

**Dissolution of Adolescence in Chris Abani's *Graceland***

Dr. Somnath Vitthal Panade  
Assistant Professor,  
Department of English,  
Prof. Dr. N. D. Patil Mahavidyalaya,  
Malkapur, Tal. - Shahuwadi, Dist.- Kolhapur  
[somnathpanade@gmail.com](mailto:somnathpanade@gmail.com)

**Abstract**

*The focal point of the present paper is Nigerian coming-of-age experience in Chris Abani's Graceland. The text covers the span of eleven years of his protagonist Elvis' life in which Nigerian life underwent a corrupt military rule. It elaborates how innocent civilians suffered persecution and received inhumane treatment during this regime. It is during this political instability and military rule, Abani narrates a story of Elvis Oke and the disintegration of his family. Abani's text reveals Elvis Oke's warped coming-of-age in ghettos of Lagos during his forced displacement to Lagos. It explicates a process of Elvis' regression in his developmental phases in the postcolonial failed nation-building in Nigeria. Elvis, an adolescent boy of sixteen years old, symbolizes the fallen state of Nigeria. It is through Elvis' contingent existence in the city of Lagos, Abani seeks an opportunity to bare the cruel realities of the corrupt state of Nigeria. Abani reflects on the dichotomy between Nigeria and America. He contrasts Nigerian urban life infested with dirt, poverty, unemployment, corruption and unlawful activities with fanciful and dream like world of America.*

**Keywords:** adolescence, transcultural influence, warped coming-of-age,

In his interview with Yogita Goyal, Chris Abani himself admits that his writing puts him neither in the literary tradition of African Igbo realism introduced by Chinua Achebe nor in the literary school promoting African folk traditions, myths and dream narratives pioneered by Amos Tutuola. Rather, he claims that his writing places him firmly in the middle of these two parallel traditions in Nigerian writing (234). Abani explains this phenomenon of his writing by describing the influences on his writing. He reckons that as a child of an Igbo father and an English mother, his writing has both Igbo-ness and Englishness. He says further that he had Indian and Pakistani teachers and Lebanese friends

who had their share of influence on his novels. Besides, he was fascinated with British, American and Indian pop culture since his childhood. And collectively it creates, what Abani says ‘certain looseness and fluidity’ in his work. He declares that ‘I am a product of all literatures I grew up with and all the strands of Nigerian literature I refer to....’ (234). Apparently, Abani’s writing amalgamates different cultures in his texts. Substantially, his novel *Graceland* (2004) in particular shows all the above influences scattered throughout his narrative. Set in 1970s and 80s, the text proffers the naked realities of the erosion of postcolonial Nigerian society and its cultural and political life as it is deeply abraded by incessant military rules.

The text covers the span of eleven years of his protagonist Elvis’ life in which Nigerian life underwent a corrupt military rule. It elaborates how innocent civilians suffered persecution and received inhumane treatment during this regime. It is during this political instability and military rule, Chris Abani narrates a story of Elvis Oke and the disintegration of his family. Abani’s text reveals Elvis Oke’s warped coming-of-age in the ghettos of Lagos during his forced displacement to the city life as Elvis falls prey for addictions and criminal activities. It explicates a process of Elvis’ regression in his developmental phases in the postcolonial failed nation-building in Nigeria. Elvis, an adolescent boy of sixteen years old, symbolizes the fallen state of Nigeria. It is through Elvis’ contingent existence in the city of Lagos, Abani seeks an opportunity to bare the cruel realities of the corrupt state of Nigeria. He almost proves Nigeria as a state of human debasement and being inappropriate for the expected human development. While doing it so, he reflects on the dichotomy between Nigeria and America. He contrasts Nigerian urban life infested with dirt, poverty, unemployment, corruption and unlawful activities with fanciful and dream like world of America. While explaining the transcultural influence on the Nigerian life, Eze believes that Abani makes ‘painstaking deployment of the politics of transculturality’ in his text (105). He states further that Abani paints ‘a scatological portrayal of reality’ (105). Ruefully, the text has much praise for American culture and its people. Abani sets to prove America as the land of grace (hence the name of the novel is chosen as Elvis Presley’s house *Graceland*, in America) where one may prosper with equal opportunities to reach the highest levels of development.

The text revolves around the life of Elvis Oke, sixteen years old boy, who has a dream to be a dancer like Elvis Presley right from his childhood in his native village Afikpo. Two sad events determine the course of his life. His mother Beatrice dies due to the breast cancer and his father Sunday loses the assembly elections. Consequently, his father has to flee from his native Afikpo village and settle into the ghetto of Maroko with Elvis in order to avoid post-elections bankruptcy. In Lagos, as a school dropout, he tries to earn his livelihood by

dancing as an Elvis impersonator in front of foreigners. However, he is disillusioned by his meagre earning. He has to accept other petty odd jobs. In this phase, Elvis witnesses the harsh realities of life. He gets involved into illegal and criminal activities with his school friend Redemption under the pressures to survive in the city's brutal conditions. Elvis suffers and finally leaves for America to fulfil his dream to be a dancer exactly like Elvis Presley.

It is quite apparent that the trajectory of Elvis' development in the course of the text is not upward as Abani's concurrent narration reveals his degeneration and collapse in his social and psychological development. One may clearly discern that he does not grow normally due to the traumatic events that he experiences during both his childhood and adolescence. This obstructs him to attain his maturity in the life of ghettos in Lagos. The present analysis seeks to know the reasons for the contortion of his adolescence in the failed state of Nigeria. It is argued that the corrupt socio-political conditions, familial dispersion and poverty in the city of Lagos coerce Elvis and the other children in the ghettos of Lagos to accept adult roles earlier in the developmental phase of their lives. It creates an ambiguous process of *dissolution of adolescence* from their lives. Abani's text undermines the universality of the existence of adolescence across the globe. He suggestively seems to say that there is only pubescence in the lives of the children in the ghettos of Lagos. He shows how adolescent is a social construct found missing in lower layers of the society. He seeks to maintain that there is sheer absence of the expected socio-cultural phase of adolescence as the children in this part of the world, skipping adolescence, leapfrog from childhood to adulthood. Elvis' failed coming-of-age and resulting dissolution of adolescence can be judged as a personal, familial and socio-political failure of post-colonial urban society in Lagos.

Psychologically, Elvis' childhood in Afikpo has a deep negative impact on his process of becoming. As long as Elvis' childhood days in Afikpo are concerned, it may be said that it is his motherly world, in which he slowly begins his journey through the African rites of passage towards attaining African manhood which he, of course does not achieve. At the age of five, Elvis' father Sunday holds Elvis' initiation ceremony on his first step to manhood. In this ceremony, a male child is supposed to kill his first Eagle. Ironically enough, Elvis has to kill a chicken in place of eagle due to the arrival of new times. Abani implies the hollowness of the ceremony as Elvis never comes to terms with the Nigerian society. The ceremony is held to cut the apron strings of a child. However, Elvis always remains tied to his mother's apron strings.

His mother, grandmother, Auntie Felicia and his cousin Efua give their warmth and love to him. Broadly, his affectionate relationship with them is a part of the soothing moments of his life. As a fine dancer in her prime, his mother passes him the legacy of an art of dance. However, his world in Afikpo is threatened by the evils and cruelties in the people

around him. His mother's death due to breast cancer, Uncle Joseph's frequent rapes on his own daughter Efua and his experience of anal copulation forced on him by his Uncle Joseph are the most traumatic situations that Elvis experiences in his childhood. The trauma of these events has its strong effect on the entire development of Elvis. Freud's ideas about trauma may explicate Elvis' state of mind. Freud explains 'Fixation to Traumas' in his Lecture No. 18 in his 'Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis'. Illustrating the term traumatic, he states:

We apply it [the term "traumatic"] to an experience which within a short period of time presents the mind with an increase of stimulus too powerful to be dealt with, or worked off in the normal way, and this must result in permanent disturbances of the manner in which the energy operates' (Freud 317).

Though Elvis does not turn neurotic, he suffers from permanent disturbances due to these traumatic situations. The traumatic situations from his childhood unconsciously seem to have fixated him to his past life, as Elvis' present life is affected by them. Due to this fear for traumatic events, Elvis does not incline to stand by the innocent people during the wrong application of public justice in Lagos. On the two instances of vigilante justice on the streets of Lagos, he does nothing and stays rooted in the ground. Despite his will, he does not help them. He becomes what Harrison calls 'a paralysed observer of social injustice' (97). Elvis' inability to react against it can be interpreted as a symptom of his stunted growth in his developmental phases.

His mother Beatrice remains as an inseparable part of his psyche throughout the text. Therefore, Elvis' mind is always prone to yearn to be with his mother. It is evident in Abani's description of Beatrice holding Elvis in affectionate embrace many days before her death. Abani describes it: Elvis 'was content to bury himself in the deep aloe scent of her hair and the damp of her sweaty brow' (36). In Lagos, he has his mother's journal 'a collection of cooking and apothecary recipes and some other unrelated bits' as a token of her presence (11). In his vacant times, he reads a recipe as 'a fortifying psalm' (11). His emotional dependence on his mother even after her death hints at his mother-fixation. On one occasion, during night, Elvis witnesses his mother's nudity and becomes aware about 'the emptiness where her breast had been' (39). When his mother places Elvis' hand on the torn flesh of her breast, it is followed by the descriptions of the sentiments between them: 'she closed her eyes against the tenderness; then gently pulled his hand from her' (40). The occurrence has many implications. His mother's breast is amputated due to the cancer. It symbolically suggests the beginning of Elvis' suffering and deprivation of pleasure. The emptiness of his mother's chest creates a psychic trauma. It may be interpreted that Elvis loses his nourishing part of his life in the form of his mother's breast. It also evinces Beatrice's maternal desires towards her son. Besides his mother, Elvis' psychosexual development is also affected by his Aunt

Felicia and his cousin Efua. Elvis has incestuous sexual desires for them. His incestuous voyeurism of Auntie Felicia while changing her clothes and unnatural closeness with his cousin Efua show his pervert uncontrollable pubertal sexual drive. These are the symptoms of Elvis' abnormal sexual awakening.

The premature death of his mother blurs the possibility of his smooth formation as an adult. Consequently, it creates permanent vacuum in Elvis' life. He tries to fill it by getting addicted to smoking and drinking. In ghetto life of Lagos, he becomes a chain smoker of cigarettes and drinks in front of his father. Overtly, it seems that he is influenced by the popular icons in the media around him. However, unconsciously, Elvis' unfulfilled maternal desires find its fulfilment in smoking and drinking. His act of drinking and smoking may be reckoned as his attempt to assimilate with his mother through the slow poisoning of himself. In the text, there are many instances when Elvis asks for cigarettes. He chain smokes them and other characters make him aware about its dangers. For example, Redemption says, 'Dat cigarette you are smoking like you are drinking water will kill you' (115). King observed it too "still smoking too much" the King said (157). Even Felicia points it out: "You smoke too much" (168). These warnings of fatal consequences of smoking implies Elvis' unconscious craving for death. Lacan's view may support this argument. Jacques Lacan, in his essay, 'Family Complexes in the Formation of the Individual' (1938) discusses about the early weaning that usually culminates into a weaning complex of a child. He argues that 'In fact, weaning, any one of the contingent operations it involves, is often a psychic trauma, whose individual effects, such as anorexia, oral addictions and gastric neuroses, reveal their causes to psychoanalysis' (16). He states further that:

This psychic tendency towards death in the original form that weaning gives to it, can be seen in those special kinds of suicide that are characterised as non-violent; while at the same time we can see in it the oral form of the complex the hunger strike of anorexia nervosa, the slow poisoning of certain oral addictions and the starvation diet of gastric neuroses. The analysis of these cases shows that by abandoning to death the subject is attempting to rediscover the imago of his mother. It is quite generic as can be seen in burial practices, certain types of which clearly display the psychological meaning of return to the mother's womb (22)

Elvis' mother's decaying health during her breast cancer and her ultimate death brings his regression in the course of his budding life. Evidentially, in Lacanian perspective, there is an unconscious wish in Elvis' psyche to return to his mother's womb. The outcome is Elvis' addiction of heavy smoking. His desire to return his mother is also evident in one more conscious act of Elvis. He keeps his mother's journal under his pillow while sleeping. Jagua Rigogo suggests him to do it in order to meet his mother's spirit in his dream. It never works

but gives him a feeling of comfort. It can be said that his conscious and unconscious acts are motivated by the extreme desire for his dead mother. The loss of his mother always gives him a sense of incompleteness of his existence. Hence, the idealised image of his mother that is imago governs his every move of his inner life. So it may be said that it is early in his childhood, mother as a first protective element is lost from his life which makes him psychologically crippled throughout his life.

It is quite agreeable what Eze reckons about Elvis' reading habit. He reckons that Abani forces his own 'reading list on his teenage protagonist in a flagrant case of authorial intervention' (106). However, Elvis' habit of reading world classics may also be interpreted as a sort of escape from his reality around him. By presenting Elvis, a reader of classical books, Abani attempts to render a more humane aspect to his character. He seems to suggest Elvis' innate civility and artistry that are marred due to unhealthy social conditions of Lagos.

Another important aspect of Elvis' psychological life in Lagos is his extreme desire to be a dancer like Elvis Presley. His mother fills Elvis' life with dance and music. The text is full of references to mostly American and Nigerian pop singers and musicians. Elvis grows listening to the music of Bob Marley, Elvis Presley, Edith Piaf, Gloria Gaynor, Reverend Al Green, James Brown, Prince Nico Mbarga, Jimmy Cliff, Sunny Ade, Bobby Benson and many others. Besides, Hollywood and Bollywood cinema also significantly influences Elvis and drags him towards dancing skills. Elvis' consumption of these elements of pop culture shapes his mind. It may be inferred that as an adolescent boy, Elvis psychologically oscillates between fanciful idealism of American culture and his material reality in Lagos. American popular culture intervenes between Elvis and his ties with his indigenous Igbo culture. However, it also gives him an opportunity to get a temporary escape from his bitter reality of Lagos. As a result, Elvis tries to find out his true self in the imago of Elvis Presley that deeply stirs him. He unconsciously seeks to fill his mother's absence with the imago of Elvis Presley. He is greatly fascinated by the popular persona of Elvis Presley. The fascination for Elvis Presley reaches its extremes when Elvis strives to earn his livelihood as Elvis Impersonator. Harrison interprets Elvis' desire to mimic Elvis Presley, a popular icon from American Pop culture 'as a symptom of Nigeria's neo-colonial subjection to the import of American popular culture' (106). She figures it out more as a social phenomenon. However, psychologically, it can be said that Elvis identifies Elvis Presley as his adolescent ego-ideal. In the beginning of the text, when Elvis, wearing Elvis Presley makeup, dances in front of a foreign couple on the beach of Lagos, he earns meagre amount of two naira. This disappoints him and compels him to accept other trivial jobs. However, he never loses his desire to be a dancer; rather he defers it. After losing his job at the construction site, Elvis puts on makeup in his room and stares at himself. He regrets that he cannot come in public with this makeup



due to the fear of being identified as transvestites. While looking at his own image in the mirror, he gets his thoughts:

Elvis has entered the building, he thought, as he admired himself. This was the closest he had come so far to looking like the real Elvis, and he wished he had a camera (78). Elvis' wish to look like the real Elvis may be identified as a representative emotion of any black Negro encountering the whiteness of a white man. Frantz Fanon's observations regarding the psychology of Negro may help one explain Elvis' adoration for Elvis Presley. In the introduction of his book *The Black Skin and White Masks* (1952) he says: 'The white man is sealed in his whiteness. The black man in his blackness' (3). Also Fanon talks of Negro's inclination towards comparison. He says: 'The Negro is comparison. There is the first truth. He is comparison: that is, he is constantly preoccupied with self evaluation with the ego-ideal' (163). This comparison between his being a black Negro from Nigeria with his ego-ideal Elvis Presley, a white artist from America brings frustrating thoughts as 'What if he [Elvis] had been born white or even just American? Would his life be any different? (78). Elvis seems to have been sealed in his blackness. It creates a vague psychological feeling that as a black, he lacks something that is an essence of his existence. It is this biological essentialism that Elvis suffers. The thread of his thoughts brings him to a conclusion that he looks like 'a hairless panda' as his skin shows through his worn out makeup due to sweat (78). He cries without understanding why. A sense of inferiority complex is apparent in him. As an adolescent black African boy, Elvis is self conscious who keeps thinking about his own invisible existence in Lagos. Abani hints at his invisible existence by describing him reading Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* (5). He seems to loathe his existence as a Negro boy. His judgment about his looks as a 'hairless panda' comes out of his acceptance of the parameters of good looks from the white world which penetrate into the psyche of black man through media, films and music. He is completely subjected to American cultural hegemony as he believes America is 'a place where they appreciated dancers' (25). Leaving his own indigenous Nigerian cultural icons, Elvis inclines to worship Western cultural icon. The text is a substantive evidence of how fake Americanism insidiously causes an alienation of Elvis from his own roots.

Hegel's ideas about recognition may uncover Elvis' urge for American culture and its pop icons. In his *The Phenomenology of Mind*, he states:

Self-consciousness exists in itself and for itself, in that and by the fact that it exists for another self consciousness; that is to say, it is only by being acknowledged or recognized' (qtd. in Fanon 168).

Along with Hegel, Fanon also reiterates the same thought in relation with Negro. He states a fact that:

Black men want to prove to white men at all costs, the richness of their thought, the equal value of their intellect (Fanon 3).

In other words both Hegel and Fanon agree that one's existence depends on the recognition by the other selves. However, Fanon's ideas are more about the hierarchical relation between Black and white man in which white is supposedly a superior race. It is this acknowledgement and recognition from the others especially white American foreigners that Elvis longs to obtain. He becomes a mimic man who wants to be recognized by the Other. Here, the West is the Other who Elvis wants to prove his dancing skills to. He hates to drown in what Abani calls 'urban anonymity of Lagos' as other residents of the ghetto (25). Therefore, his behaviour as a delinquent adolescent is his psychic turbulence to be recognized by the others.

Lagos may be identified with the fatherly world where Elvis never befits into. His life in, what Omlesky calls 'urban dystopia' of slums of Lagos, also contorts Elvis' development (86). As he is brought to Lagos by his father, he witnesses many realities of Lagos' street life. He sees vigilante injustice in which criminal is punished on the streets without legal trial by public. Deprived of his grandmother Oye's delicious food, he eats on the Buka and tastes tasteless food. He meets beggars, criminals, corrupt military officers, smugglers and beggar children. He bears hate of his stepmother and lives in poverty and squalor of the slums of Lagos. Also he bears extreme physical torture by corrupt military soldiers. Despite all this, he learns to survive in these brutal conditions by becoming an Elvis impersonator, a labourer, a hired club dancer, a smuggler of cocaine, an escort of the truck carrying human limbs and kidnapped children and a caretaker of the young beggar children in the Bridge city. All this while, his father's drunkenness and negligence makes Elvis a wayward adolescent who hates his father. Rejecting his authority, his growing self consciousness makes him throw away the burden of his father's authoritarian control on him. He rebels in the form of smoking and drinking in front of him. He learns that it is his father and Uncle Joseph who ask Innocent to carry out honor killing of Godfrey for bringing dishonour to their family name. As a result, perceiving that he belongs to the family of rapists and murderers, he disowns his father's legacy. He says:

What are you talking about? Your name is associated with failure. Where is the honour in that? How can I carry this name knowing that it belongs to murderers and rapists?' (188).

Significantly, Elvis resists his blood ties with his father and gets camouflaged in the colours of the city of Lagos. His father dies in the protest against the demolition of the Maroko and other ghettos in Lagos undertaken by the city authorities. Finding his father's dead body in the mud of swamps in the demolished Maroko, his state of mind is revealed in the text:



He stood still for a long time before he approached it. In that time, he experienced nothing, thought nothing and felt nothing. He wondered he would be able to weep for his death. If he was dead, that is. It was more likely that Elvis would feel relief, though (304).

Instead of grieving, Elvis feels relief after the death of his father. Looking at this phenomenon psychoanalytically, it can be argued that Elvis already has a death wish for his father in his unconscious. In the text, Abani refers to this unconscious desire in the beginning of the novel: 'The desire to drive his fist through his father's face was old and overwhelming' (5). The repressed unconscious drive for his father's murder does not let Elvis cry on his father's death. On the contrary, it makes him feel relieved. Abani informs:

Elvis scrambled over a final pile of rubbish and rubble and stopped short when he saw a piece of coloured cloth sticking out from mud of the swamp. He recognized his father's lappa. He stood still for a long time before he approached it. In that time he experienced nothing. Thought nothing and felt nothing. He wondered whether he would be able to weep for his father's death. If he was dead, that is. It was more likely that Elvis would feel relief, though (304).

Analysing the above state of mind of Elvis, it can be said that Elvis has, what Freud calls in his book *Totem and Taboo* (1913), an attitude of 'emotional ambivalence' towards his father in which two opposite feelings collide with each other. What followed after realising his father's death is described as: 'It bothered him that his father was dead and all he could feel was relief' (305). In Freudian perspective, Elvis is faced by 'a situation of emotional ambivalence' in which he has both the feelings of hostility and affection for his father (Freud 57). Elvis' feeling of botheration about his father's death erupts out of his subjectivity as a son, but at the same time, he feels relieved due to his pre-existent unconscious wish for his father's death. The same ambivalence of feeling may be identified when Comfort asks Elvis 'to be like son to him' (51). His emotional state becomes predominantly ambivalent as he says:

He had been pretty sure that he hated his father, and now he had this strange urge to help him (51).

Hence, it appears that Elvis' unconscious maintains this emotional ambivalence towards his father even after his death. When a soldier does not allow him to take his father's dead body to give funeral, he comes to know about his triviality. He realizes that he is 'worthless in the face of blind, unreasoning power' (306). It is not his father's death but his incapability to give funeral to his father as a son brings tears into his eyes. It underscores his failure as a son.

What his fatherly world of Lagos gives him is poverty, suffering, squalor, pain and struggle to survive. Hence, it can be said that the social conditions in Lagos dwarf his father's

stature in the eyes of Elvis. His act of criminalization results out of his rejection of his biological father. When Sunday, Elvis' father reminds him about his past respect as a child, Elvis corrects him that it was fear and not respect. He says, 'I never really learned to respect you' (130). His involvement into the illegal activities in Lagos may be construed as the failure of the Nigerian state. Instead of following and respecting law, he suspends it from his behaviour. It is also one of the symptoms of abnormal development of Elvis. His evasion of law could be interpreted as his failed subject formation. He is not interpellated by the laws of failed state of Nigeria. Rather; as Omlesky suggests Elvis is already interpellated by becoming 'a consumer ("subject") of American cultural capital (89). At the time of going to America, he uses the forged identity as Redemption and does not hesitate to befool the authorities.

Elvis' life with The King of the Beggars is altogether contrast to the life Redemption shows him. He oscillates between these two self-chosen leaders who happen to determine his route of life. As an adolescent boy of sixteen, he blindly submits himself to these people. Redemption drags him into criminal world and The King leads him to physical torture executed by the Colonel. During The King's performance at the freedom square, Elvis carefully listens to his speech. However, Elvis does not get completely convinced by The King's stand on American capitalism. Elvis feels that it is impossible to back to the 'good old days' in search of their indigenous culture (155). But he wonders why The King does not speak about 'how to cope with these new and confusing times' (155). His unripe mind seems to be perplexed by the socio-Political situations of Nigeria. Elvis is not capable of employing his faculty of criticism. It also shows his lack of mental vision and perspicacity through which he could have used his reason and understood the reality around him. Elvis has only a biological presence in Lagos; however, he is always in fancy with his ego-ideal Elvis Presley without a sense of being complete entity. Consequently, his static psychological condition does not concede him rationality. By and large, it could be said that Elvis never becomes a subject of Nigerian state and nation.

Having said the above things, it may be concluded that the trauma of the past situations fixates Elvis to his past life and keeps affecting present psychological life in Lagos. The past traumatic events that become part of his psychic structure do not let him grow as an adult. They definitely cause an unnatural growth of Elvis. Besides, the social conditions affecting the psychological processes of Elvis lead him towards his distorted growth culminating into premature adult. Therefore it confirms that though Elvis is sixteen years old, he is not in the phase of adolescence in a true sense, because of lack of direct weight of his family, culture and society in Lagos. Besides this, it can be inferred that along with Elvis, Efua, Redemption and Blessing (a promiscuous beggar girl of twelve, who takes care of Elvis

in his illness) are those pubescent children who gain physical maturity earlier; however, in the long run, their transformation as a normal adult self obliged by state, societal and familial ideologies does not take place. It is stalled due to the absence of healthy socio-cultural and political conditions in the urban slums of Lagos. As they struggle for their survival in the city, they are driven by the worse conditions of the city to do what adolescents from more sophisticated middle and upper classes of the society are forced to defer. For example, Elvis' smoking and drinking, Efua's incestuous rapes by her father, Redemption's involvement in illegal criminal activities and Blessing's precocious knowledge to throb the male sex and entice them to have her gratification of pubescent sex drive are the evidences that there is complete dissolution of the adolescence. The absolute absence of the adolescence makes them skip the adolescence and accept what may be called unripe adulthood.

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