and men, cattle and women, pigs and children, all holding the same rank in the scale of being, and were all subjected to the same narrow examination (Gates & Mckay – eds, 1997:330).

From the 18th century, black writing deployed sentimental appeal framed in religious terms. Many prominent literary figures such as David George, Boston King, John Marrant, John Jea etc. embraced evangelical religion and preached the gospel

themselves. According to Graham and Ward (eds), (2011:45), Evangelical Christianity affected black print literature in primarily two ways: "the influence that new denominations like the Methodists and Baptists had on the publication of black writings, and the second was, the discourses offered potent rhetorical sources". Both Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs exhibited religious sentimental appeal in their autobiographies. Olaudah Equiano used this method in his *Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (1789). Even Phillis Wheatley and Jupiter Hammon using the discourses of Evangelical Christianity and sentimental benevolence, argued more effectively against slavery and for their own humanity. In the late 18th century to early 19th century, black writing turned to spiritual and physical forms of slavery. Equiano and Marrant achieved this fact. Thus, how African American literature evolves up to the 19th century when issues of post-civil war, post-reconstruction, the place of African Americans in urban America were captured by writers.

Prominent epochs that have shaped and impacted on the development of the literature are many. The Negro Convention Movement from 1830, which continued up to the civil war had made a headway in the development of black literature. While the Jim Crow was a spring board, the Negro Convention encouraged writers to write and appeal to both white and black audiences for freedom. The black literary form and tradition had benefited a lot, as writers exploited the press to reach even larger audience. Some of the most famous autobiographies written at this time were those of Frederick Douglass, Willaim Wells Brown, Austin Steward and Josiah Henson, all of

whom recorded horrors of slavery as well as the humiliation of racial discrimination (Coombs, N. 2004:112).

No period witnessed an upsurge in artistic activities than the Harlem Renaissance which spanned 1920's up to the 1930s. The Harlem Renaissance, was the name given to the cultural, social and artistic explosions that took place in Harlem, a prominent black settlement in New York. During the period, the clearest expression of that moment according to Huggins, (1995:40) of change is to be found in the remarkable outpouring of literature, art and music. The zenith of this flowering of Negro literature took place between 1924 to 1929, when a journal of Negro life hosted a party for black writers where many white publishers were in attendance. Some of the prominent writers in the period were Zora Neale Hurston, C. Cullen, Richard Wright, Longston Hughes, W.E.B Du Bois etc.

Finally, African American literature was acknowledged to have reached a kind of apex when in 1993, the popular African American writer, Toni Morrison was awarded the International Nobel Laureate for literature.

1.5 Definition of Terms

a) **Solitude:** Solitude is defined as "the absence of social interaction. In most cases, this will mean physical isolation from others" (Burger, 1995:85). From this definition, solitude, unlike loneliness, is enforced by self-choice and sometimes, for convenience. People can seek solitude by going away from people into privacy.

However, people can maintain a sense of solitude in the presence of others by choosing not to interact with the people around them.

One clear distinction between loneliness and solitude is that, while solitude is a preferred isolation from social interaction, loneliness is an isolation from social commitments of an individual or a perceived feeling of isolation from others. One term which encompasses both solitude and loneliness is social isolation, a term which Biordi & Nicholson (2004:85) define as the "distancing of an individual, psychologically, or physically or both from his or her network of desired or needed relationship with other persons… the isolation may be voluntarily or involuntarily."

Contrary to the popular notion of linking solitude to only positivity, it can indeed be harmful as to instill a negative feeling as Burger (1995:85) asserted "past research suggests that solitude can have either a positive or negative impact on a person's wellbeing".

b) **Loneliness:** Unlike solitude which stems from self-imposition, loneliness is rather influenced and imposed from both internal as well as external stimuli. It is thus defined as a "distressing feeling that accompanies the perception that one's social needs are not being met by the quantity or especially the quality of one's social relationship" (Hawkley & Cacioppo, 2010:219).

As social species, humans rely on a safe, secure social surrounding to survive and thrive. Perception of social isolation or loneliness increases the likelihood of threat, vulnerability while also raising the desire to reconnect. Hence, the psychic

conflict between expectation of the ideal and the realization of the threatening reality – what Horney (1942:8) called neurosis.

With regard to existentialists they believe that man is naturally attached to loneliness from his cradle to the grave, that he is born alone, travels through different phases alone and dies and is buried alone. For Perlman & Peplau (1981:32), loneliness is the "unpleasant experience that occurs when a person's network of social relations is deficient in some important way, either quantitatively or qualitatively".

There is bound to be a feeling of loneliness and then the desire to reconnect following bereavement or distance, or geographical relocation of a loved one. Psychologists such as Hawkley and Cacioppo (2010:218) believe that loneliness affects psychological states, physiological stability and the general well being of the victims. Loneliness is also characterized by emotional feeling which the victim want to divulge and unburden, because, as Weis (quoted in Biordi & Nicholson, 2004:88) puts it, he wants to integrate himself into new relationship. This desire to unburden, aptly captures Mafi T's view (quoted in Quotes about Loneliness) when he says "all I ever wanted was to reach out and touch another human being not just with my hands but with my heart".

Loneliness can extend to physical, psychological and emotional states.

c) **Slave:** The Macmillan Encyclopedia (1981:784) defines 'slave' as a person who is bought as a property of his buyer, and who in return works for his master without pay. He is thus, considered an object of the law rather than a subject.

A slave is also defined as a person who is the property of another person, and whose labour and life often are subject to the owners's volition. He is legally obliged by prior contract (oral or written) to work for another, with contractually limited rights to bargain. (Endslaverynow).

From the above, we can conclude that a slave is characterized by some salient attributes; that he is a property, thus belongs to someone, considered object of the law rather than its subject. He is not liable for torts or contracts, he has few rights legally, or socially. He is not liable to kins nor relatives that can stand for him as an outside, marginal individual. The product of his labour can be claimed by someone who also control his physical production. A slave is deprived of a personal liberty and the right to move about geographically as he desires. To cap it, Gates & Mckay (1997:XXVII) call him a socially dead person.

d) **Slavery:** Slavery: Briggs (1989:975) defines slavery as an "institution whereby one person owns another and can exact from that person labour or other services, found among both primitive and advanced people". Slavery is therefore, a condition in which a human being was/is owned by another. A slave was considered by law as property, or chattel and was deprived of most of the rights ordinarily held by free persons.

In view of the above slavery is a condition in which individuals are owned by other. Who controls where they live, and what they do. It is a legal or economic system in which the principle of property law can apply to human so that people can be treated as property, and can be owned, bought and sold according and cannot withdraw

unilaterally from the arrangement. These are salient features of slavery although there are variations in practice from one place to another.

e) **Slave narrative**: is a literary genre especially in the United States of America and Britain through which fugitives and ex-slaves wrote about their past experiences in slavery. According to Edwards & Dabydeen (eds), (1991:25), slave narrative as a genre has claimed increasing critical attention particularly in the United States, and is acknowledged to be central to Black American Literature.

Slave narratives are usually told through a first person narrator in form of autobiography, although in other cases, a narrator could verbally narrate his experience for others to put such into writing. In fact, slave narrative is a story told by an exslave or a fugitive. It reveals the existence of a people who were stereotypically assumed not to posses the expertise to write their unique experiences. According to Morgan (1997:74):

> The narrator is a reliable transcriber of the experience and character of the black folk… slave narratives show that slaves suffered physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually under slavery. That slaves yearned for freedom and resisted slavery in every way possible; that slavery was a pernicious system ultimately destroying masters as well as slaves.

Therefore, a slave narrator uses a language that suitably fits his narration, because he is telling a story of the people considered alien and strangers as well as observers because the mainstream culture has isolated them.

1.6 Statement of the Problem

A review of available works on African American slave narratives shows a focus on the sociological aspects of the slaves' experience. Therefore, it seems that my investigation so far has not brought any available material that has been of much help to this work. For instance, Warmick (2008:11) examines Freerick Douglass' painful struggles and quest for intellectual development under the strictures of slavery. Ese, (2000) explores the link between slavery and creativity with respect to how slavery, a very negative phenomenon was responsible for the sprouting of creative literary works among African slaves. Morgan (1997:12) delves into gender – related differences in slave narratives, examining the salient features that distinguish Harriet Jacobs' narrative from those of Douglass. Erin, D. (2012:10) examines how those in bondage used emotions to resist slavery, and how the slave masters' class employed emotions to enforce the institution of slavery.

As important as these reviews are, however, they have not attempted psychoanalytic reading of solitude and loneliness in Douglass' *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and *Jacobs' Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl.* It is in the context of these reviewed works that this study attempts an interrogation of another strand of thought. The study examines solitary and lonely African American slave characters under trauma and subsequently neurosis, and how they psychologically cope and react to their conditions. In essence, the study is based on the following propositions:

- Living under the yoke of slavery and the attempt to come to terms with the demands of slavery result in a fragmented self, loss of identity and social isolation.

- Neurotic conflict and trauma expose the Afro-American characters to feeling of inertia and depression.
- Freudian and Horneyan strands of psychoanalysis are the suitable critical tools for the discourse, due mainly to their concerns with human personality, psychology and behavior.

1.7 Aim and Objectives

This study aims at bringing out the various neurotic trends and defence mechanisms manifest within the socially isolated African American characters in Douglass's and Jacobs's autobiographies, and how these trends and coping strategies are signified in the selected texts. In other words, this study analyses such characters under solitude and loneliness and how they cope and react to their condition. The objectives of the study are to illuminate that:

The objectives of the study are to illuminate that:

- Loneliness devolves into loss of self, social fragmentation, and hopelessness.
- Although solitude relieves slaves from social anxiety it however brings to the fore conflict in African American slave characters.
- The slave narrative genre is an apt literary discourse to explicate the African American slave experience.

1.8 Justification

A brief study of the critical works on African American slave narratives especially on alienation shows that a large corpus of critical works focus more on sociological aspects of slavery. It seems that my investigation so far has not brought

any available material that has much help to this work. The importance of those works on sociological aspects cannot be undervalued, however, discussing this aspect alone is restricting and constraining the canon. Therefore, it is imperative to add discussions to African American studies concerning psychoanalytic perspective of solitude and loneliness and its significance in African American literature. This is because, an African American slave is an off-spring of two fold cultural influences his communal consciousness and western individual consciousness – hence, his social isolation, which influences his character and world outlook. In this regard, this study highlights that being socially isolated gives rise to other issues ranging from identity crisis, break down of social relations, conflicts, depression etc. Overall, the psychoanalytic interpretation of solitude and loneliness in Douglass's *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and Jacob's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* contributes to existing studies on these texts. To the best of this researcher's knowledge, there has been no discussion on psychoanalytic study of solitude and loneliness in Douglass's and Jacob's autobiographies.

1.9 Scope and Delimitation

This study examines, from a comparative perspective, by deploying the parameters of the psychoanalysis the issues of solitude and loneliness in Douglass's and Jacobs' autobiographies. Although there are slave narratives in other countries besides the United States of America, this study focuses on African American slave experiences. Even though other African American autobiographies also discussed

issues that pertain to isolation, the choice of Douglass's and Jacob's autobiographies is premised on their suitability, fame and place on the rung of African American literature. Douglass's *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* "was unquestionably the epitome of the antebellum slave narrative" (Gates and Mckay, eds, 1997:300). While Harriet's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, a narrative crafted from the female perspective "occupies a crucial place in the history of both African Americans and American women's literature" (Gates and Mckay, eds, 1997:208). Overall these texts supply amply substantial materials about solitude and loneliness and their consequences on African American slave characters.

1.10 Research Methodology

This study adopts qualitative research which is applicable to subjects in humanities, as the subject-matter involves human behavior and action. The study makes use of, and draws generously from library sources. Besides, the two autobiographies of Douglass and Harriet Jacobs', the study is conducted using background studies on African America Literature as a ground work on which the analyses and arguments of the research are based. The study has also been conducted using secondary materials in form of books, articles, magazines, journals and unpublished works, etc. The internet also constituted a relevant source of critical materials used for this study. In addition, this study work employs an inter-disciplinary approach. This is because, the subjects of solitude and loneliness have been contested in a number of disciplines such as sociology, psychology and cultural studies.

1.11 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the main thrust of the study by locating the linkage between slavery, slave narrative and the term social isolation. The chapter also fore grounded the two key terms of the study, solitude and loneliness. Solitude and loneliness are trauma – induced experiences therefore, result in the formation of neurosis and consequently the neurotic pulls. The chapter explicitly discussed African American literature as a literary corpus with a fusion of literary traditions, for instance, of Euro-African combination defined by a series of literary epochs, and movements. Moreover, it incorporated oral forms such as jazz, spirituals, sermons, gospel, music, blues etc. that are termed "vernacular tradition". The chapter also traced African American roots to slavery in America. Finally, the chapter outlined the 'preliminaries' such as statement of the problem, objectives, research methodology, justification, aim and objectives and scope and delimitation.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Literature Review

This section of the study reviews relevant critical literatures regarding the concepts of solitude and loneliness. It also focuses closely on critical reviews on both Harriet Jacobs's and Frederick Douglass's autobiographies, as well as the key terms of psychoanalysis and the two strands (Freudian and Horneyan) of the theory.

2.2 Solitude

Burger, (1995:86) defines solitude as the "absence of social interaction. In most cases, this will mean physical isolation from others". Solitude therefore in most cases involves curving a particular space either in location or in communication pattern for oneself. As Altman, (1975:10), asserts, solitude involves control over personal space and territoriality. Burger goes on to shed more light on individual preferences for solitude which may result from a combination of several motives and expectations. For many people, according to him, a high preference for solitude is related to well being. Although some people typically avoid social interaction because of social anxiety or a lack of social skills. Burger's summations especially on solitude being connected to social anxiety relate to this study. The point of divergence between Burger and this study is his stance on solitude being connected to a healthy situation of well being. Burger, further opines that solitude can impact negatively on both psychological and physiological well being of a solitary victim, and that people benefit from solitude in

areas of self-reflection, religion, personal values and goals, intellectual capacity, emotional wellbeing and creativity. This study emphasizes that the solitude under discussion emanates due mainly from trauma-induced happenings, stress and attempt for self-reflection from the victims.

Paul Tillich (1886-1963), (quoted in Microsoft Encarta, 2009:Emotion – Loneliness) stripped one part of the term "solitude" naked when through analogy he differentiates it from loneliness, he says: "language has created the word loneliness to express the pain of being alone, and the word "solitude" to express the glory of being alone". What the German psychologist alludes to, is, that solitude and loneliness encapsulate the joy and the pain of being alone respectively. Tillich's assertion consigns solitude to positivity, neglecting the negative side of solitary confinements as Burger (1995:87) avers that solitude may likely bring on negative as well as positive moods in adolescent. Thus, solitude can produce a negative feeling even though it may be preferred as a convenient option.

In their article titled "social isolation", Biordi & Nicholson, (2004:84-85) provide an umbrella term which encompasses both solitude and loneliness termed as social isolation, which they define as:

> The distancing of an individual, psychologically, or physically, or both, from his or her network of desired or needed relationships with other persons. Therefore, social isolation is a loss of place within one's group. The isolation may be voluntary or involuntary (p.84-85).

However, in whatever form it appears, social isolation affects the physical and psychology of its victim. Biordi and Nicholson agree that a socially lonely person may feel sad, angrier and hopeless. Moreover, they also accept that social isolation is characterized by physical disabilities or illness, frailties associated with advanced age, personality or neurologic disorder. Beside Biordi & Nicholson's agreement with issues associated with social isolation such as physical defects, frailties, advanced age, two other important areas are: that social isolation affects the victim's neurologic well being, an issue which is accepted by both Freud and Horney. The other area, is the influence of culture in character development, an issue that encompasses isolation and the resultant neurosis, as cultural influence forms one of the bases of Horneyan critical theory. Biordi & Nicholson (2004) aver that:

> As globalization and sensitivity to United States multi-culturalism increases, with its concurrent absorption of multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious individuals into yet other cultures, there is an overlap into mainstream… this is especially true of a cultural group that have not assimilated into the dominant culture. Language differences and traditional living arrangements may impede social adaptation (p.94).

Thus, Biordi and Nicholson believe that social isolation can be heightened in the multi—cultural United States, where cultural inputs, language barrier and social set-up, can impede socialization. Hence, aliens are susceptible to social isolation.

Storr (1988:2) looks at solitude from a positive perspective, a term he defines as the capacity to be alone and a "healing psychological experience". Storr dissects solitude through the lens of positivity abandoning in the process its negative aspect.

All human beings, opine Storr, need interests as well as relationship; all are geared toward the impersonal and personal. Storr further aligns with the Freudian postulation of the biologically inherent genes/trends that evolve and influence human attitude throughout evolution. The events of early childhood, opined Storr, inherited gifts, and capacities, temperamental differences, and a host of other factors may influence whether individuals turn predominantly toward others or toward solitude to find the meaning of their lives (Storr, 1988:4).

Storr believes that the capacity to be alone is proved to be a valuable resource which facilitated learning, thinking, innovation, coming to terms with change and the maintenance of contact with the inner world. He further opines that man's adaptation to the world is largely governed by the development of the imagination and hence of an inner world of the psyche which is necessarily at variance with the external world. Some of the most profound and healing psychological experiences which individuals encounter take place in solitude. Storr argued further that the happiest lives are probably those in which neither interpersonal relationships nor impersonal interest are idealized as the only way to salvation. He concluded that the desire and pursuit of whole must comprehend both aspects, that is social interaction and solitude as a means of attaining every possible achievement.

2.3 Loneliness

In her article titled "On the Sense of Loneliness", Melanie Klein (1963) attempted to investigate the inner sense of loneliness – that is, the sense of being alone

regardless of external circumstances, of feeling lonely even when among friends. This state of internal loneliness, says Klein, is the "result of a ubiquitous yearning for an unattainable perfect internal state" (Klein, 1963:300). Such loneliness stems from paranoid and depressive anxieties which are derivatives of the infant's psychotic anxieties. These anxieties, explains Klein, exist in some measure in every individual but are excessively strong in illness, both of a schizophrenic and depressive nature.

The sense of loneliness according to Klein as with other attitudes and emotions is traced to early infancy and its development is extended to later stages of life. Klein's postulation is in sync with Freud's assertion that attitudes are formed from early stage and influence adulthood. What differentiates Klein's early ego formation from that of Freud is that Klein insists that ego is formed prior to oedipal complex. Such ego, says Klein is lacking in cohesion and dominated by splitting mechanisms. The child develops the feeling of death instinct, which splits impulses into good and bad. The good part of the ego is protected since aggression is directed away from it. The good part is the basis of relative security in the very young infant; whereas, other splitting processes, such as those leading to fragmentation are detrimental to the ego and its strength. A satisfactory relation with the mother implies a close contact between the conscious of the mother and the child. However, if destructive impulses arise strongly, the mother is perceived by the infant to be persecutory, and the infant's submission to the bad part of the ego inevitably experiences some insecurity. This paranoid insecurity is one of the roots of loneliness.

Perlman & Peplau's (1981) study loneliness through three areas which it affects: behaviour, cognition and what they term as affective manifestation (which includes dissatisfaction, anxiety, boredom and hostility). Loneliness, they aver, is frequently precipitated by changes in a person's social relationships that leads to a sub-optimal level of achieved social interaction. These changes may affect a single relationship or may affect a person's total network of social relationships. The causes, according to them emanate from termination of relationship (through death or separation), situational change, change in expectations (p.39-40). In other words, Perlman and Nicholson (2004), agree that loneliness is preceded by inadequate capacity to generate social network, therefore, such inadequacy or lack of it brings a psychological conflict and the resultant perception of alienation.

Robert Green (2001), a German psychologist, reviews loneliness from an exploitative angle. Loneliness, he agrees is both a physical and psychological gruelling experience, and its victim is weak and always subservient to his master's manipulation, as he says that:

> By slowly isolating your victims, you make them more vulnerable to your life influence. Take them away from their normal milieu, friends, family, home. Give them the sense of being marginalised, in limbo they are leaving one world behind and entering another. Once isolated like this, they have no outside support and in their confusion, they are easily led astray. Lure the seduced into your lair where nothing is familiar. (p.20)

Robert Green's angle on loneliness can actually reflect on some aspects of African American slave experiences. His views reflect, African Americans' positions

as the victims of social isolation and exploitation which may be among factors which the lonely characters perceive as detrimental and dehumanising, hence the perception of loneliness.

Koehler, (2005) studies loneliness from a psychological perspective. Loneliness, he opines, seems to overlap with states of painful separation in which one's biological systems are affected (p.1). Koehler likened loneliness to schizophrenic attack in which the person feels that he is hopelessly in bits and that he/she will never be in possession of his/her self. The very fact that he is so fragmented results in his being unable to internalize his primal objective sufficiently, and therefore, in his lacking of stability, cannot rely on his own self. In loneliness, opined Koehler, there is the sense of being surrounded by a hostile world, which is characteristic of the paranoid aspect of schizophrenic illness. And this in turn not only increases all his anxieties but vitally influences his loneliness (p.2). Koehler's summation on loneliness with paranoia and schizophrenia, and other toxic consequences as well as detached nature of lonely person, his hopelessness and despair corresponds with Livingston's (2011:5) assertion that a lonely person sees his future in slow motion, through a cloudy lens that detaches him from once intimate relationships and even from his former self.

2.3.1 Types of Loneliness

i. **Physical Loneliness** - Physical loneliness can be defined as the isolation of a person from his interpersonal social network. Physical loneliness is considered as the first stage to emotional and psychological loneliness. This is why

Perlman, and Peplau (in Cook, M. and Wilson, C. 1979:103) affirm that physical separation from family and friends put people at the risk for loneliness. What differentiates physical loneliness from solitude is that while solitude is a voluntary withdrawal, physical loneliness is enforced on its victim sometimes by psychological perception.

ii. **Psychological Loneliness:-** This loneliness emanates from psychologically feeling distraught and out of sync with the people one relates. This is why Reichman and Weiss (in Perlman and Peplau, 1980:35) believe that loneliness is a paralyzing hopelessness and unalterable futility. In psychological loneliness, the victim feels lonely even if he is in the midst of people. Klein (1963:300) corroborates this fact when she avers that such loneliness emanates from a ubiquitous yearning for an unattainable perfect internal state.

iii. **Emotional Loneliness:-** Emotional loneliness defines a situation where one feels emotionally unable to relate with others. It is a situation where one feels emotionally blank. In other words, emotional loneliness entails the inability of the victim to appreciate his emotion for others and lacks empathy. Robson (2015) says emotional loneliness/emotional void is called alexithymia, a term he defines as a kind of emotional colour blindness that prevents the victim from perceiving the many shades of feeling that normally embellishes our life.

This study therefore, explores all the three types of loneliness. This is because, the slave characters yearn for social contact from secluded locations (physical loneliness). They are also psychologically distraught even in the midst of their

relatives and yearn for an internal perfect state (psychological loneliness) and at other times are unable to emotionally relate with others (emotional loneliness).

2.4 Frederick Douglass

Frederick Douglass, one of the most decorated African American men of the letters, the author of *Narrative of Life of Frederick Douglass*, received a lot of accolades and reviews especially on the above autobiography. James McCune Smith (quoted in Gates and McKay, 1997:299) opines that Douglass is a representative American man – a type of his country men whose record of 'self-elevation' from the lowest to the highest condition in society marked him as a noble example for all Americans to emulate. Warmick (2008:25) in his paper titled *"Oppression, Freedom and the Education of Frederick Douglass"*, examines Douglass' journey from oppression to freedom while searching for knowledge. A journey which Warmick labelled as playing "out against the backdrop of a certain educational system – a system complete with teachers, classrooms and methods of instruction explicitly pushing its 'students' away from freedom toward subjugation" (p.25).

Morgan (1997:74) in his treatise titled *Gender-Related Difference in the Slave Narratives of Harriet Jacobs and Frederick Douglass*, examines gender-related difference; how gender influenced even the way in which bondage was experienced. How men and women experienced it in different ways despite the same socio-historical context. Bosnicova (2004:125) in a dissertation titled *"Lonely Fighters and Communal Talkers: A Comparative Analysis of Male and Female Slave Narratives"* examines comparatively four slave narratives: those of Equiano, Mary Prince,

Douglass and Harriet Jacobs. The dissertation examines the narratives' treatment of the themes of family and resistance, portraying male as 'solitary heroes' exhibiting physical confrontation, and females as 'selves-in-relation' using verbal warfare.

2.5 Harriet Jacobs

In his review of Jacob's narrative, Andrews (1987:205) avers that the most important book by an African American woman in the Antebellum era is Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, because the book contains the "first and most sustained analysis of the links between the patriarchal oppression of women and the peculiar institution's exploitation of blacks in the nineteenth century south" (p.463). Gates and McKay (1997:205) echo Andrew's acknowledgement when they remark that Jacobs' successful struggle for freedom, not only for herself but or her "two children, represented no less profoundly a black woman's indomitable spirit". And Shockley (1989:96) commends Jacobs' autobiography as a "tragic account of a black woman's desire to free herself in mind and body from the dehumanization of slavery."

Bos (2016:2) in her paper titled *"The Female Slave Experience: An Analysis of Female Slave Narratives"* studies the narratives of Jacobs, Prince and Elizabeth Keckley. The study specifically illustrates that apart from issues such as racism, inequality and discrimination, the female slaves had to endure sexual harassment, abuse and the struggle for motherhood. Sherman (2008:2) in a dissertation *"Moral Experience in Harriet Jacobs' Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl"* dwells on moral

conflict and moral ambiguity in Jacobs' narrative. In other words, the study explicates Jacobs' puritan narrative on the one hand, and on the other hand, moral conflict and ambiguity that characterise the narrative.

Zafar and Khan (2010:2) in their paper titled *"The Images of White Womanhood in Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*" examine the social gap on America's rung of the social cadre between the white woman and black female slaves. Specifically, they bring to the fore, on the one hand, the white woman's 'sheltered' and 'protected' position, and on the other hand, the female slaves 'unsheltered' physical and psychological oppression.

As important as these reviews are, however, they have not attempted psychoanalytic reading of solitude and loneliness in Douglass' *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and *Jacobs' Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. It is in the context of all these reviewed works that this study takes another strand of thought. It discusses solitude and loneliness as portrayed in the two texts using the Horneyan and Feudian Psychoanalytic theories.

2.5.1 Psychoanalytic Criticism as Theoretical Framework

The critical theories adopted for this work are the Freudian and Horneyan strands of psychoanalysis. This is because solitude and loneliness deal with human action and behavior. Moreover, the two concepts have been contested in a number of disciplines such as psychology and sociology. Therefore, to aptly situate and analyse the two, it is deemed appropriate to employ the two strands of psychoanalysis. This is reinforced by the belief that psychoanalysis deals with issues of anxiety, depression

and other neurotic trends that are the hallmarks of solitude and loneliness. In addition, solitude and loneliness deal with issues of sexuality and an array of other human traits which Freudian and Horneyan strands of psychoanalysis revolve around.

2.5.2 Origin and Development of Psychoanalysis

The springboard for the study of psychoanalysis and it is relationship with literature has been an ongoing phenomenon by critics, philosophers and thinkers since Aristotle. Schlegal, Schepenhauer, and Nitsche had examined the psychological dimension of literature ranging from the author's motivation and intention to the effect of the texts and performances on an audience. Freud however, provided the foundation and the mood, attempts subsequently aided by the inputs of Alfred Adler and Carl Jung. Habib (2005:571) stated that, Freud's contribution was to "open up the entire realm of the unconscious to systematic study, and to provide a language and terminology in which the operations of the unconscious could be expressed." Freud's postulation of the unconscious as the ultimate source and explanation of human thought and behaviour represents a radical disruption of the mainstream Western thought which, since Aristotle has held that man is a rational being capable of making free choices in the spheres of intellection. What therefore Freud postulates that we bear a form of 'otherness' within ourselves, why we act as we do, why we make certain decisions, etc. Even when we think we are acting from a given motive, we may be deluding ourselves, because much of our thoughts and actions are not freely determined by us but driven by unconscious forces which we can neither measure nor control.

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) therefore, is the founder and father of modern day psychoanalysis. Initially his theory was not meant for literary criticism. It was later that the realm was applied to literature. However, the psychoanalytic frontier is extended in art, philosophy, cultural studies and literature. Freud invented the theory while working with patients whose ailment he perceived as hysteria. Freud concluded that the root cause of their problem emanated from psychological disturbances rather than from physiological or physical causes. This gigantic discovery, according to Bressler (2003:121) led Freud to posit that "fantasies and wishful thinking, not actual experiences, play a large part in the onset of neuroses.". Thus, emotionally related disturbances such as hysteria, phobia, depression, and addictions are not caused by organic symptoms but rather emotional disturbances that emanate from the unconscious.

Freud's postulations metamorphosed into a full-fledged field of study when in 1895, he published, with Joseph Breuer, *Studies in Hysteria*, an important treatise asserting that symptoms of hysteria are the result of unresolved but forgotten traumas from childhood. Five years later, he wrote the *Interpretation of Dreams*, in which he brought to the fore the fundamental precept of psychoanalysis. According to Dobie (2009:51) this milestone led Freud to a breathtaking conclusion that "using free association, slips of tongue, and dreams, Freud found ways for analyst to help a patient uncover the painful or threatening events that have been repressed in the unconscious to make them inaccessible to the conscious mind." From the above, we can infer that a patient with such neurosis, that is manifested through the slips, dreams, can be

discovered and resuscitated. Therefore, psychoanalysis is a method of treating emotional and psychological disorders, and the same techniques can be used in the study of literature. Thus creating a powerful avenue for the study of psychology and literature. Psychoanalysis deals with a language structural thought, sub-texts, the hidden motives of an author – the repressed (Lye, J. 1996:5). As a result of this, literature is fundamentally intertwined with the psyche. The significance of psychoanalysis in literary criticism is so powerful that it helps in the interpretation of literary text as Bressler (2003:133) opines: that the psychoanalytic critic "believes that an author's story is a dream that on the surface reveals only the manifests contents of the true tale. Hidden and censored throughout the story on various levels lies the latent content of the story, its real meaning or interpretation".

Moreover, psychoanalysis's is the only critical school viable for manifold interpretative angles. For instance, psychoanalytic criticism can exist side by side with any other school of criticism aptly for interpretation, because this approach attempts to explicate the how and why of human actions in relation to literature. Bressler (2003:120) posits that "Marxists, feminists and New Historicists, for example, can utilize psychoanalytic methods in their interpretations without violating their own hermeneutics. Psychoanalytic criticism may then best be called an approach to literary interpretation rather than a particular school of criticism". Thus, psychoanalysis can be called an all-encompassing theory suitable for all the critical schools of thoughts for interpreting literary texts. One other salient trait with which psychoanalysis theory outrun its peers according to Kano 1.B (2014:10) is its all-round ability, while for

instance, formalism, structuralism and new criticism are text-based theories, Reader Response theory is reader-based, feminism is an author-based, psychoanalysis can be used to interprete texts from textual, authorial, readership and context/content perspectives.

Psychoanalysis is a suitable literary tool in the analyses of literary texts because of its capability to explain the activities of the author's or characters' 'unconscious'. Literary criticism make use of psychoanalysis by using its method, concept and theory in the study of literary texts. This method is referred to as psychoanalytic literary criticism and has contributed immensely to the interpretation and understanding of literature. Psychoanalysis has become a full-fledged critical school of thought and has richly evolved into a diverse literary tradition. This is realized due mainly to Freud's artistry in weaving art and psychology into the all-round literary theory. This has indeed made it easy to study literature in relation to the repressed.

2.5.3 Proponents of Psychoanalysis

After the death of Freud, psychoanalysis flourished under the tutelage of renowned scholars: Ernest Jones, for instance, wrote a psychoanalytic work titled *Hamlet and Oedipus* (1948), Otto Rank (1884 – 1939) produced *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero* (1909), Ella Freeman Sharpe (875-1947) treated language and metaphor from a psychoanalytic perspective. Other disciples include Marie Bonaparte (1882-1962) wrote a psychoanalytic study of Edgar Alan Poe while Melanie Klein (1882-1960) modified *Freudian Theory of Sexuality*, rejecting the primacy of the oedipal complex and elaborating a theory of the drive. Other important scholars of the

psychoanalytical school include Jaques Lacan (190-19181) Harold Bloom (1930b), Julia Kriesteva (b.1941), Carl Jung (1875-1961), North Frye (1912-1991), KIaran Horney (1885-1952).

Moreover, the contributions of the preceding scholars and many more produced different strands of psychoanalysis, with each critic making some modification or point of divergence from the Orthodox, Freudian Strand. A few examples are: Horneyan, Lacanian, Self-psychology, Relational, interpersonal, archetypal psychoanalyses. However, Freud remains the father and most popular psychoanalyst. For the purpose of this study, some aspect of Freudian and Horneyan strands of psychoanalysis are used for the purpose of interpreting the selected texts.

2.5.4 Background to Freudian Psychoanalysis

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) an Austrian neurologist, psychotherapist and psychoanalyst is considered the father of modern day psychoanalysis. Influenced by Charles Darwin, Edward Von Hartmann, Friedrich Nietzche, William Shakespeare, and Charcot established his school of thought in 1886, in Paris. His works were considered the catalyst and foundation of psychoanalysis. His strand of Psychoanalysis is dubbed the orthodox psychoanalysis, because it is the progenitor, which conforms to the established traditional doctrines of psychoanalysis. All other strands developed from it. The cornerstones of Freudian psychoanalysis, according to Freud himself (quoted in Carter, D. 2006:70) is the "assumption that there are unconscious mental processes, the recognition of the theory of resistance and repression, the appreciation of the importance of sexuality and of the Oedipus complex – these constitute the

principal subject-matter of psychoanalysis and the foundation of its theory". Thus, for Freud, the subconsciousness and sexuality are among the major central points in his psychoanalysis. Moreover, biologically-derived influences and environmental inputs are the bases of human personality especially the psychosexual stages of development (Grossman, W.I. 1980:3).

In Freud's psychoanalysis, contradictions, inconsistencies, vagueness, blatant errors, and prejudices are indicators of unconscious conflict in individuals. The manifestation of any of these classified under the concept of dream, proves that hidden motives in the subconscious are surfacing in the conscious – which indicates/signals the presence of neurosis. In an effort to dissect the conscious and unconscious mind, Freud divided the human mind/psyche into three parts, he called the tripartite psyche. The *Id,* the *super ego* and the ego. They are, for the most part, unconscious. The *id,* for example, is completely unconscious; only small parts of the ego and the super ego are conscious. Each operates according to different, even contrasting, principles (Dobie, 2009;53).

The *Id* is the repository of the libido, the source of our psychic energy and our psychosexual desires. The *id* is always trying to satisfy our desires. The ego operates according to reality principle, as it regulates our agency, as it regulates our id's energies into socially non destructive. The super ego provides additional balance to the id as it operates according to the morality principle. In other words, it provides the sense of ethical and moral wrongdoing.

The significance of sexuality is where Freud also highlights the biological nature of sexuality from childhood to adulthood. Freud maintained that children like adults have sexual urges and libido. The period of childhood is where children experience intense sexual drive which Freud classifies into three phases (Dobie, 2009:54): *oral phase* which is characterized by sucking- first to be fed from our mother's breast, *the anal stage* the realization of sexual pleasure, and the *phalli stage* where a child discovers the pleasure of genital stimulation connected to reproduction. Nowhere has Freud caused stir than in analyzing the concept of female sexuality. His definition led to Karen Horney's rebellion forming her strand of psychoanalysis afterwards. In his summation, Freud simply extended his view of male sexuality to women, viewing women as simply men without penises. (Cohler & Galatzer – Levy, 2008). His male sexuality perspective is understandable, but nonetheless, problematic, as it marginalizes female sexuality.

Female sexuality according to early Freudian theory, is exactly the same as male sexuality up until the phallic stage of psychosexual development since women don't have penis, however, they experience penis envy, which is the jealousy little girls feel towards boys and the resentment towards their mother (whom they blame for not having a penis). Though Freud did not propose the 'electra complex', it can be deducted from his postulations that little girls switch their affections from their mothers to their fathers in just to possess a penis. Being female, they cannot come to identify with their father, however, and when they realize they cannot have a penis, seek to have children instead (Denmark & Paludi, 2008). Freud concluded that women

were passive, engaging in sex only because they want children, especially male to possess a penis. Penis envy, therefore to Freud, is a problem that would never be completely resolved, thus condemning all women to inferiority, meaning that women would always be morally inferior to men, who are capable of having superiority (Schultz & Schultz, 2009)

2.5.5 The Basic Tenets of Freudian Theory

Dobie, A.B. (2009:52-56) identifies the main elements of Freudian approach to psychoanalysis, which in summary include the following:

- The most significant aspect of this theory is the primacy of the unconscious. It stores our wishes and desires which may be brought to the surface unconsciously in many forms. An individual may be unable to tell the difference between what is happening and what he thinks is happening. Our actions are the result of forces we do not recognize and therefore, cannot control.
- The *id, ego* and *superego* form what Freud calls the tripartite psyche. They control the human psyche. The *id* is the repository of the libido and psychosexual desires, it operates under the pleasure principle. The ego, operates according to the reality principle, its function is to divert id's energies into socially acceptable actions. It mediates between our inner selves and the outer world. The superego works against the drive of the *id* and represses socially unacceptable behaviours back to the unconscious. It balances between the

license of the id, and the restrictions of the superego produces the healthy personality.

- During childhood, the id is formed, shaping the behaviour of the adult to come through the oral, anal and phallic stages. If these three stages are successfully negotiated, the adult personality emerges sound and intact. If however these needs are not met, the adult is likely to suffer arrested development.
- The vast unconscious that exist beneath the surface of our awareness seems closest to revelation when we sleep. Our dreams are therefore, the language of the unconscious, full of unfulfilled desires that the conscious mind has buried there. In literature, the process may take place through condensation or displacement.
- If dreams are symbolic expression of repressed desires, most of them sexual in nature, then the images through which they operate are themselves sexual ones. Their sexuality is initially indicated by shape that is physical objects that are concave in shape such as lakes, tunnels and cups are assumed to be female or yonic symbol, and those that are convex such as trees, towers and spires are assumed to be male or phallic.
- Freud recognized that the artist expresses fantasy, illusion, and wishes through symbols, just as dreams from the unconscious do. To write a story or a poem, then, is to reveal the unconscious, to reveal what is repressed in the unconscious. The writer is therefore, a conflicted individual working out his or her problems

2.5.6 Background to Horneyan Psychoanalysis

Karen Horney (1885-1952), a German-born psychoanalyst was born in Hamburg in 1915. She founded American Institute of Psychoanalysis after she parted company with Sigmund Freud, her teacher. Her rebellion against the orthodox brand of psychoanalysis bordered on her repulsion about Freud's stance on sexual conflict (especially female sexuality), neurosis and culture, Freud's concept of passivity in women, and the question of penis envy. For instance, she opined that neurotics must be studied in consideration of his culture, that a neurotic is driven by emotional forces in his life, that Freudian theory about sexuality and continuous compulsives interfere with an individual, the family and social factors where there is organization of values and attitudes. Freud believes, they are compulsive driven from nature, involving every human being. This cannot be valid according to Horney, because these neurosis were the outgrowth of disturbed human relation (Horney, 1945:12). She believes, they are compulsive drives but become neurotic by a human feeling isolated, helpless, afraid and hostile. Neurotics cope with their lives despite these problems called 'neurotic trends (Horney, 1942:40). Horney's postulations on female psychology have provided grounds for feminist psychoanalysis, Horney's contributions to the feminine psychoanalysis psychology have gained increasing favour in psychoanalytic circle. Her feminist critique of psychoanalysis and of the influence of male oriented culture on female mental life is the source, often acknowledged by some of today's most feminist writings (Grossman, 1980:6).

The significance and value of Horneyan psychoanalytic theory has been extended to the realms of medicine, cultural studies and gender studies especially on feminism. Her contribution on psychoanalysis in relation to literature is significant, Bernard J. Paris opines (quoted Solomon, I. 2006:6) that her writings are "not full of mysterious, recondite terminology, as are the writings of Freud, Jung and Lacan, and it does not have the aura of being secret knowledge possessed only by the master… Horney explores unconscious motives and conflicts, but she makes them readily accessible to conscious understanding." Therefore, Horney's approach is an important avenue for the interpretation of literary texts and characters because of her ability to bring to the fore more about behaviour and human personality.

Karen Horney may have her differences with Freudian, orthodox psychoanalysis, but she also shares some of Freud's postulations. For instance, both agreed that the unconscious is characterized by hidden conflicts which are then unknowingly transferred to consciousness. The emotional conflicts that occur in the psyche is what is called neurosis. She is also in agreement with Freud regarding psychological problems originating in early childhood. However, she does not believe that the adult retains those childhood trends. Therefore, it is important to see what the past and the process of growing up is causing in a person's life. In another words, a character in a literary text is analysed based on the current state of the psyche as opposed to the analysis done in reference to the infantile origins (Paris, 1999:4). Solomon, J. shares Paris's opinion that "she saw the value of concentrating on the present behaviour in the context of character trends" (Solomon, J. 2006:4). In other

words, Horney acknowledges the significance of childhood experiences even though she does not relate adulthood experience to infantile influence the fact that most of her analysis center on existing conflicts and less attention to childhood experiences makes her strand of psychoanalysis a viable approach to interpreting literary texts. Solomon, I. (2006:ix) opines that "I was struck by the finding that her writing was remarkable for its crystal-clear expression. In contrast to the vast majority of psychoanalytic writers of journal papers and books, Horney vigorously wrote better than they in simply, lucid prose about problems of the inner heart in conflict with itself." Among her several studies, this study employs her postulations of neurosis in the analysis of the characters in the selected elements of Horneyan theory:

2.5.7 The Basic Tenets of Horneyan Theory

Solomon (2006:13-15) has identified the main elements of Horneyan theory:

- Character disorder originates in part from distortions in interpersonal relationships.
- She rejects Freud's Instinct theory because aggression and sexual pathology are caused by frustration of fundamental needs for love, safety and security and by an increase in anxiety.
- Character disorder always has basic anxiety as its cornerstone. The helplessness or basic anxiety of the child leaves him or her vulnerable with a conviction of being isolated and helpless in a possibly unkind world.
- Mankind has the ability as well as the desire to evolve into a reasonable human being. An individual can change and go on changing as long as he/she lives.

Inherent in man is a desire to fulfil his/her potentialities, a drive for self-realization.

- There is a need to value oneself and to be valued. Poor self-esteem is a consequence of either under or over-valuation of the self. This leads to a specific idealized image by way of compensation.
- Horney defined conflict broadly seeing it as either a juxtaposition between the real self versus the idealized image, the real self versus the pride system, or the destructive forces versus the constructive urges.
- The treatment of the present in psychoanalysis is immeasurably more effective than the focus on the past.

2.5.8 Freud's Versus Horneyan Psychoanalyses: Poetics of the Study

Psychoanalysis emanates from Sigmund Freud, and all other strands of this school are driven from him. Horney's strand is no exception. As Freud's student, she later rebelled and developed her own strand of psychoanalysis. But one fact is conspicuously clear; all the two are geared towards investigating the repressed. The researcher explores the two strands in the interpretation of the texts, with the tenets in mind. However, the researcher treats the issue of sexuality in the two texts using Freudian psychoanalysis especially on Douglass' oedipal complex and Jacobs' sexual adventures. This is because Freudian strand of psychoanalysis is premised on the assumption that all human behaviours are sexual in nature. This declaration makes sexuality the focal point in Freudian psychoanalysis. Therefore, the theory would be suitable to analyse this aspect (sexuality). Other issues/behaviours beside sexuality are

analysed using Horneyan strand. This is because Karen Horney's theory expands the frontier beyond the realm of sexuality into a wider dimensions of human attitudes and behavior. It would therefore, be apt to analyse other aspects.

2.5.9 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed some literatures on the concepts of solitude and loneliness, critical reviews on Douglass and Jacobs, as well as the key terms of psychoanalysis and the two strands (Freudian and Horneyan) of the theory. Solitude, for instance, has been portrayed as both a physical as well as psychological experience, that benefits and harms its victim. For loneliness, it is an excruciating psychological experience that could cause cognitive decline, illness, psychological trauma and ultimately could lead to death. For Douglass and Jacobs, they are portrayed as American man and woman of the letters respectively as scholars extensively wrote on them and their works. Psychoanalytic theory is a literary theory concerned with the study of the unconscious and the repressed.

CHAPTER THREE

SOLITUDE AND LONELINESS IN FREDERICK DOUGLASS' *NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS*

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the issues of solitude and loneliness as portrayed in the narrative. The succeeding paragraphs underline Douglass' portrayal of the mortifs of solitude and loneliness, and the trauma that ensues, complicated by the formation of neurosis within the slave's psychology and the resultant pulls between ideal and the reality.

Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass was published in 1895. The settings of the autobiography are the pre-civil war towns of Maryland, New York, Bedford, and Massachusetts. The story is Douglass' first and a representation of what African Americans encountered during slavery. The narrative treats issues of skin colour, loneliness, confinement, courage, labour, heroism, persecution etc. Morgan (1997:77) claims that Douglass organizes his narrative around the theme of increasing control over his life, as a path toward personal independence and individual courage, and the theme of individuality, depending on one self alone, predominates over the theme of community. Valerie Smith (in Bosnicova, 2004:127) states that Douglass presents himself as an "isolated hero in his quest for freedom. His intention was to give his readers the classic story of the triumph of the individual will rather than a story of a triumphant self-in-relation."

3.1 Solitude in Douglass' *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Even though psychologists like Morano (2003:5) and Burger (1995:88) have associated solitude to positive and constructive state of engagement, they have however linked it to psychological problems such as pathology and social anxiety. These scholarly opinions summarily explicate Douglass' short-termed solitude when he says: "I spent that day mostly in the woods, having the alternative before me to go home and be whipped to death, or stay in the woods and be starved to death" (Douglass, 1845:297). He later chooses the lesser evil by staying in the woods, and contemplates his confrontation with Mr. Covey, the beginning of his aggressive behaviour. What precedes and causes his solitary confinement is his slumping while working with fellow slaves and the subsequent whipping from Mr. Covey. He has gone to St. Michael's, purposely to master Thomas for his intercession. Thomas Auld refuses, thus he returns to the woods for meditation and planning. Ralf Waldo Emerson (in Eyerman, 2004:28) avers that only in "quite solitude do we hear the call of intuition, freedom and independence". Therefore, Douglass decides to stay in the woods until Sandy comes, as he narrates "I went home with him, and talked all this matter over, and got his advice as to what course it was best for me to pursue" (Douglass, 1845:297).

Douglass's narrates his trauma when he starts off to Thomas for intercession "wearied in body and broken in Spirit" (p.296). Thus, his behaviour in the woods can be referred as Horney's "detachment" as a solution to his internal conflict. Therefore, rather than facing Master Covey for an imminent confrontation, he adopts the neurotic

need for self-sufficiency and independence (moving away strategy) and avoid Master Covey and especially other slaves who may give him psychological succour. Douglass uses symbolism and imagery – that depicts his African root when he accepts the root given to him by Sandy as a means of protection against his master, Mr. Covey. The superstitious root Sandy offers Douglass is a symbolism. According to Frederick May Holland (in Bloom, eds, 2010:158) the root symbolizes African root in reference to the magic power of a "root whose wearer ran no danger of being whipped by any whiteman." Douglass's symbolism reinforces his subconscious attachment to his origin, Africa. On the other hand, the root symbolizes Douglass' subconscious attachment to social commitment despite his solitude which is reinforced by social anxiety. This symbolism reinforces his African Communal consciousness. Slightly his other defence mechanism coming the other way towards others strategy – even though less dominantly. This temporary solitude has given Douglass time to reflect and vow to maintain his independence and his subsequent aggression against Mr. Covey as he narrates thus 'this battle with Mr. Covey was the turning-point in my career as a slave. It rekindled the few expiring embers of freedom…". (p.298). Douglass's action sums up Burger's (1995:88) assessment when he states that solitude "allows a periodic opportunity to organize one's thoughts, reflect on past actions, and future plans and prepare for future social encounters."

Two horrorful experiences force Douglass to seek another short-term solitude, and relieve himself of his trauma and social anxiety. Mr. Covey has purchased Caroline from Master Thomas and hires a married man Mr. Samuel Harrison to sleep

with her. She gives birth to twins, and despite that he confines her to utter seclusion. Secondly, Douglass, is sapped of hard labour and hunger, that he narrates his trauma, thus: "if at any onetime of my life more than another, I was made to drink the bitterest dregs of slavery…that time was during the first six months of my stay with Mr. Covey" (Douglass, 1845:293). Thus, Douglass seeks a moment of reflection and rest. In solitude, according to Ralph Waldo Emerson (in Eyerman, 2004:28) do we hear the voices of intuition… these are the voices we hear in solitude, but they grow faint and inaudible as we enter into the world.. it loves not realities and creators, but names and customs". Douglass relates, that:

> Sunday was my leisure time. I spent this in a sort of beast-like stupor, between sleep and wake, under some large tree. At times, I would rise up a flash of energetic freedom would dart through my soul, accompanied with a faint beam of hope, that flickered for a moment, and then vanished. I sank down again, mourning over my wretched condition. I was sometimes prompted to take my life, and that of Covey, but was prevented by a combination of hope and fear. My sufferings on this plantation seem now like a dream rather than a stern reality (p. 293).

Douglass also here employs neurotic strategy of detachment or moving away strategy. Beck (in Burger, 1995:89) affirms that social withdrawal is a common behaviour among depressed individuals. Beck also asserts that Karen Horney identifies a high need for privacy as a symptom of neurosis. Beck accordingly described a strong desire to be by oneself as detachment, an effort by the neurotic to remove himself or herself from the source of anxiety (Burger, 1995:89). Douglass's solitude centers on his intense desire to unburden through apostrophe. Apostrophe is a term Cuddon

(1977:51) defines as a figure of speech, in which a thing, a place, an abstract quality, an idea, a dead or absent person is addressed as if present and capable of understanding. Douglass solitude stems out of frustration and dejection as he voices out thus "my thoughts would compel utterance; and there, with no audience but the Almighty, I would pour out my soul's complaint, in my rude way with an apostrophe to the moving multitude of ships" (Douglas: 1845:293). Douglass's apostrophe confirms his admiration for the ship and how he scorns on himself: "Those beautiful vessels, robbed in purest white so delightful to the eyes of freeman, were to me so many shrouded ghosts, to terrify and torment me with thoughts of my wretched condition" (p.293). Karen Horney (1950:189) calls such apostrophe self dramatization, which shows the divergent forces operating within a person. In other words, Douglass oscillates between his ideal, in admiration of the white vessel which he idealizes as himself in freedom and perfection and his real self in form of a dejected solitary and wretched slave. Horney further posits that "to be more exact, a conflict is bound to arise because the neurotic identifies himself in toto with his superior proud self and with his despise self" (Horney, 1950:189) His use of symbolism 'white vessel' is a clear indication of his subconscious attachment to freedom in his quest for the 'ideal' and 'perfectionism'. Horney (1950:188) opines that a neurotic presents "himself in terms of divergent symbols: different people, animals, plants, or inanimate objects. He may appear in one and the same dream as himself". Hence Douglass' admiration and latter equation with the vessel

Thus, Douglass' use of personification "The glad ship is gone; she hides in the dim distance…" (p.294) alludes to the inanimate ship which he imagines as a free, white lady moving gracefully. His other apostrophe like "Go on go on. O that I could also go! Could I but swim! If I could fly!..." (p.294) confirms his craving for perfection which fits his neurotic posture. His employment of ambivalence in form of paradox "let but the first opportunity offer, and, come what will, I am off. Meanwhile, I will try to bear up under the yoke" (p.294) is a testament to Horney's (1950:21) assertion that a neurotic "reinforces the alienation by adding an element of confusion; he no longer knows where he stands or 'who' he is." Hence Douglass's swinging back and forth from his determination to escape to the North and his surrender to the inevitable. Grossman (1980:1) is in agreement with Horney regarding a neurotic ambivalence, when he opines that contradictions, inconsistencies, vagueness, blatant errors and prejudice are indicators of unconscious conflict in individuals.

Douglass uses rhetorical questions in his apostrophe. Cuddon (1977:748-9) defines rhetorical question as basically a question not expecting an answer or one to which the answer is more or less self-evident. Douglass asks rhetorically "Is there any God? Why I am a slave?" (p.294) Cuddon insists that rhetorical question is used to express "anger and frustration" (p.748). Douglass's rhetorical questions are expressions of anger, protest and frustration by looking at the diction of his apostrophe: "You move merrily before the gentle gale, and I sadly before the bloody whip… I am confined in bands of iron!" (p.293). Horney avers that a neurotic may go through alternating phases of self-castigating 'goodness' and wild protest against any

standard. In other words, there may be a constant shuttling between an 'I should'… 'No, why should I?" (Horney, 1950:77-78). His assertion affirms Douglas rhetorical question to be an act of protestation, anger and frustration.

In summary, Douglass's solitude in the Narrative is the result of neurosis in him which forces him to shuttle between his proud, idealized self and the despised 'real' self,between what 'should' and what "is". Douglass' narrative therefore, presents a neurotic, lonely and solitary Douglass who battles with social anxieties which forces him to seek for solitary spot, and escape from his traumatized, anxious moments. His solitude significantly even though an action within a traumatic experience has helped him to relieve himself of some social anxiety and pressure, and helped him to reflect his past and look for future intense challenges.

3.2 Loneliness in Douglass's *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Goldin (2013:233) has linked loneliness to a pathology born out of relational trauma of the injured psyche left behind by the connected pack. His linking aptly suits the issue of loneliness under discussion as it emanates from a formation of neurosis due to trauma. Perlman and Peplau (1981:35) link loneliness to ensuing sense of paralyzing hopelessness and unalterable futility. Goldin (2013:234) links loneliness to pathology and calls it a naked existence, a naked horror, and devoid of interest in any goal. The succeeding paragraphs underline Douglass' portrayal of the theme of loneliness in *Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass* and the trends exhibited by

the characters, their coping strategies due mainly to earlier trauma and the formation of neurosis.

Frederick Douglass brings out the psychosexual libido/oedipal complex through the character of Douglass. In the Narrative, Douglass reveals certain facts about his infant experiences typical of his 'oral stage' (characterised by sucking from mother's breast, enjoying them and kissing – Bressler, 2009:54) surrounding. He narrates that his master is his father and is separated with his mother when he was an infant as it was the tradition to wean children from their mothers at a tender age. He narrates thus, "I do not know, unless it be to hinder the development of the child's affection toward its mother and to blunt and destroy the natural affection of the mother for the child" (Douglass, 1845:256). Douglass laments that she died when he was seven years old, never having enjoyed to any considerable extent "her soothing presence, her tender and watchful care" (Douglass, 1845:256). The lamentation above reveals what Habib (2005:575) calls "emotion of affection".

Douglass later reveals his psychosexual consciousness (an intense, complex sexual admiration towards his mother and hatred of his father) when he sums up the slave master's ultimate goal on the infant's early separation with its mother, that according to him "this is done too obviously to administer to their own lust, and make a gratification of their wicked desires profitable as well as pleasurable; for by this cunning arrangement, the slave holder, in cases not a few, sustain to his slaves the double relation of master and father" (Douglas, 1845:256-7). From the foregoing, Douglass reveals his hatred for his white master and father, and his jealousy which all

together, are derived from his emotional loneliness, a term Perlman & Peplau (1981:33) defined as the absence of personal intimate relationship due to the absence of attachment figure. Thus, Douglass reveals the perception of lack of the early intimate and filial relationship with his mother despite his subconscious revelation of his affection for his mother.

Reichman (in Spira & Richards, 2003:5) believes that an unsatisfactory relationship with the early environment of infancy can lead to a defensive withdrawal and later vulnerability to psychosis. Wincot (also in Spira & Richards, 2003:8) believes that the ability to be comfortable when alone is a developmental achievement that arises out of the child's having played alone in the presence of his mother; the lack of such experience, results in being alone when alone. The two summations explain Douglass' perception of loneliness and vulnerability to a sexual attachment to his mother. Then, for Douglas, it is not the mother figure that he only longs for, but his infancy's ideal of the good mother who never disappoints and never becomes a figure that stimulates aggression, hence, his feeling of insecurity and loneliness.

Douglass's lamentation is 'emotional affection' which according to Habib (2005:575) emanates from libidinal impulses. According to him, sexuality now encompassed all of the emotions of affection and friendliness traditionally subsumed under the word 'love'. In other words, affectionate impulses were originally sexual in nature but later became sublimated into affection or rather affectionate wishes.

Douglass's description of Ned's whipping of Aunt Hester, how she is stripped naked from neck to waist, highlights his 'anal stage' (the presence of erogenous zone;

a part of the body that provides sexual pleasure – Dobie, 2009:54). Like his emotions towards his mother, he expresses those same 'emotions of affection' to Aunt Hester (his aunt) as a woman of "noble form and graceful proportion" (p.258). His mentioning of 'stool' on which Aunt Hester is seated while being beaten by Master Ned is a phallic symbol, a convex in form, which according to Dobie (2009;56) is assumed to be a phallic or male sexual organ. This reveals Douglass's subconscious libidinal impulse. Other sexual symbols are the apparent swear words master Ned (his master) utters toward Aunt Heter "d-d, b-h-, d-d" (p.259) are sexual images, even though his 'super ego' at work, forces him to employ self-censorship and thus refrains from direct mention of vulgar words.

Douglass's narration of how the other slaves and him use a sloop to transport Colonel Llyod's farm produce from his plantation to Baltimore for sale brings to the fore another symbolism in 'sloop', which is concave in shape. Dobie (2009:56) avers that such concave sized items are assumed to be a yonic or female sexual organ, another revelation of Douglass's libidinal attachment. Douglass psychosexual libido is transferred through 'displacement' from Sally, the daughter of Colonel Llyord to the sloop, when he narrates how the sloop is named after Sally. Thus, subconsciously, Douglass transfers his love and sexual libidio from Sally to the sloop. That his father is the white slave master, hence, Sally is perceived to be his sister, proves his oedipal complex. Therefore, this transfer, of his love from Sally, a girl to sloop, an object, an exchange through symbol or image, but not directly, thus the unconscious continually asserts its influence over our motives and behaviour (Bressler, 2003:125).

Douglass suffers from oedipal complex, hence, his hatred directed towards his white father and affection toward his mother. Thus, directing sexual impulses toward mother and hatred toward father constitute oedipal complex. According to Freud (1965:296), it is the "fate of all of us, perhaps, to direct our first sexual impulse towards our mother and our first hatred and our first murderous wish against our father. Our dream convinces us that is so". Therefore, Douglass's expression of the warmest fondness and affection, thus as he says "her soothing presence, her tender and watchful care'. (p.256) and his expression of hatred for his father especially concerning his identity, thus, according to him "a want of information concerning my own was a source of unhappiness to me during childhood" (p.255) reveal his oedipal complex. Douglass's oedipal complex and the preceding loneliness are exacerbated by both physical and psychological trauma he experiences. Eyerman (2004:2) defines such trauma as a "wound and the experience of great emotional anguish by an individual." Douglass reveals his trauma especially at the death of his mother, when he was not allowed to be present at her funeral and never allowed to develop a filial affection between them, as well as emotional and spatial gaps he perceives have been erected between them. Morgan (1997:80) has summed up Douglass's oedipal complex when he opined that the narrative "assumes a hierarchy that places male prerogative, of Douglass's father to impregnate and abandon Douglass's mother". Hence, Douglass' oedipal complex stems from his feeling of loneliness and insecurity, therefore, his quest for security and integration into his white master's family.

All the above subconscious sexual excitations evince by Douglas emanate from his feeling of loneliness as Laaser (2004:120) links lonely people to a search for sexual gratification as a route to blend.

Aggressiveness, one of the many neurotic trends is revealed through the characters of Douglas, and Henry Harris. Douglass's aggressiveness starts when he is with Mr. Covey. He and other slaves are working when he limps off, traumatizes by hunger, and illness. Mr. Covey beats him severely. Thus, he reveals his trauma due to Covey's horror: "when I could stand no longer, I fell and felt as if held down by an immense weight… The blood was yet oozing from the wound on my head…" (p.294-5). Douglass is a neurotic with the ambition for personal achievement. Horney (1937:26) opines of such neurotic condition, that a neurotic needs independence, hence his attempt to be aggressive. The urge of his idealized image subconsciously forces him to hit back, and this says Douglass "rekindled the few expiring embers of freedom, and revived within me a sense of my own manhood" (Gates, 1987:298). Thus, Douglass's aggression leads him closer to his idealized image than his reality. Morgan (1997:79) opines that "Douglass presents himself as someone who has learned to read and write almost solely by his own efforts, who fought with Covey, the slave-breaker, for his human dignity, and who finally seized his own freedom, all pretty much on his own." Therefore, from his early struggle under Mr. Hugh's care, and the attempt to intellectually isolate him, Douglass ultimately shows his idealized need for perfection. Horney (1950:22) calls this narcissism, where a neurotic suffers from self-obsession and 'imperceptibly becomes an idealized self. And this idealized self

becomes more real to him than his real self, not primarily because it is more appealing but because it answers all his stringent needs." Therefore, Douglass has been captivated with this idealized image and reached a point of no return since a narcissist looks at self, and nothing but self.

Henry Harris exhibits the same aggression during their stay in prison after a foiled attempt to escape to freedom. Tom Graham, William and Mr. Hamilton tried to tie them, but Henry could not give in. Even though he later capitulates, his aggressive behaviour reveals the existence of neurosis in his psyche. Solomon (2006:4), opines that a neurotic aggression may not necessarily be bad but rather an attempt for mere assertion. Thus, both Douglass's and Henry's aggression is an attempt to escape from their anxiety. Thus a feeling of self-sufficiency and independence increases the likelihood of a neurotic to fight and assert self through strength. In other words, the aggressive child starts to place value on strength and on the capacity to endure and fight (Horney, 1950:20). Both Douglas and Henry Harris adopt Horney's movement against other strategy; therefore feeling isolated and out of sync decide to further detach themselves aggressively.

Depression and the ensuing anxiety, hopelessness and despair are the hallmarks of African American slave characters. Douglas vividly represents depression, despair, hopelessness, anxiety and destructive impulses (both self-destructive and non-self-destructive impulse) that afflict lonely African American slave characters. Depression has been defined as a state of bad mood and aversion to activity that can affect a person's thoughts, behaviour, feelings, and sense of wellbeing. A depressed is

associated with feelings of sadness, anxiety, emptiness, hopelessness, helplessness, worthlessness, guilt, irritability, anger, shame or restlessness (*Association of Hormonal Contraception & Depression – 2016:16*).

Douglass suffers from anxious moments, for instance, while at Baltimore, Master Hugh hires him to Mr. William Gardner, an extensive ship-builder, to learn how to calk. He is placed at the beck and call of about seventy carpenters, and he is to regard every one as a master. Thus, a plethora of voices, each demanding his service, traumatize and make him anxious: "their word was to be my law. My situation was a most trying one. At times, I needed a dozen pair of hands. I was called a dozen ways in the space of a single minute – it was 'Fred, come help me to cant this timber here', 'Fred, come carry this timber yonder,'… (Douglass, 1845:312). Verbal biles from these white carpenters traumatize him: "Halloo nigger… I say darky… Damn you if you move…" (p.312). Lastly, he and other black carpenters are daily harassed there. Douglass voices out his loneliness: "Their reasons for this, as alleged, was that if free colored carpenters were encouraged, they would soon take the trade into their own hands, and poor white men would be thrown out". (p.312).

While Douglass works at Mr. Freeland's plantation, he and Henry Harris, John Harris, Henry Bailey, and Charles Roberts decide to escape to the North. Here, Douglass is ruled by anxiety as he narrated his anxiety, thus: "As the time drew near, for our departure, our anxiety became more intense. It was truly a matter of life and death … Friday night was a sleepless one for me. I probably felt more anxious than the rest…" (Douglass, 1845:308). His anxiety becomes more intense as their plan is

hatched. What follows is the traumatized experience of separation, which he calls a painful isolation "within the walls of a stone prison" (p.311). Such loneliness is what Perlman & Peplau (1981:34) called loneliness anxiety, which is aversive and results from a basic alienation between man and man (Perlman and Peplau, 1981:34). Loneliness is linked to anxiety, sadness, doubts, hence Douglass' intense, gloomy and pessimistic state. In other words, lonely people are tense, restless, and anxious, their outlook is negative, less happy, pessimistic and less satisfied.

Hopelessness/despair is another trauma that characterizes Douglass' slavery life. At colonel Lloyd's plantation, he suffers from hunger, nakedness, labour as well as psychological pain. Douglass narrates thus "my mother was dead, my grandmother lived far off, so that I seldom saw her. I had two sisters and one brother that lived in the same house with me; but the early separation of us from our mother had well nigh blotted the fact of our relationship from our memories. I looked for home elsewhere, and was confident of finding none which I should relish… if however, I found in my home hardship, hunger, whipping and nakedness, I had the consolation that I should not have escaped any one of them by staying" (Douglass, 1845:272). Thus, Douglass's hopelessness has reached the pinnacle, as to him, wherever he is as long as he is a slave, trauma and despair are the order of the day. This is why Perlman & Peplau (1981:35) opine that loneliness creates a sense of paralyzing hopelessness, and unalterable futility.

What depresses Douglass more is the treatment of himself, Aunt Hester and Caroline while he is under the "care" of Mr. Covey. Aunt Hester for instance is

stripped naked and beaten to the extent that her voice becomes hoarse, while Caroline, another slave is caged and maltreated. Douglass narrates the trauma and depression attached to these horrible experiences: “But a few months of this discipline tamed me. I was broken in body, soul and spirit. My natural elasticity was crushed, my intellect languished, the disposition to read departed, the cheerful sparks that lingered about my eye died; the dark night of slavery closed in upon me; and behold a man transformed into a brute” (Douglass, 1845:293).

Douglass is a neurotic and depressed what Horney calls a “condition that makes a victim unhappy and anxious and often prevents him living a normal life”. That is why even in the company of his brother and two sisters, he cannot reconcile between his reality and ideal, pick up the pieces and carry on. Therefore, as a neurotic, as Horney avers, he “builds up his personal idealized image from the materials of his own special experiences, his earlier fantasies, his particular needs and also his given faculties” (Horney, 1950:22). Thus, Douglass forms his perception from his experiences, fantasies (ideal) and the general aura of his environment.

Moreover, Horney describes the neurotic’s (here Douglass) directionless, purposeless journey when he avers that “his feeling and wishes thus cease to be determining factors; he is no longer, so to speak, the driver but is driven. Also the division in himself not only weakens him in general, but reinforces the alienation by adding an element, confusion; he no longer knows where he stands, or ‘who’ he is” (Horney, 1950:21). The description above fits Douglass as he fails to appreciate the presence of his two sisters and a brother, and his swinging between the ideal and

reality alienates his own self from his kin and kith. Thus, Horney calls his situation moving away strategy – as he detaches himself from his remaining family members. His confusion leads him subsequently to wish for his own death as he says: "I have no doubt, but that I should have killed myself, or done something for which I should have been killed" (p.279).Orback (2007;267-8) opines that suicide may be chosen as a last resort of maintaining self-cohesion when moments of high distress generate feelings of self-disintegration. Douglass's urge for self-destructive impulse confirms his subconscious neurosis, and his loneliness and depression. Hence, Perlman & Peplau (1981:31) affirm that loneliness and depression are synonymous. Characters who suffer heart-breaking incidents they opine, are faced with the onerous responsibility of coping with a gloomy life. It is in lieu of this that Horney (1937:227) avers that "the neurotic, whether or not he feels it consciously, is not only a very unhappy person indeed, but he does not see any chance of escaping his misery". Therefore, destructive impulses such as depression, becomes another route of escape.

Interpersonal social network is a mirage to African American slaves. The absence of Douglass's social network accelerates his loneliness. From his childhood, Douglass misses his mother and the severing of relationship with his Grandmother, and his 'wanderings' or rather his being hired from one slave master to another, have astronomically deepened his social isolation. No wonder that Orlando Patterson (in Gates & McKay, eds, 1997:130) calls slavery a "social death" because, a slave could have "no family, no personal honour, no community, no past and no future… The intention of slavery was to create in the slave a sense of complete alienation from all

human ties except those that bound him or her in absolute dependence to the master's will".

At Colonel Llyod's plantation, Mr. Llyod sees a slave and asks him if he is being taken care of, to which the naïve, poor boy replies in negative. The boy is sold to a Georgian slave trader as punishment. This incident has psychologically affected Douglass and other slaves as he confirms this fact thus: "this has had the affect to establish among the slaves the maxim that a still tongue makes a wise head. They suppress the truth rather than take the consequences of telling it…" (p.266). This incident has stirred psychological conflict in Douglass's and other slaves' minds. This has affected their sense of family, because, whenever they are together they keep mute but when separately says Douglass "they excrete their masters" (p.266).

At Mr. Covey's plantation, he uses to sneak and suddenly appears to survey them. He sometimes crawls on his stomach, on his hand and knees to evade detection and would rise up and scream out. Thus, this attitude has created a sort of image of a looming monster that frightens them. They are therefore, psychologically restive. Horney (1950:21) avers of such neurotic that the urge to "cope with others has forced him to override his genuine feelings, wishes and thoughts." Thus slaves are encouraged to be aloof, and to employ the western culture of individualism, self and non-communal integration. In other words, to a slave, the theme of individuality, depending on oneself alone, predominates over the theme of community (Morgan, 1997:80). Later, the slaves call Mr. Covey a 'snake' therefore, the 'snake' here is a symbolism that reiterates the harrowing and frightening picture of slavery.

Douglass's aloofness before the white people in anticipation of betrayal, has subconsciously become what Horney called 'obsessive compulsive disorder', s term for a mental disorder in which somebody feels he has to repeat certain actions or activities to get rid of fears or unpleasant though because, Douglass repeats and repeats the same manifestation of fear to unburden what actually is on his mind. Thus, according to Horney (1950:21) such neurotic has subconsciously forced himself to over-ride his genuine feeling…". This obsessive fear for interpersonal socialization is revealed when Douglass is on Mr. Water's Wharf. Two Irishmen are unloading a scow of stone. After enquiring about his status, they both advises him to escape to the North. Douglass narrates his ordeal, thus: "I pretended not to be interested in what they said, and treated them as if I did not understand them; for I feared they might be treacherous. Whitemen have been known to encourage slaves to escape, and then, to get reward, catch them and return them to their masters." (Gates, 1987:280).Douglass's hold-back emanates from his neurosis, his perceived feeling of isolation and rejection. Perlman & Peplau (1981:33) asserts that interpersonal loneliness is forced from a mixture of feeling rejected or unacceptable, together with a sense of boredom. Hence, Douglass's perception, not to talk freely and reveal his real self.

Douglass reveals his trauma at his separation from his blood-related slaves: Henry Harris, John Harris after the foiled attempt of escape. While put on market for sale, the frustration is palpable in Douglass's words: "Our fate for life was now to be decided. We had no more voice in that decision … A single word from the Whiteman

was enough-against all our wishes, prayers and entreaties, to sunder forever the dearest friends, dearest kindred and strongest ties known to human beings" (P. 282). Likewise, how his Grandmother is sequestered to the woods is a traumatic experience that clearly reveals his feeling of loneliness and isolation. This is a woman who has spent all her life in Mr. Auld's household. But in her old age, she is taken to the woods. Despite her service to the Auld's, she is left a slave for life, a slave says Douglass, is "in the hands of strangers; and in their hands she saw her children, her grandchildren and her great-grandchildren, divided, like so many sheeps" (Douglass, 1845:283). Therefore, Douglass is a neurotic in need of 'perfection', hence, his inability to understand the reality and forget the ideal, which he earnestly craves. That's why Horney (1950:19) asserts that such a neurotic in need of perfection is "driven to rebel or to keep aloof without reference to his real feelings and regardless of the inappropriateness of his attitude in a particular situation".

Beside the lack or inadequacy of interpersonal social network, Frederick Douglas also explores the African American family dynamics especially in form of social fragmentation and break-up. We have seen Douglass missing that filial bond at a critical moment of his life, and how this breeds his interpersonal loneliness and subsequently, emotional void. To cap it all, Edwards and Dabydeen (eds), 1991:xiii) bring to the fore both the interpersonal loneliness and the fragmented nature of African American family, when they opine that "there was too the memory of loss of family, which no amount of individual freedom or material acquisition could eradicate.

Although isolated by colour, the sense of the absence of family would have deepened the loneliness of Black Africans."

African American slave characters seek for social network. Douglass exhibits this trait, by seeking for social network as a lonely person. According to Perlman and Peplau (1981:35) loneliness motivates individual to initiate social interaction despite anxiety such interactions holds for lonely people. Douglass suffers the same fate immediately after his prison experience, after himself, John Harris and other slaves are earmarked for sale. Douglass reveals their trauma, thus: "our greatest concern was about separation. We dread that more than anything this side of death" (p.310) Douglas craves for socialization at a time when they are being socially isolated, he later proves this fact when he says "Their object in separating us was to hinder concert" (p.30). He suffers dejection when the slave traders arrive to value the slaves. Like animals, they are touched and surveyed. The anxiety and trauma of separation have overtaken him as he voices his frustration: "I regarded this separation as a final one. It caused me more pain than anything else in the whole transaction. I was ready for anything rather than separation." (p.311). Douglass is a neurotic in need of perfection. And here, his 'perfection' is approval and affection. Horney averts that a neurotic "needs for affection/approval entails the indiscriminate need to please others and be liked by them (Horney, 1942:54-55). This explains Douglass's attempts to please the other slaves and fills them with an enticing promise of a better future when they escape to the North. When he realizes that same 'concert' is a mirage, he turns gloomy and dejected. His sadness is justified, as Horney reveals the neurotic's

contrasting state: “He needs an atmosphere of warmth to give him both a feeling of inner security and the inner freedom enabling him to have his own feeling and thought and to express himself (Horney, 1950:18). Then, the lack of this warmness makes him sequestered says Douglass “within the walls of a stone prison” (Douglass, 1845:311).

Through ambivalent posture, we are able to dissect the vagueness of a neurotic African American slave character. Grossman, (1980:1) asserts that contradictions, inconsistencies, vagueness, blatant error, and prejudice are indicators of unconscious conflict in individuals. Douglass, therefore, as a neurotic full of conflicting issues, his movement between the ideal and reality, exhibits ambivalence in his daily life. He numerously doubts about his freedom, for instance, he says “I looked for home elsewhere, and was confident of finding none” (p.272) only later to say that “a deep conviction that slavery would not always be able to hold me within its foul embrace” (p.273). These two statements confirm the subconscious conflict in Douglass, as he swings between his reality (looking for home and confident of finding none) and his idealized image (that slavery would not hold him within its foul embrace).

When Douglass embarks on his short-term solitude, in his apostrophe, his paradox confirms his psychological state when he narrates: “let but the first opportunity offer, and come what will, I am off. Meanwhile, I will try to bear up under the yoke”. (p.294). This statement also confirms the state of a fretful, pathological mind which makes him swing back and forth between reality and ideal. Thus, Horney (1950:21) avers of a neurotic in such state, that “also the division in himself not only weakens him in general, but reinforces the alienation by adding an element of

confusion. Douglass' ambivalence reinforces his confusion, he no longer knows where he stands and fits Horney's description that he is driven rather than being a driver. Such contradictory trends, says Horney (1950:22) beside being glorified, may be isolated in the person's mind that they no longer constitute disturbing conflicts.Finally, Douglass's state of indecisiveness can be described in the words of Horney (1950:189) a neurotic two ways of experiencing himself at the same time, makes him feel like two people pulling in opposite directions. It is not only a conflict in him, but a conflict of sufficient impact to tear him apart.

In Douglass, Frederick Douglass brings to the fore the sense of loss or crisis of identity and cultural dislocation of African American slave characters. The narrative opens with an account of Douglass's lamentation of not knowing his age, and is deprived of the privilege to enquire as that amounts to a sign of an impertinent behaviour. The whispher is that his father was a whiteman – and the feeling of not knowing his father traumatizes him. According to James McCune Smith (in McKay, 1997:299) Douglass "cites the resentment he felt over not knowing his birthday as early evidence of a restless spirit within that would goad him into increasing defiance of the institution into which he had been born". McCune's summation sums up Douglass loss of identity as a person who looks rootless. The presumption about this loss of identity traumatized African Americans as, according to Booker T. Washington (quoted in McKay, 1997:503), "The Negro boy has obstacles, discouragements, and temptations to battle with, that are little known to those not situated as he is. When a white boy undertakes a task, it is taken for granted that he will succeed. On the other

hand, people are usually surprised if the Negro boy does not fail. In other words, the negro youth starts out with the presumption against him."

Douglas is therefore, a neurotic, and his psychological conflict is classified by Horney as the struggle between the opposing sides. This means that the conflict between who he is (the reality of his identity crisis) and who he ought to be (the ideal – a full fledged citizen with rights) creates tension in his life as he tries to come to terms with the reality and his aspiration for the ideal. In other words, Douglass's oscillation between the reality and ideal in his unconscious, portrays a traumatic, lonely person who has perceived the inadequacy of his essence or family tree.

Later when Douglass gains his freedom by escaping to the North, one incident caps up his crisis of identity, a reality he faces that sums up his cultural loneliness thus:

> … at New Bedford, while at the breakfast, table, the question arose as to what name I should be called by. The name given to me by mother was "Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey". I however, had dispensed with the two middle names long before I left Maryland so that I was generally known by the name of 'Frederick Bailey". I started from Baltimore bearing the name of "Stanley|. When I got to New York, I again changed my name to "Frederick Johnson", and thought that would be the last change. But when I got to New Bedford, I found it necessary again to change my name. the reason of this necessity was, that there was so many Johnson's in New Bedford, it was already quite difficult to distinguish between them. I gave Mr. Johnson the privilege of choosing me a name, but told him he must not take from me the name of "Frederick". I must hold on to that, to preserve a sense of my identity (Douglass, 1845:322).

Douglass's Crisis of identity has gone beyond cultural dislocation, it is what Eyerman (2004) called cultural trauma which he defined as a dramatic loss of identity and meaning , a tear in the social fabric affecting a group of people (Eyerman, 2004:2).

Sociologically oriented theorists have seen loneliness resulting from cultural factors that prevent people from establishing satisfactory relationship. Riesman (in Perlman & Peplau, 1981:44) characterized Americans as 'other-directed', over-concerned about the evaluation of others to validate self-worth. While Slater (in Perlman & Peplau, 1981:44) emphasized a basic conflict between American values of competition, involvement, and independence on the one hand, and human needs for community, engagement and dependence on the other. In other words, cultural values especially in America emphasize rugged individualism and personal success, which in turn increase the incidence of loneliness. Douglass's Narrative illustrates that African American slave characters experience trauma as a result of cultural disparity with the host community especially in contrasting areas of Western cultural practice of individualism and African communal consciousness.

Douglass is a neurotic and there are instances of psychological conflicts arising from his cultural dislocation. This psychological conflict is classified by Horney as the tussle between opposing sides. This implies his swinging between the mainstream American culture of individualism (including his perceived social isolation) and his African root of communalism which creates tension in his life. In other words, there is a tussle in his unconscious between the ideal and the reality he faces in America. To borrow from Horney (1950:59), he may feel dislocated, therefore too "timid to feel or

assert his rights when he actually could and should". Hence, his feeling of cultural and psychological loneliness.

This cultural dislocation in Douglass emanates from the social isolation he perceives to have been suffering with his family. His grandmother is taken to the woods to die there despite her immense contribution to the upliftment of Captain Auld's family. This is America's mainstream individualistic leaning, a divide- and – rule sort of tactic, where, according to Douglass, his Grandmother "lives to suffer in utter loneliness, she lives to remember and mourn over the loss of children, the loss of grandchildren…" (p.284) and on the other hand, the Africa communal culture, when her children "sang and danced in her presence" (p.284). Douglass cannot reconcile between these two conflicting cultural conflations. He is therefore, a neurotic who according to Horney needs to be 'perfect'. Cathy Caruth (in Eyerman, 2004:3) aptly situates Douglass's cultural dilemma when she posits in what she calls 'psychoanalytic theory of trauma'. "it is not the experience itself that produces traumatic effect, but rather the remembrance of it. As reflective process, trauma links past to present through representations and imagination. In psychological account, this can lead to a distorted identity formation.

Frederick Douglass brings to the fore the African American Slaves' lives under illusion. The concepts of 'ideal' and 'reality' are the two salient features of a neurotic patient. Therefore, a move from 'reality' to 'ideal' has become a hallmark of a neurotic. Suh movement from 'reality' to 'ideal' becomes compulsive in a neurotic even though subconsciously. Horney avers of such neurotic that a solution not only for

a particular but one that implicitly promises to satisfy all the inner needs that have arisen in an individual at a given time. Moreover, it promises not only a riddance from his painful and unbearable feelings but in addition an ultimately mysterious fulfilment of himself and his life (Horney, 1950:24).

Douglass exhibits these phantom and illusionary trends through imagination. During his stay with Mr. Covey, Douglass has suffered excruciating pain from labour, hunger to physical and psychological disturbances that have succeeded in breaking him in body, soul and spirit. Frederick Douglass then turns to Phantom dreams in one of his apostrophe, when he sees ships, thus:

> You are loosed from your moorings, and are free. I am fast in my chains, and I am a slave! You move merrily before the gentle gale, and I sadly before the bloody whip! You are freedom's swift-winged angels, that fly around the world; I am confined in bands of iron! O that I were free! O, that I were on one of your gallant decks, and under your protecting wing! Alas! Betwixt me and you, the turbid waters roll. Go on, go on. O that I could also go. Could I but swim! If I could fly!... only think of it; one hundred miles straight north, and I am free! (Douglass, 1845:293-94).

Despite his galling reality under slavery, Douglass's apostrophe reveals the conflicts in his psyche between the pull of reality and ideal, and the wish and aspiration swing towards ideal – his freedom in the North.

When in 1834, Frederick Douglas was hired by Mr. Freeland from Mr. Covey, the echoes and reverberations of the name 'freeland' appeals to him toward a free land, that is, the North. This is Another symbol of a compulsive obsessive disorder in

Douglass, his subconscious urge towards freedom. Douglass goes on in his imaginative journey towards freedom by vividly creating a picture of himself and other slaves on their escape route he says "On the other hand, away back, in the dim distance, under the flickering light of the north star, behind some raggy hill or snow-covered mountain, stood a doubtful freedom…" (Gates, 1987:306). Douglass's oscillation from his ideal in the far North to the reality he faces in the South aptly fits Horney's description of his neurosis: "There is only one way to fulfil his wish through imagination. Gradually, and unconsciously, the imagination sets to work and creates in his mind an idealized image of himself. In this process, he endows himself with unlimited powers and with exalted faculties, he becomes a hero, a genius, a supreme love, a saint, a god" (Horney, 1950:22)

Finally, Douglass narrates how depressed and traumatized he becomes after his escape to the North. His expectation (ideal) is that the North would prove to be a haven of succour, an ideal place to flourish, but it turns out to be another lair of psychological dislocation. He is static, a sequestered being who is being pursued by slave hunters, in fact, he does not know where to go, or where to stay in the words of Douglass "perfectly helpless both as to the means of defence and means of escape – in the midst of plenty, yet suffering the terrible gnawing of hunger – in the midst of houses, yet having no home – among fellow men, yet feeling as if in the midst of wild beasts" (Douglass, 1845:320). Thus, Douglas's realization from his ideal imagination to the reality he faces even in the free North, confirms his neurosis. Horny perfectly analyzes the neurotic precarious situation when he opines that "people resort to

analysis when life becomes unbearable or there are psychological factors that serve as an impediment to their progress and damage their relationship with others in the process" (Horney, K. 1942:8). Hence, Douglass' perception of an unwanted being even in the North despite the prospect of security. Douglas becomes extremely concerned with himself. This is what is called "self-obsession" imperceptibly attached to his image of 'only me' image. The idealized image according to Horney becomes idealized self. And this idealized self becomes more real to him than his real self, not primarily because it is more appealing but rather it answers all his strict and demanding needs (of a free mind, perfect social network, home and full citizens rights). Douglass's need for perfection, explains his inability to attain the 'perfection' obtainable in the North, makes him detached and depressed. Horney opines of a neurotic in such dilemma, thus "under inner stress, however, a person may become alienated from his real self. He will then shift the major part of his energies to the task of molding himself, by a rigid system of inner dictates, into a being of absolute perfection. For nothing short of godlike perfection can fulfil his idealized image of himself and satisfy his pride in the exalted attributes which (so he feels) he has, could have or should have" (Horney, 1950:13). Thus, Douglass only indulges in thinking that links him to life in the galling south despite gaining his freedom in the North, a revelation of his neurosis and subconscious urge for perfection. Therefore, Douglass's illusion is subconscious, because he is not aware of the reality that dawns in his subconscious psyche. In other words, the more injurious work of imagination concerns

the subtle and comprehensive distortions of reality which he is not aware of fabricating (Horney, 1950:33).

Through the character of Douglass, Frederick Douglass brings out African American slave characters' trait of evincing emotional void or what Peplau and Perlman calls emotional loneliness, in their lives, as a defence mechanism. This defence m`echanism is employed through the character of Douglass himself because of the neurotic state of his mind. Horney opines of such character, that "… he may try to rebel and fight; he may try to shut others out of his inner life and withdraw emotionally from them. In principle, this means that, he can move toward, against or away from others" (Horney, 1950:19). Douglass displays this trend immediately after the death of his mother, Harriet Bailey. He is weaned at a tender age and his mother is taken to a plantation camp where traditionally the slaves toil for their master. After her death, he is not allowed to be at her funeral nor is he allowed a time to mourn her. Douglass's vulnerability to loneliness and his subsequent feeling of emotional void can be explained by Wincot's (in Spira & Richards, 2003:8) summation that feeling of loneliness is driven from the child's feeling of insecurity in his infancy due to his mother's absence.

Douglass narrates the traumatic hangover of his loneliness, that he says: "I do not know, unless it be to hinder the development of the child's affection toward his mother, and to blunt and destroy the natural affection of the mother for the child" (Douglass, 1845:256). This traumatic action to hinder any contact between the two; that he sees her not more than four times throughout his life and each time, it is at

night and very short, that she would lie down with him to get him asleep, and tiptoe back to the plantation, has blunted any affection towards her at her death, as he says, he "received the tidings of her death with much the same emotions I should have probably felt at the death of a stranger" (p.256). As a result of this, Douglass' emotional loneliness is the version of "alexithymia" a term Robson (2015) defines as a kind of emotional 'colour blind' that prevents the victim from perceiving or expressing the many shades of feeling that normally embellish our lives. In others words, alexithymia is a trait which results in the inability to appreciate the feeling of emotion.

Douglass is a victim of a feeling of "colour blindness" as a result of influence from his early childhood, to circumstances in his development from environment. This breeds neurosis in him; his inability to reconcile between his reality (his loneliness) and his ideal (what ought to be done to him through empathy and decorum). In other words, Douglas is a victim of a feeling of "colour blindness" because he no longer appreciates emotional feeling.

Douglass slavery 'wanderings' between Baltimore, to Tuckahoe, to St. Michaels, and being exchanged among slavemasters like William Gadner, Colonel Llyod, Master Hugh, Mr. Ned, and Thomas Auld and the excessive labour with both physical and psychological trauma have indeed decimated some aspects of his emotional feeling especially of a place called home, he misses the feeling of homesickness whenever he is leaving one plantation to another, one home to another. Rather he suffers from anxiety for a forth coming uncertain future and dread attached to it. When Douglass is leaving Colonel Llyod's plantation back to Baltimore, he

narrates his emotional loneliness, physical and psychological trauma, as well as physical dislocation. He opines that:

> The ties that ordinarily bind children to their homes were all suspended in my case. I found no severe trial in my departure. My home was charmless; it was not home to me; on parting from it, I could not feel that I was leaving anything which I could have enjoyed by staying. My mother was dead, my grandmother lived far off, so that I seldom saw her. I had two sisters and one brother that lived in the same house with me; but the early separation of us from our mother had well-nigh blotted the fact of our relationship from our memories. I looked for home elsewhere, and was confident of finding none which I should relish less than the one which I was leaving. If however, I found in my new home hardship, hunger, whipping and nakedness, I had the consolation that I should not have escaped any of them by staying. Having already had more than a taste of them in the house of my old master, and having endured them there, I very naturally inferred my ability to endure them elsewhere, and especially at Baltimore; for I had something of the feeling about Baltimore that is expressed in the proverb, that 'being hanged in England is preferable to dying a natural death in Ireland (p.271-2).

Douglass's employment of the proverb above (last sentence) can be traced to Horney's (1950:60) assertion that a neurotic suffers from a feeling of resignation in form of "paralysis of psychic energy". Therefore, Douglass's preference of hardship and ultimately, death at Mr. Hugh Auld in Baltimore rather than at Colonel Llyod's plantation amounts to his resignation to a lesser evil in his painful and lonely journey. Perlman and Peplau (1981:33) echo Horney's assertion when they opine that "emotionally lonely people are passively resigned to their fate. Although they may lack an intimate partner and friendship and they may see no end to their condition,

they accept their social deprivation as unavoidable and are apathetic in their response". Douglass is therefore, a neurotic whose psychotherapy is social network and affection. Anna Simha-Alpern (in Goldin, 2013:234) has summed up Douglass's predicament and emotional loneliness altogether when she says that emotional loneliness can be conceptualized as a gap in emotional knowledge, an aching sense of incompleteness one brings into all one's relational transactions.

3.3 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the issues of solitude and loneliness in Douglass' narrative. Concerning solitude, the characters in the narrative evinced movements against and away from others. Consequently, they evade social network and sometimes employ aggression. On loneliness, the characters exhibit neurotic coping strategies such as oedipal complex, emotional void, depression, anxiety, aggression and ambivalence. Other loneliness-related themes exhibited by the characters include: social fragmentation, psychological dislocation, hopelessness, social network, crisis of identity etc.

CHAPTER FOUR

SOLITUDE AND LONELINESS IN HARRIET JACOBS' *INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF A SLAVE GIRL*

4.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the issues of solitude and loneliness as portrayed in the narrative. The succeeding paragraphs underline Jacobs' portrayal of the motif of solitude and loneliness and the trauma that ensues, complicated by the formation of neurosis in the slaves' psychology and the resultant neurotic pulls.

Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl is Harriet Jacobs' autobiography, published in 1861 under the pseudonym Linda. The story is her first and only representation of what African American encountered, especially women during slavery. The settings of the autobiography are the United States', slave-trading towns of Edenton, North Carolina in the South and New York, Philadelphia, Boston in the North, and Liverpool in the United Kingdom.

The narrative is replete with issues of loneliness, solitude, women's plight, sexual abuse, motherhood, physical as well as psychological harassment etc. According to Troy (2016:20) the word 'incidents' in the title indicates a "disrupted, fragmented experience, one that cannot be represented as a steady progression through linear calendar time. the temporal fragmentation reflects the fashion in which slave families are repeatedly broken up". For Troy, the narrative therefore, presents a picture of the disruption of African American family structure which ultimately led to breakup and fragmentation, hence the perception of loneliness.

Jacobs' narrative is considered to be the springboard of feminist discourse in African American literature. This is because, her story is stuffed not only with the plight of African American women under slavery but the social barrier erected by the cruelty of patriarchal institution under slavery. Thallam (2013:24-6) highlights the significance of Harriet's story in contrast to male-centered autobiography of Frederick Douglass when she avers that;

> Douglass' narrative is the most important book the American Press had ever issued. But Douglass' narrative presents only a limited picture of slavery. It does not deal with how the other half of his people suffered under the cruel system. The gynocritical subtext of slavery was not represented until the female narratives emerged… Jacobs' tale for the first time chartered a specialized voice to highlight the gender-specific complexities deeply embedded within the cruel system of slavery. In a way it is both a compliment and counter discourse to patriarchy.

This chapter discusses the concepts of solitude and loneliness as portrayed in the autobiography by Harriet Jacobs. The succeeding paragraphs underline Harriet's portrayal of the themes of solitude and loneliness in relation to trauma and formation of neurosis, the reaction of the characters in form of neurotic trends and defence mechanisms.

4.1 Solitude in Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

Like other psychologists, Schultz and Schultz (2013:164) and Hannah Arent and Hans-George Gadama (in Costache, 2013:133) conceded that although solitude is a 'buffer', it however devolves into pervading feeling of hopelessness and loneliness.

Linda's solitude stems from social anxiety. A term Schultz and Schultz

(2013:164) as an "insidiously, all-pervading feeling of being lonely and helpless in a hostile world". Linda's concealment in an attic for seven years is linked to social anxiety which stems from a plethora of things, from her feeling of insecurity, the filial bond with her children, her grandmother etc. Burnham (1977:154) opines that Linda's solitude stems from the "absence of freedom, the physical hardship, the separation from children and family and the secrecy that mark the slave's conditions are repeated and exacerbated by Jacob's confinement in her dungeon".

Linda's solitude then is traced to Karen Horney's neurotic needs and trends. Linda needs affection and approval which is characterized by movement toward other people (called compliant personality) and self-sufficiency-characterized by movement away from other people (the detached personality). Linda is craving in solitude, away from the daily harassment of her master in the attic and enjoys the company of her grandmother, Aunt Martha, her two children Uncle Philliph, and her brother, William. During her early confinement she reveals this fact when she says that:

> The air was stifling, the darkness total. A bed had been spread on flow. I could sleep quite comfortably on one side; but the slope was so sudden that I could not turn on the other without hitting the room. The rats and mice ran over my bed; but I was weary, and I slept such a sleep as the wretched may, when a tempest has passed over. Morning came. I knew it only by the noises I heard; for in my small den day and night were all the same. I suffered for air even more than for light. But I was not comfortless. I heard the voices of my children. there was joy and there was sadness in the sound (Jacobs 1861:438).

Linda is being pulled by two neurotic trends; movement toward people and movement away from people as typified by her contrasting attitudes of seclusion in the attic and enjoying the company of her family. Schutlz and Schultz (2013:168) opine that a neurotic suffers from incompatibility of three neurotic trends and this conflict is the core of neurosis. The difference between a normal person and a neurotic lies in the intensity of the conflict; it is much more intense in the neurotic. This neurotic conflict explains Linda's paradox, thus "there was joy and there was sadness in the sound" (p.438) to explain her ambivalent attitude (movement to and away from people). Linda is eagerly in need of conferring with her children and at the same time, she has created a barrier by choosing to conceal in the garret than risk her life.

Linda's withdrawal from participation in interpersonal socialization can be explained by Karen Horney (1950:276-6) in reference to a neurotic in solitude, he avers: "moreover, by withdrawing into a world of his own, he saves his individuality from being all together camped and engulfed. His early detachment thus not only serves his integration, but has a most significant meaning: the keeping intact of his inner life. The freedom from bondage gives him the possibility of inner independence." While Linda Shuttles between moving-toward and away from people, the movement-towards is more dominant as she consistently becomes closer to people than away from them. This can explain why she uses the 'gimlet' left by Uncle Philliph and makes three holes so that she can peep through to see her children. the gimlet is both a symbolism and an imagery of a movement towards people. Therefore,

this symbolism ‘` gimlet’ reveals Linda’s obsession with family support network. The gimlet serves as an avenue to link with a hostile world.

The narrator’s language or rather dialect reveals her subconscious self. While Linda is in her cramped attic, poor Aggie, an old slave comes to Aunt Martha. Their discussion borders on the break-up of black family due to slave – trading. Aunt Martha laments the absence of William, Linda and her other children, that in her dying hours, she has no kin to lay her body in the ground. Aggie, employing African American dialect remarks, thus:

> Get down on your knees and bress de Lord! I don’t know whar my poor chillern is, and I nebber ‘spect to know’. You don’t know what poor Linda’s gone to; but you do know what her brudder is. He’s in free parts; and dat’s de right place. Don’t murmur at de Lord’s doings, but git down on your knees and tank him for his goodness (p.455).

Aggie’s dialect reveals both disruption of African American family as well as utter loneliness.

The use of this African American Dialect (AAD) according to Reynolds (2010:32) can be traced to African American portrayal of the inferior status of African Americans as a type of humans. This assertion correlates with Horney’s stance that neurotics suffer from a feeling of inferiority complex, hence, African Americans exhibition of inferiority complex as exemplified by Linda, her timidity, shyness before her white counterparts.

Linda's attic where she seeks sanctuary symbolizes the incapacity of solitary African Americans slave characters. Linda has put her own fate on her family, Mr. Sands to save her and her two children from the cankerous grip of slavery. Linda's feeling of inertia is apparent when she says that "my relatives were constantly on the lookout for a chance of escape" (p.443). Horney (1950:60) echoes the incapacity of a solitary neurotic when he says that, "to get a job, to be happy, to overcome difficulty. He is entitled to achieve all this without any output of energy". This explains Linda's dependence on Uncle Philliph, Aunt Martha and poor Benny serving as spies, helpers and protectors. Reviewing the narrative, Schovanec (2009:3) says of Linda's dependency, expectation and optimism: "to procure freedom for herself and her children, Linda rebelliously plans to hide until Dr. Flint becomes discouraged and then sells the three of them. Should a Whiteman like Mr. Sands purchase Linda and her own children, he would have the power to set them free." This explains Linda's peeping through the hole to spy on Dr. Flint's, and later writing misleading letters purported to be from her in the North in order to hoodwink him into giving up. Horney (1950:60) explains the limbo of a neurotic in such state, thus, "the unconscious argument, then, runs, as follows; others are responsible for the trouble I am in … it is no longer up to him to do something about his life; it is up to them – or to fate."

Throughout her solitude in particular, Linda employs the use of 'silence and concealment' technique to highlight her obsession with solitude, hiding, concealment etc. This obsessive behaviour explicates and suits Horney's tag- obsessive compulsive disorder. The narrative is replete with different versions of the word 'conceal', 'shut',

'hide' etc. for example "I told her I had a hiding place" (p.422), "I flew out of the house and concealed myself in a thicket of bushes" (p.423), "they told me a place of concealment" (p.437). According to Stover (2003:144) Jacob's demonstrates the "importance of these techniques by using variations of the terms of concealment, hiding, secrecy, shield, veil and screen ninety – six times in the body of her text.".

Linda's life has been characterized by taking refuge, always on the run. She is therefore, subconsciously attached to solitary confinement from Aunt Martha's attic to the thicket of bush, to the wharf. Linda's obsession and frustration, and neurosis are obviously spelt out in her oxymoron, thus: "we could also have told them of a poor, blighted young creature, shut up in a living grave for years, to avoid the tortures that would be inflicted on her, if she ventured to come out and look on the face of her departed friend". (p.466). The contradictory phrase (oxymoron) 'living grave' confirms her neurotic self as well as an ambivalence which reveal fear and insecurity and hope of living. Such contradictory pulls are explained by Karen Horney (1950:167) that, "the anxiety which will arise in such situation is great because he has no other directives to follow. His real self is, as it were confined in an oubliette; he cannot consult with it, and for this very reason he is a helpless prey to contradictory pulls".

Linda's contradictory pulls are extended up to the end of her confinement. The reality of leaving a home that gives her both a feeling of dread and emotional bond is dawning on her. Thus she ambivalently remarks that:

> For the last time I went to up to my nook. Its desolate appearance no longer chilled me, for the light of hope had risen in my soul. Yet, even with the blessed prospect of freedom before me, I felt very sad at leaving that old homestead where I had been sheltered so long by the dear old grandmother; where I had dreamed my first young dream of love; and where after that had faded away, my children came to twine themselves so closely round my desolate heart.. We knelt down together, with my child pressed to my heart, and my other arm round the faithful, loving old friend. I was about to leave forever… (p.474)

Linda's ambivalent feeling reveals two conflicting pulls, of a dear home that nurtures her after the death of her father and mother. And of a dreary home that reminds her of the fetters of slavery through the experience in her dungeon. According to Troy (2016:30-31), it should be noted here that "her emotional ambivalence in this instance, arises from the tension between the two chronotopes; the garret and the grandmother's house, the desolate nook and the old homestead". Thus, she is both please and sad in her feeling; she is feeling homesick and repuls on of the thought of a prison. Linda's anxiety, emotional overflow, and nervousness force her psychological abnormality when she is taken to the wharf enroute to freedom. She reveals that "I never could tell how we reached the wharf. My brain was all of a whirl, and my limbs tottered under me." (p.474). This sudden attack of psychological disturbance exacerbated by fear, nervousness and anxiety explains and reveals her neurosis as well as her internal crisis.

Finally, Linda's solitude is reinforced by manifold social and pathological issues: motherhood, family, fear, freedom, independence, anxiety etc. Her concealment however reveals that state and perception of inertia, indolence and

inferiority complex; because she can no longer act on her own, a revelation of neurotic tendencies. She is finally shipped out to the North under the tutelage of Uncle Philliphs and Aunt Martha.

4.2 Loneliness in Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

Bogaerts (2006:796) succinctly links loneliness to "negative psychological experience that conceptually has always been related to interpersonal experiences and interpersonal trust." Bogaert's correlation of loneliness to psychological rather than sociological aspect fits our subject matter. The following succeeding paragraphs therefore underline Harriet Jacob's depiction of the motif of loneliness in her autobiography. The simple explanation is, the victims develop a perception of loneliness in relation to traumatic experiences, then a neurosis develops – the reaction of the lonely characters is transmitted through some neurotic trends and defence mechanisms.

African American slave characters exhibit libidinal impulse, frustration due to sexual deprivation. From her puberty, Linda Brent is deprived to choose her preferred partner by her master, Dr. Flint. From her free black Negro to the white Mr. Sands she has been bared to socialize with a man of her choice. Earlier, she manifests sexual repression as a result of her psychosexual loneliness and formation of psychosexual neurosis. At such stage according to Reich (1972:15), a victim of sexual repression begins to "develop an external inhibition, which then becomes internalized, produces libido stasis, which in turn impacts its pathological energy to the experiences of

oedipal stage and perpetuated as a consequence of sexual repression, keeps the psychoneurosis constantly supplied with energy in a kind of cyclic motion". This explains Linda's neurosis and she subconsciously represses her sexual libido. This libidinal impulses appear dimly through 'sublimation' via certain images.

In the early part of the narration, Linda expresses what Habib (2005:575) calls 'emotion of affection' in form of expression of affection to Benjamin, William, her two brothers, her father, mother and mistress. For example she says: 'my mistress was so kind to me' (p.343), 'he was a bright handsome lad" (p.342), (in reference to William). "My father was a carpenter and considered so intelligent and skillful" (p.341). Linda's expressions of affection amount to Habib's (2005:575) 'emotion of affection, which emanates from Libido, hence Linda suffers from electra complex as she shuttles in her 'emotion of affection' within an axis that contains her two brothers, William and Benjamin, her dead father, on one side her dead mother and her dead mistress on the other side. Thus, Linda is caught in an intricate web for father's and mother's affection, of Penis envy, and then realizing the lack of penis. Thus, according to Freud, (1997:2), "the father is often idealized just as Electra's father, he is missed and lamented in his absence". This is why Linda later leans to the praise and affection of her Mistress in favour of her mother and subsequently turns to her two brothers, William and Benjamin and leaves out the two female figures. Thus, Linda shuttles between what Freud calls father-fixated to mother fixated attractions, to confirm her libidinal excitations, and ultimately loneliness.

Linda's libidinal impulses are extended to certain images and symbols. While voicing out her anger and frustration towards Dr. Flint for her maltreatment she says that the Doctor had "blighted the prospect of my youth, and made my life a desert" (p.384). 'Desert' is both an image and symbol of infertility. Here, she equates her self with a desert; which is waterless, empty, area of land with little or no vegetation. Like a desert, Linda refers herself, she is infertile therefore, useless. She therefore, subconsciously reveals her repressed sexual libido. The word 'stool' on page 366, on which Mrs. Flint calls her to sit is a phallic symbol, a convex in shape, therefore, reveals Linda's sexual impulse. Mrs. Flint has told Linda, during her temporary sanctuary in her room to evade Dr. Flint's nocturnal sexual perversion, that she talks in her dreams. Although Mrs. Flint cannot decipher the gibberish, it becomes a source of concern that the jealous mistress pesters her to reveal the content of her dream. Mrs. Flints revelation of Lindas incessant dream correlates with Dobie (2009:55) affirmation that the "vast unconsciouss that exists beneath the surface of our awareness seems closest to revelation when we sleep". Therefore, Linda's dreams reveal a repressed sexual desire.

Dr. Flint has just abused Linda over her black friend who proposes to take her hand in marriage. The blow is so psychological striking that she won't even know of her brother's appearance. Having understood that there is something that makes her dejected, William asks her: "*what makes you look so sad? Everybody seems so cross and unhappy*". (emphasis mine). Linda replies: "every body was not cross or unhappy. That those who had pleasant homes, and kind friends, and who were not afraid to love

them, were happy". (p.352). Linda lists some ingredients that make a good living but stops short of mentioning a 'lover' whom Dr. Flint has just disapproved. Linda is therefore '*cross*' and unhappy as William says, because she has neither a lover nor home. "*Cross*" here is a metaphor and symbol of sexual posture – a picture of a lady's groin with the legs pull apart. Linda is therefore being pulled by the destructive forces of her Id. Freud (1965:105-6) calls it a "chaos, a cauldron full of seething excitations… it is filled with energy reaching it from the instinct, but it has no organization, produces no collective will, but only striving to bring about the satisfaction of the instinctual needs subject to the observance of the pleasure principle." Linda is "*crossed"* that is matured for sex but unhappy because there is no preferred sexual partner.

Despite Dr. Flint's persistent surveillance on Linda, her Id leads to a passionate and destructive level, guilt-ridden, she visits her grandmother to confess her aberration. Aunt Martha refuses to entertain her, instead, her repulsion is beyond measure: "Go away", she explained, "and never come to my house…You are a disgrace to your late mother" (p.387). Linda's active superego starts to react. She becomes uncomfortable and conscious. In other words, superego makes it impossible for a mind to feel good about oneself. It forces her victim to feel uncomfortable and adopts a contemplative stance (Storey, 2014:19). Images of 'purity', 'sheltered', and 'protected' (p.384), with which Linda describes the lives of American white women in contrast to the black African American women are those of purity, security and morality. Reinforcing the notion of her ideal ego or super ego at work.

While reflecting on Dr. Flint's sexual abuse, Mr. Sand's aberration, her grandmother's moral consciousness, Linda's ego also surfaces to make her realise herself through external forces. According to Freud (in Storey, 2014: 28) the *ego* is that "part of the *id* which has been modified by the direct influence of the external world… moreover, the ego seeks to bring the influence of the external world to bear upon the id and its tendencies… The ego represents what may be called reason and common sense in contrast to id which contains the passion."

Immediately after Aunt Martha's vituperation to Linda, she sits down on the stump of a tree – an action that reveals the tempo of her id – the stump is convex in form, therefore, reveals a passionate, repressed sexual Libido. Linda then 'sank down on the ground, her mind full of horrid thoughts" (p.387). These horrid thoughts portray the pulls and conflicts in her mind. At last, she narrates with great effort she raises herself and walks to "some distance further to the house of a woman who had been a friend to my mother" (p.387). This action confirms Linda's drift towards the pulls of her ego (her identity, background – her mother's friend, then her own self, reconciliation with Aunt Martha etc). This is why she says that her mother's friend soothes her, and then she walks to her grand mother. Linda goes on and narrates that, "I thought I could bear my shame" (p.388).

Consequently, this declaration (bear my shame) confirms her drifts towards her super ego (realization of her sexual misconduct, as well as the issue of her two children with Mr. Sands who are born on the wrong side of the blanket). After Linda meets her grand mother, she narrates finally how she out of empathy understands her

precarious situation, thus, she says, "… I thought if she could know the real state of the case, and all I had been bearing for years, she would perhaps judge me less harshly… I begged of her to pity me for my dead mother's sake. And she did pity me for my dead mother's sake… she laid her hand gently on my head, and murmured 'poor child! Poor child" (p.388). This statement reveals her final drift to the pulls of ego (her identity, background of her mother, grandmother, the sense of who she is etc.) Therefore, Linda's ego (realization of her identity) blocks the impulses of id (passionate urge for sexual perversion) and super ego (her feeling of guilt, realization, her moral quagmire). p.89. Freud calls this defence mechanism and they are of three types: moral conflict, neurotic conflict, and the realistic conflict (Gilbert & Schcter, 2011:24). Linda represents all the three conflicts of the defence mechanism. Linda's moral conflict arises because there is a strong impulse to pervert yet the superego resists. She also suffers from neurotic conflict because her ego is afraid of being overwhelmed by the id. She also suffers from realistic conflict because the ego and reality provoke emotions of fear and anxiety especially in relation to the prudish nature of her grandmother as well as her moral upbringing.

Linda does not display the sense of self-preservation in earlier situations and is happy to venture into uncanny grounds with recklessness but she later realizes her mistake – this confirms the pulls of id, ego and superego. Linda's sexual adventure emanates from her loneliness, the feeling of insecurity. Laaser (2004:120) corroborates the vulnerability of a lonely person who seeks for sexual gratification when he avers that we feel "empty and incomplete when we are alone. Even though we fear intimacy,

and commitment, we continually search for relationship and sexual contact". Therefore sexual adventure is another route for seeking integration to people who suffer from feeling of loneliness.

Lonely African American slave characters acknowledge disruption of family structure and subsequently the need for social network. In the narrative, Harriet Jacobs brings to the fore the motif of constant familial breakup within the slaves. In chapter one, we are acquainted with Aunt Martha's decimated family members. She has five children who are shared to heirs at the death of her master. The youngest, Benjamin is sold. The narrator reveals the traumatic picture, thus: "farewell were exchanged and the bright, kind boy endeared to us by so many acts of love, vanished from our sight". (p.355).

Therefore, fragmentation within slave families has become the order of the day. Troy (2006:20) opines that the fragmentation reflects the fashion in which slave families are repeatedly broken up, while the plantation slave's year follows a clearly cyclical pattern, leading to annual disruption of an already precarious existence". Linda has described Dr. Flint's house as a 'roof' (p.361), a synecdoche for house to reveal that the so-called house is not appealing for it sequestered her from her family. According to Troy, (2016:21) the 'roof' is a synecdoche, roof, usually indicates 'shelter'. Linda uses it ironically to underline her unsheltered position. Later, Linda laments the spatial gap between her and her little son whom she describes as "the little vine was taking deep root in my existence, though its clinging fondness excited a mixture of love and pain". (p.392). Linda's metaphor and symbolism in "vine"

emanate from the fact that her son like a vine, a plant that produces grapes, is not meant for her but for slaveholders who nurture him for profit, hence her employment of oxymoron “a mixture of love and pain”, as he evokes ambivalent feeling of happiness and sadness. Happy because as a lonely woman she needs him, and sad for thinking of the prospect of separation.

Linda’s children are put behind bars as a punishment for her running away. When she is told, her first reaction and impulse as she says “was to go to them”. (p.426). This confirms Linda’s psychological abnormality, and neurosis, as she shuttles between the reality (her confinement, insecurity), and the ideal (her perception to be with her children at the prison despite the dangers.). Linda knows that it is impossible for her to come out for her children but she suffers from subconscious appeal for instant solution, therefore, as Horney opines the “unconscious claim, then, is that the mere intention should be enough to bring about achievement, to get a job, to be happy, to overcome difficulty” (Horney, 1950:60). This is why she instantly forgets her insecurity and demands an instant re-unification with her children. Linda reveals the despair of black families in one of her solitary moments when she says: “ And now came the trying hour for that drove of human beings, driven away like cattle, to be sold they knew not where husbands were torn from wives, parents from children, never to look upon each other again this side of the grave” (p.431). Linda employs simile “driven away like cattles” to compare the situation of the black akin to animals, therefore, there is no value attached to the slaves.

While Linda is in her solitary confinement, her grandmother, Aunt Martha confers with her in a room, she just laments the absence of her cream of the crop, William and laments that at her death, she has no one to mourn her. Suddenly while in their conversation, the mischievous Jenny comes. Aunt Martha opens the door forgetting that the 'coveted' Linda is in the room. This single action which Bressler (2003:122) classified under slips of the tongue, failures of memory, misplacing of objects, bring out the unconscious to the conscious. That Aunt Martha's failure to notice Jenny's presence as a danger to Linda reveals the correlation between loneliness and psychological instability. Hence, Aunt Martha's action reveals the picture of traumatic sense of loneliness and bereavement of the loss of her children.

The persistent picture of snakes Linda reveals from her days in the South – during her escape ordeal in the thicket of bush to the wharf and up to the North, in Mrs. Bruce house in New York says a lot. It is both the symbol and imagery of insecurity – the fear that predators in form of slave-hunters and holders may impound her and return her to the demon, slavery. Reich (1972:292-3) identifies the neurotic's hallucination, that he "sees other, finally in the light of his externalization. He does not experience his own tyranny, but others become tyrants. If anything goes wrong it is their fault. They should be perfect. They are not to be trusted." Later, Linda's statement corroborates Reich's assertion:

> I spoke of being separated from my children, and from relatives who were dear to me; but I did not mention the constant feeling of insecurity which oppressed my spirits. I longed for someone to confide in but I had been so deceived by white people, that I had lost all confidence in

> them. if they spoke kinds words to me, I thought it was for some selfish purpose. I had entered his family with the distrustful feelings I had brought out with me out of slavery. (p.485).

Linda's statement is replete with signs of neurosis alluded by Reich: feeling of insecurity, stereotype, blamegame and nervousness. These experiences of separation, bereavement and the ultimate perception of loneliness have forced the slave characters to seek for social network. They therefore, develop what Horney called compliance, and moving – toward people strategy. According to Albrigde, Kilgon and Jepkemboi (2014:34) compliance is a "strategy in which an individual tries to please others. Horney called this moving – toward strategy. A person who uses this strategy has a strong desire to be liked and tried to accomplish this through people pleasing behaviour." Linda exhibits this trait of moving toward strategy especially to unburden her pent-up emotions. Horney explained that there are two derives that are the most important in the development of neuroses: they are the need for affection and the desire for control or power. Linda represents the two traits, first she earnestly craves for affection especially concerning her ordeal. She laments that she "longed for someone to confide". (p.485) her troubles and then requires their affection. Secondly, she craves for power to control her own children and be independent of the unfettered access with which Dr. Flints, and his wife trample on her right.

Linda's confinement proves to be the most desperate and nervous situation, therefore, she needs the company of others. Here, Linda is closer to her ideal, then the reality she faces in her cell. The thoughts of William who is in the North have

overtaken her. As she dwells on her ideal than her reality dawns on her, the trauma of a sequestered life has persisted. She says :"Alone in my cell, where no eye but God's could see me. I wept bitter tears. How earnestly I prayed to him to restore me to my children, and enable me to be a useful woman and a good mother". (453). Linda suffers from longing for companionship, and anxiously needs a partner to relieve her social anxiety. This explains her anxious attempt to make holes on the wall with Uncle Phillip's gimlet, so that she can peep through to reconnect with the outer, enchanted world. Bogaerts (2006:798) opines that the absence of an "attachment figure creates separation distress and feelings of pain and on the other hand separation distress entails the development of a motivation to return to the optimal level".

Although she employs moving –away defence mechanism by preferring to stay in her garret, Linda concurrently appreciates moving – toward defence mechanism. This is what makes her to shuttle between two conflicting impulses and pulls; of linking and disliking social connection, thereby making her more nervous, anxious and insecure.

Harriet Jacobs brings to the fore the lemotif of despair in her narratives. Despair, confusion, hopelessness are among the salient features of neurosis and ultimately loneliness. Karen Horney refers to neurotic as hopeless, confused and rather than drive, he is being driven. African American slave characters have displayed this trait in their daily life in the narrative. Linda narrates a story of a slave girl who is dying immediately after giving birth, her mistress abusing her in the pain of labour. in her physical and psychological agonies, she prays: "O Lord, come and take me"

(p.349). Her mother (the mother of the dying girl) echoes her prayer, thus: “The baby is dead, thank God; and I hope my poor child will soon be in heaven too” (p.349). Both the mother and her daughter employ what Horney calls ‘detached’ and ‘moving-away strategy’. They are both depressed and laden in destructive impulse and self-alienation. The two characters are a good paragon of despair, and reach a point of no return. Their lives are already a failure and the world is an absurdity. Horney (1950:215) avers that such neurotic ‘lives with a diffuse sense of failure (to measure up to his should) and hence tends to feel guilty, inferior or contemptible”.

Benjamin, the youngest child of Aunt Martha tries to escape to the North but is captured. When he attempts to run again, while being pursued, he narrowly avoids casting himself into a river when he is recaptured he vents his anger through comparison (simile): “when a man is hunted like a wild beast he forgets there is a God, a heaven. He forgets everything in his struggle to get beyond the reach of the bloodhounds”. (p.356). Benjamin comparison ‘like a beast’ which is in contrast to a human being, confirms his state of the mind. Horney (1950:167) avers of such neurotic as a ‘helpless prey to contradictory pulls’. Hence his equation of a man to beast. His hope on life is in its lowest ebb, this is why he cannot answer Linda and Aunta Martha when they visit him in the prison.

Linda herself has in one time or the other become both hopeless and helpless. At the height of her sexual perversion with Mr. Sandas, Linda goes to her grandmother to confess and ask her forgiveness. Aunt Martha cannot tolerate her, she therefore sends her away. Linda sits down on a stump of a tree, overpowered by guilt and

despair. She figuratively (personification) and meditatively pour out her mind: “The stars were shining through the boughs above me. How they mocked me, with their bright, calm light! The hours passed by, and as I saw there alone a chillness, and deadly sickness come over me. I sank on the ground my mind was full of horrid thoughts. I prayed to die, but the prayer was not answered”. (p.387). Linda’s figurative expression stems from her admiration of the stars in their tranquility in contrast to a slave who is under the yoke. Hence, Linda’s admiration is connected to Horney’s assertion that neurotics turn to imagination in their daily life.

While Linda is confined in her cramped attic, her little son, Benny has been taken ill, his body is pale and disfigured, Linda in her usual neurotic, ambivalent behaviour reveals her thoughts as she says: “Sometimes I wished that he might die in infancy… I had prayed for this but never so earnestly as I now prayed for his life; and my prayer was heard. Alas what mockery is it for a slave mother to try to pray back her dying child to life! Death is better than slavery”. (p392). Thus, although Linda is actually hopeless of the fruit of life, her ambivalence reinforces her neurotic mindset. According to Sharman, (1990:101), Linda’ wish for destructive impulse of death is the “final assertion of authority: in death, her children would be hers to keep”. Therefore all the characters that manifested this neurotic trait of despair, have also imbibed other neurotic attributes such as depression, self-harm, detachment and self-alienation.

African American Slave characters imbibe the theme of emotional attachment in their daily experiences. According to Bogaerts (2006:808) lonely people have a tendency to establish “close, enduring emotional bonds with others to feel secure and

explore the world with confidence". Edwards and Dabydeen (eds), (1991:xiii) aver that African American slaves are "preoccupied with the memory of loss of family which no amount of individual freedom or material acquisition could eradicate.. Already isolated by colour, the sense of the absence of family would have deepened the loneliness of black"… Thus, lonely African American slave are made to aspire for attachment in an attempt to seek for relationship. These characters therefore demonstrate the version of Horney's compliance and moving toward strategy. Albridge, Kilgon and Jepkemboi (2004:34) say that compliance is a strategy in which an individual tries to please others. Horney called this moving- toward strategy. A person who uses this strategy has a strong desire to be liked and tried to accomplish this through people pleasing behavior.

After the death of Linda's parents and her mistress, things have become complicated, as for the first time she realizes her vulnerability to loneliness as she comes to terms with the pain of bereavement. The diction of her statement is repulsive: 'my heart rebelled against God, who had taken from me mother, father, mistress and friend." (p.345). Her grandmother's soothing words (euphemism) are meant to give her succor, thus: "perhaps, they have been kindly taken from the evil days to come". (p.345). Both Linda and Aunt Martha are overtaken by attachment distress as they travel through a labyrinth of emotional attachment from bereavement of the dead, to self-pity. Bogaerts (2006:799) asserts that the absence of attachment figure creates separation distress and feeling of pain and on the other hand, separation distress entails the development of a motivation to return to the optimal level". Thus, a feeling of

social anxiety and attachment distress produce a feeling of loneliness. Therefore a neurotic with compliant drive and moving toward instinct, says Horney (1950:19), tends not only to subordinate himself to others and to lean on them, but also tries to be unselfish and good.

Linda's departure from her grandmother's home also evinces poignant emotional response from her. Now, the home symbolizes both a playground where she is nurtured by her kind grandmother when the world appears hostile and it gives her a feeling of sadness as a symbol of servitude. Hence, her employment of ambivalent feeling through a paradox: "for the last time, I went up to my nook. Its desolate appearance no longer chilled me. I felt very sad at leaving forever that old homestead where I have been sheltered…" Cooper (1998:60) asserts the synthesis between emotional attachment and feminity when she says "the man is more noble in reason, so the woman is more quick in sympathy. That as he is indefatigable in pursuit of abstract truth, so is she in caring for the interests by the way – striving tenderly and lovingly that no one of the least of these little ones should perish". Tanritanir and Yildiz (2011:161) capp it all when they opine that the main themes of Harriet's narrative are the "bond of motherhood and abandonment, the quest for freedom, pain, physical and emotional suffering, community support and family loyalty".

African American slave characters evince psychological frustration, despondency and inertia. Slavery is attached to physical and psychological pain due to daily traumatic experiences. Characters exhibit their frustration due to these traumatic experiences. Eyerman (2004:2) opines that another feature of slave childhood is the

"added psychological trauma of witnessing the daily degradation of their parents at the hand of the slave-holders… to the trauma of observing their parent's humiliation was later added that of being sexually exploited by Euro-Americans on and off the estate…" Linda is a cunning character, she foresees the prospect of her master's frustration and subsequent selling of her and her two children by refusing to entertain his demands. Unfortunately, Dr. Flints cannot capitulate to her thinking. One day, he calls her and bluntly tells her that she is his slave and will never sell her or her children. Linda's reaction is imminent and immediate as she says: "Hope died away in my heart.. I was too ill in mind and body to enjoy my friends as I had done. For some weeks I was unable to leave my bed… and he did not fail to remind me that my child was an addition to his stock of slaves". (p.390-391). Horney (1950:57) averts that a psychologically frustrated neurotic's reaction is to plunge into misery and self-pity. The individual then feels extremely hurt or abused, and may become despondent. This explains Linda's loath of life and subsequently her illness when she is bedridden for weeks, lamenting her plight as well as that of her child. Linda's illness can be explained by Horney's (1950:60) assertion of a neurotic physiological infliction due to psychological frustration, thus: "All claims, by definition, substitute for the neurotic's active work at his problems, and hence, paralyze him with regard to his growth".

The birth of Linda's second child Ellen, has been a time she suffers from constant verbal abuse by Dr. Flint and his wife. After he discovers that she gives birth to a female child, he becomes restless and she says that he "heaped upon me and my little one every vile epithet he could think of. Even the grandmother in her grave did

not escape his curses. In the midst of his vituperations, I fainted at his feet " (p.405). Linda's fainting, a result of psychological maltreatment, corroborates Horney's claim of physical abnormality as a sign of neurosis. Sharman (1990:96) confirms Linda's psychological maltreatment at the hand of her master, when he says that Linda is not physical coerced but she "is from puberty on ward, relentlessly harassed by flint, her master." This psychological maltreatment inflicted on Linda results into her inertia by confining herself in the attic waiting for either fate or her family to save her from the grips of slavery.

4.3 Conclusion

Overall, incidents in the life of a slave girl presents individuals who have suffered from one or more traumatic events and are ridden with loneliness, and some with a resultant solitude. The failure to counter the hazardous traumatic events with a conducive atmosphere of affection and integration have a long-term impacts on the characters. Atleast these characters needed a shoulder to lean on. In other words, the lack of social network in family cohesion and social stability and other needs create a tense atmosphere of depression. The characters subsequently manifest neurotic trends like emotional attachment, despair, sexual depression, psychological frustration, etc. Other characters evince defence mechanisms such as solitude, detachment, and self-destructive impulses etc.

CHAPTER FIVE

Comparative Study of Solitude and Loneliness in Douglass' *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

5.1 Introduction

This chapter illustrates the existence of thematic and stylistic linkages as well as polarities explored in relation to solitude and loneliness in African American slave characters as of demonstrated in Douglass' *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and Jacobs *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. This chapter therefore, focuses on the comparative study of the two texts, with a view to, despite similarities in socio-political contexts, and gender differences, show their evidence of the commonality of human experiences in the two narratives.

5.2 Comparative Study

Beginning with solitude which entails the process of moving to a secluded area, away from social commitments due to certain factors especially social anxiety, the studied writers, both Jacobs and Douglass, feature events, social and pathological that necessitate the slave characters' relocation to alternative areas in order to reflect. At various points, Frederick Douglass' narrative features circumstances which necessitate the need for slave characters to go underground. For instance; when Douglass becomes depressed, unsafe as a result of Mr. Covey's raucous treatment, Master Thomas cannot intercede to save him. He is thus, being pulled by social forces; anxieties, an idealized image of freedom, independence and triumph –against his real condition of a refuge:

according to him: "I spent that day in the woods, having the alternative before me to go home and be starved to death" (Douglass, 1845:297). Douglass' solitude echoes Ralph Waldo Emerson's (in Eyerman, 2004:28) summation that only in "quite solitude do we hear the call of intuition, freedom and independence". This confirms Douglass' determination to be free and independent.

Frederick Douglas uses a narrative technique through the character of Douglass, who in this case is the first person narrator, that reveals his neurotic mindset. For instance, he says "let but the first opportunity offer, and come what will, I am off. Meanwhile, I will try to bear up under the yoke" (Douglass, 1845:294) Here, Douglass employs the use of paradox to reveal the conflict in his mind; that he is both ready to run away and at the same time, determines to stay and suffer. According to Grossman (1980:1) contradictions are indicators of unconscious conflict in individuals. Douglas here reveals his neurosis; his oscillation between ideal (a freeman in the North) and reality (a slave in the south).

Following a similar pattern, in her narrative, Jacobs portrays this same theme of solitude through the character of Linda. Linda is under the same social anxieties especially in relation to her feeling of insecurity, the plight of her children, and her ties to her grand mother, Aunt Martha and the cruelty of the Flint's family. These forces pile up to make her perceive her world differently. She thus seeks for solitude, to borrow from Emerson, to hear "the call of intuition, freedom and independence".

Like Douglas, Linda also uses the contradictory statement to portray her neurotic and conflict ridden mindset, as she employs oxymoron, thus "we could also

have told them of a poor, blighted young creature, shut up in a *living grave* for years, to avoid the tortures that would be inflicted on her…" (p.466). The phrase 'living grave' confirms her feeling of insecurity, and the possibility of death and a hope of living.

The area of divergence in their portrayal of the theme of solitude is that while Douglass employs the Horney's version of domineering/moving against others strategy and moving away strategy/detached, where he appears to abhor interpersonal communication and anything public, Linda on the other hand employs both dependent/moving towards others and detached/moving away from others strategies; where she seeks company and at the same time hates interpersonal social network. For Douglas, his coping defence mechanism, that is, his coping against the feeling of being unsafe, and unvalued leads him to compulsively move against others. Paris (1999:3) opines that such domineering characters employ aggression and strive to be powerful, ruthless and triumphant. This is why Douglas momentarily refuses to go back to Mr. Covey even though other slaves in the plantation may give him company. Rather he remains for a while reflecting over his past and future. Hence, the beginning of his aggressive behaviour, and his subsequent scuffle with Mr. Covey.

Frederick Douglass employs unique stylistic elements to couch his movement against others and away from others. For instance, he uses apostrophe to reveal his solitary plight: "The glad ship is gone; she hides in the dim distance… go on go on. O that I could also go! Could I but swim! If I could fly!" (p.294). Here, he reveals his

ideal or rather idealized image and expresses his admiration of a ship that goes away from people. In this respect he reveals his movement against people.

For Linda, her solitude can be located within the Karen Horneys moving toward and away from others strategy. She on the other hand revels in her solitude because she evades Dr. Flint's violent treatment. On the other hand, she enjoys the company of others, thus: "I was not comfortless, I heard the voices of my children…" (Jacobs, 1861:438). Paris (1999:3) opines that such conditions that give rise to them all (movement toward, away and against others) people (or victims) will be torn by inner conflicts, and these will be reflected in both their behaviour and their idealized image. This is why Linda, being pulled by movements towards and away from others strategies enjoys and repulses her solitude.

Harriet too uses narrative techniques in her depiction of the character of Linda to reveal her two-fold defensive mechanism. For instance, she employs paradox to portray her inner conflict, thus: "… there was joy and there was sadness in the sound" (p.438). This explicates Linda's ambivalence (movements to and away from others) as she eagerly confers with her children and enjoys their presence and at the same time hates the sounds (of her two children) due to her neurosis.

Douglass moving against others strategy and Linda's moving toward and away from others strategies are explained by Morgan (1997:77) when he avers that male slave narratives emphasize the role of the self in the quest for freedom, female slave narrators remind their readers that they were some other people's children, sisters, wives, mothers and friends. In other words, while male slave narratives fight a lonely,

aggressive fight towards freedom, female slave narrators fight towards freedom leaning to family and social integration.

The two writers also display the sense of similitude in their portrayal of solitude especially in areas pertaining to the character's dependency and the tendency for inertia. Throughout his solitude, Douglass is portrayed a despondent, solitary character. In other words, Douglass remains gloomy and dispirited in his solitude. This is why he narrates that he will stay and according to him: 'bear up under the yoke'. (Douglass, 1845:294). Like Douglass, Jacobs also expresses such despondency through Linda, this is why she calls her attic worth than a prison. Douglass' and Lindas' despondency explains Horney's (in J. Paris, 1991:1) assertion that a neurotic's loss of self leaves him despised without a center of meaning. So also, the two writers reveal characters with a sense and feeling of inertia. Horney (1950:200) opines that inert neurotic's inner strength has been 'sapped by his having to be on the defensive, by his being divided, by the way in which his early solution initiated a one-side development, thereby making a large area of his personality unavailable for constructive use". This is why Douglas revels in his ambivalent posture; between running away and staying to suffer. Hence, his delay and prolonging his stay. This is why also Linda depends on uncle Philips and Mr. Sands to work for her safe passage to the North.

In their portrayal of the theme of loneliness, Frederick Douglas and Harriet Jacobs also share similarities as well as polarities. For instance, the two writers, Douglas and Jacobs present their central characters suffering from oedipal complex

and electra complex respectively. Laaser (2004:120) has affirmed that such lonely characters search for sexual partners by evincing sexual repression because of the libido stasis in their psychosexual set-up due to psychosexual neurosis. Campbell (2009:557) avers that Libido stasis occurs when libidinous excitations are blocked. This gives rise to anxiety and variety of other symptoms. Douglas exhibits such libidinal impulses and repression. He expresses those "emotions of affection' towards his dead mother which emanates from those libidinal excitations that are later sublimated into affectionate wishes, as well as venting his anger towards his white father and master. He also evinces sexual repression through symbols. For instance, the "sloop' on page 259 which is concave in shape, the 'stool' also on page 259 is convex, all reveal his sexual libido and repression. He also reveals such sexual repression and excitation through 'displacement'. For instance, the sloop with which they transport Colonel Llyod's farm produce to Baltimore is named 'Sally', Llyods daughter, this also reveals his repression.

In Jacobs' narrative, she also reveals the central character, Linda who also evinces such sexual excitations and repression. She too expresses same 'affections' towards her dead father and two brothers. She also uses symbols like 'desert', 'stool', 'cross' to reveal her repressed sexual excitations. The two writers differ in their portrayal of the theme of emotional attachment. For Douglas in Frederick Douglas, he evinces emotional void or what Perlman and Peplau call emotional loneliness. And his emotional loneliness/void can be related to his infancy, his relationship with his mother, Harriet Bailey. Winscots (in Spira and Richards, 2003:8) believes that feeling

of loneliness is driven from the child's feeling of insecurity in his infancy due to his mother's absence. Douglass' sequestration with his mother in his infancy has created an emotional gap within him. This is why he relates that at her death, he has received the tidings with much the same emotions he should have received at the death of a stranger. Douglass' attitude fits Horney's domineering/moving against others defence strategy, where an individual exhibits public shy and emotional void.

In contrast to Douglas, Linda evinces emotional attachment as explained by Horney's moving towards strategy. She exhibits her emotional attachment towards Aunt Martha, Uncle Philips and her two children. Bogaerts (2006:808) avers that lonely people have a tendency to establish close, enduring emotional bonds with others. Unlike Douglas, Linda expresses her emotional attachment towards her parents and her mistress after their deaths. Linda also evinces poignant emotional response while leaving Aunt Martha's home.

The two writers share similarities in their portrayal of the theme of hopelessness and despair in the slave characters. For Douglass, he expresses this despair at Colonel Lloyd's plantation when things turn sour. For instance, he says "I looked for home elsewhere, and was confident of finding none" (Douglass, 1845:272). Douglas here, exhibits Horney's moving against strategy which involves aggressive tendencies. Such aggressive tendencies have reached the Horney's version of self-destructive impulse, when he says "I have no doubt, but that I should have killed myself or done something for which I should have been killed" (p.279).

Like Douglas, Jacobs too highlights these instances of despair in her autobiography. For instance, she narrates the despair of a slave girl who is dying immediately after giving birth. She reveals the same destructive impulse, thus "O Lord, come and take me" (p.349). and the mother echoes her prayer, thus "The baby is dead, thank God; and I hope my poor child will soon be in heaven too" (p.349).

In portraying the theme of ambivalence, which according to Horney is one of the hallmark of a lonely neurotic, the two writers dovetail. For instance, Frederick Douglass, through the character of Douglas evinces this ambivalence when he expresses his hope and hopelessness concerning his bondage and freedom, through paradox: "let but the first opportunity offer, and come what will, I am off. Meanwhile, I will try to bear up under the yoke" (p.294). Similarly, Jacobs through the character of Linda expresses such contradictory tone through oxymoron when she sums up her whole life thus "… we could also have told them of a poor, blighted young creature, shut up in a *living grave* for years…" (Jacobs, 1861:468).

The writers use of ambivalence confirms Karen Horney's assertion that neurotics employ ambivalence to portray the pulls between the reality and the idealized image.

The two writers also share similarities in their portrayal of the theme of social fragmentation/family dynamics – in their lonely plights. Douglass, through Douglass projects a lonely heroe whose familial ties are cut from a tender age and who fights a lonely battle devoid of a kindred. According to Yasmin, (1991:6) Douglas defines himself in terms of manhood and control over his total destiny. Similarly, Maclay

Doriani (in Morgan; 1997:83) opines that male slave narrators stressed their individuality, their ability to stand alone. For example, his mother, Harriet Bailey and his father died while he was young. His grandmother was sequestered to the woods and died there. Throughout the narrative he fights a lonely battle to freedom.

Jacobs too, portrays Linda who also suffers from this familial social fragmentation. For instance, she misses her parents at tender age. Even though she fights her lonely battle beside Aunt Martha, she also complains that she was countlessly separated with her two brothers, and her two children as well as the poignant memory of the death of her kind mistress, as well as that of her mother.

Harriet Jacobs differs slightly in her portrayal of familial social fragmentation. While Douglas in Frederick Douglas suffers a lonely battle, Linda evinces Horney's moving towards and away from others strategy. Hence, the presence of her grandmother and her two children, throughout her plight. Yasmin, D.J. (1991:6) follows this same line when she says that Linda has a strong, family-oriented concept of freedom that is no less assertive. Maclay Doriani (in Morgan, 1997:83) also avers that female slave narrators identify themselves with their community rather than isolation. While Douglas employs Horney's moving against strategy by avoiding contact, Linda employs moving towards and moving against strategies by avoiding and seeking social networks. This is why throughout Douglass' narrative, interpersonal social network is a mirage. In Jacobs, the characters seek for interpersonal social network.

5.3 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the comparative study of the two texts. In solitude, the two writers share similarities in neurotic coping strategies such as social anxiety etc. The writers also share similarities in employing narrative elements to show their neurotic movements. Concerning loneliness, the two writers share similarities in portraying characters with oedipal/electra complexes, depression, ambivalence etc. They share divergence on contrasting trends between Douglass and Linda. For instance, emotional void/attachment, social network/withdrawal etc.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

This study examines comparatively through the elements of psychoanalysis the issues of solitude and loneliness in Douglass' *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and Jacobs' *Incidents in the Light of a Slave Girl*, and the consequences of the two issues on African American slave characters. The two strands of psychoanalytic theory, of Freud and Horney extensively give room for character/behaviour analysis, hence advancing and expanding the knowledge on Douglass' and Jacobs' narratives. The qualitative research methodology is employed using both primary and secondary sources.

The deployment of the Freudian and Horneyan psychoanalytic models have allowed for an extensive character appraisal of African American slave characters as found in the two narratives. This is made possible because Freudian and Horneyan strands of psychoanalysis focus on interpreting characters personalities concerning sexuality and other human personality traits. This study has found that for African American slave characters to adjust in their solitary and lonely plights, there is the need to exhibit certain neurotic trends and coping strategies which could be moving towards/dependent, moving away/detached and moving against/domineering.

In areas pertaining to solitude, this study has also found that even though through solitude, the characters evade social anxieties, it has however increased their sense of dispiritedness and inertia. Regarding solitude, the study has found that the characters either evince a movement against others or a movement towards and away

from others strategies. The trend exemplified in solitude, which as the study discovers, is to the effect that female slave characters tend to exhibit a two-fold coping strategy; by moving towards and away from others, confirming the affinity between women and a sense of familism. This explains why Douglas in Frederick Douglass' attitude in the narrative exhibits apathy and aggression towards socialization, while Linda's case in Jacobs' narrative, she displays both aversion and liking of social networking.

With respect to loneliness, the study has discovered that it is not only a distressing negative experience, it is in many ways a disruption to African American slave characters. The study has found out that the absence of social support network for the solitary and lonely characters has increased their perception of alienation. Hence, the characters slide to a quest for destructive and non-destructive impulses. This is why Linda wishes for her children's death. This also explains the mother's hope for her daughter's death after giving birth. This also explains Douglass' in Frederick Douglass wish for suicide. The study discovers that lonely African American slave characters' perception of loneliness has led to their quest for coping strategies such as oedipal complex/electra complex, ambivalence, hopelessness, despondency and inertia etc. The divergence found in the two texts between, for instance, Linda in Jacob's narrative and Douglass in Douglass' narrative as in themes like emotional attachment/emotional void, aggression/submission, interpersonal network/and lack of it explains the trend in slave narrative – between male slave

authors who exhibit independence and masculinity and female slave authors who identify with their community and family.

The study affirms the argument that there is an affinity in the literary themes and narrative techniques in the two African American slave authors' works especially in areas pertaining to solitude and loneliness. The study discerns clearly the two writers' agreements on themes that reveal that perception of loneliness, such as those concerning hopelessness, social fragmentation, despondency, ambivalence etc. The study also discovers the employment of narrative elements such as paradox, oxymoron, personification, simile etc by the two writers. to connotatively expatiate on the themes of solitude and loneliness.

It is clear from Douglass' and Jacobs' narratives that solitude and loneliness are painful psychological experiences that hamper in many ways the lives of African American slave characters. The African American peculiarities expressed in this study are a close reflection of the African American Slaves' experience. Through their characters, Douglass and Jacobs comprehensively present the psychological consequences of solitude and loneliness on the African American slave victims. The comparative aspect confirms the commonality between male and female slaves experiences despite instances of disparities which are reinforced by gender differences.

From the inception of slavery in mid 17th century, certain social factors necessitated some in the black community in America to intermittently embark on solitude and/or indulge into perception of loneliness or rather the feeling of being detached. Activities such as the Jim Crow Law, Ku Klux Klan in the 1860s, the fugitive

Slave Act in 1850s, the after-effect of Net Turner's insurrection, opposition to Reconstruction and black voting rights, Anti-Obama/Colour prejudice in the 2010 as well as the recent assertion of white supremacy which culminated in the election of Mr. Donald Trump have in one way or another widened the social gap between the whites and their black neighbours. Despite these odds, African Americans have been coming out from their subservient role into more active roles. For example Barack Obama's election as president of the United States of America is only one of the several examples of the progression by blacks in the United States.

It is our belief that this study can be used by sociologists in Africa, especially in Nigeria where there are many ethnic nationalities, in the study of societies, specifically, on aspects pertaining to their interpersonal social problems. Through such studies, sociologists can devise means through which intra and inter communal social strife can be curtailed.

And lastly, psychiatrists and counsellors can benefit immensely in the study of this research work, especially, in the areas concerning the application of psychotherapy and proper counselling of patients with cognitive decline.

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