

## **The Tomfoolery of the Trickster Figure in Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's *The Adventure of Anum the Tortoise***

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### **Abstract**

In narratives, the trickster figure usually engages in various adventures thereby exposing his misdemeanor. This act gives humans (children) a sense of mythic origin which emerges, and re-emerges, in the present each time trickster appears in a narrative such as Akachi's *the Adventures of Anum the Tortoise*. This article therefore brings to fore the antics of the trickster figure inherent in Children's literature with particular reference to Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's *The Adventures of Anum the Tortoise*. Carl Jung's Trickster Archetype is the theory upon which this study is anchored. The main aim of the study is to designate the nature of and to what effect are the antics of the trickster figure to the child reader. The Trickster figure as propounded by Jung is the figure represented as a malicious prankster fond of sly jokes, an embodiment of all that is repressed and disowned, the greedy needy rascal that lives somewhere inside every human being. A more glaring attribute of the trickster figure that permeates the text under study is that of deceit, greediness and trickery. Archetypes which are believed to be stored in the collective unconscious mind, and are considered a part of the human individuation process, triggers the psychological change in the individual. Thereupon, children who engage with children's books, stand a great chance of unconsciously interacting with certain archetypes which consequently becomes conscious to the children. Thus, children's behaviors are also formed from an encounter with the Trickster archetype.

### **Introduction**

Everyone has his own definition of literature based on his understanding of literature. But it is a universally accepted fact that literature is the mirror of our societies in which we see the reflections of our lives. Literature, in its most comprehensive meaning, includes all the activities of human soul in general, or within particular sphere, period, country, or a language (Tanvir, 2009:20). Akachi's *The Adventure of Anum the Tortoise* (the selected text for the study) is a Children's text. Children's Literature is that form of writing that is appealing to the children and that arouses their feelings of the beautiful by the perfection of form or excellence of ideas or by both.

In a post on the Daily Independent titled *in Search of Viable Content for Children Literature*, Adebisi (2010: 5) counsels that authors of Children's Literature, as a matter of priority, need to consider how the contents of their literature would "develop their children's capacities intellectually, emotionally, morally, socially, spiritually, aesthetically and creatively". This is in concordance with Ratt (1996:3) extrapolations. He avouches that the audience of trickster narratives comes to know their world physically, emotionally, psychically, and spiritually through trickster's antics. Hence, the child's entire environment constitutes literary expression since what he (the child) reads, sees, hears and experiences from adults and peers alike, all build up experiences for him that even contribute information for the development of his person.

It is in view of the forgoing discourse that this paper seeks to ascertain the antics of the trickster figure inherent in the selected text and to what effect is it to the child reader.

### **Definition of Children's Literature**

The origins of Children's Literature are hard to underpin. Agreeably, Children's Literature is said to have emerged in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and it has nowadays been accepted as an important tool that could be used in shaping children's personalities. Children's Literature is often defined as collection of books written for children, read by children, and/or written about children. However, scholars have opinionated differently on the subject. For many writers, Children's Literature is simply a body of texts that is intended for a particular readership, that is, "children". Simsek and Yakar (2014), in Bayraktar (2021: 342) define the genre as "good-quality trade books varying from prose and poetry to fiction and nonfiction, which are written for children from the ages of birth to adolescence as well as prepared according to the developmental characteristics of children within each age group".

For Bayraktar (ibid), Children's Literature has both personal and academic values to the child reader. The creation of children's literature led to changes in how children read, how children learn in school, and how children understand the world. Schneider (2016:18), in her own words, speculates an all-encompassing definition of the genre thus "Children's Literature is an assortment of books (and not books) written for children (and adults), read by children (and adults), and written about children (but not necessarily)".

The purpose of Children's Literature therefore, is important at different levels. Many scholars seem to agree that literature written for children has two clear (and in many cases opposed) purposes in mind: to teach and to entertain. Texts for children are not only read for entertainment, recreation and literary experience but are also used as effective tools for education and socialization. In Children's Literature and folk narratives of most cultures, the trickster figure, which is the thrust of this paper, is usually represented through the use of human beings and animals alike. This will be explored within subsequent pages of the paper.

### **The Trickster**

The first time that the word 'trickster' was ever used was in the eighteenth century, 'not as an anthropological category, but to designate morally, one who deceives or cheats' (Hynes, 1993: 14). Putting into proper perspective, Gill and Sullivan (308) agree with Hynes. They suggest that the term "trickster" was first used in 1885 by Daniel Brinton as a general category widely applicable to the principle protagonist in Native American mythology. According to Brinton, Trickster is "a complex character type known (not only) for his trickery, buffoonery, and crude behavior, but also as a creator, culture hero, and teacher".

The trickster is known by many names in many different societies. This is due to its multiplicity of literatures and cultures all across the globe and throughout history. Nearly every culture has its own unique trickster figure. Scholars such as William Doty (1993:19) have suggested that the trickster phenomena contain similar features in several societies. To buttress further, Jung reveals that the trickster phenomenon is so similar between and among the various societies of the world that it can be considered an archetype. Jung advances to state that however similar they may seem to physically appear, they are distinguishable with respect to their unique cultures, traditions, history, and discourse. Hence, Doty (ibid) enunciates that a study of each trickster's culture of origin is paramount when trying to decipher the themes and motives of the individual tales. The uniqueness of each culture and society once again makes it difficult to create a specific characteristic or generic definition of the trickster. This disagreement exists even among many experts.

Trickster tales usually include animal characters that have been anthropomorphized in their habits, attitudes, and speech. Popular trickster figures are the spider, the mouse, the hare and the tortoise. One can quickly recognize that these trickster figures are typically smaller animals who would immediately be at a distinct disadvantage were they to find themselves threatened by another animal character. As a result, these tricksters must often times rely on their sharp wit and quick tongue to keep them out of trouble and safe from harm. This particular feature of the trickster is exemplified in Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's *The Adventure of Anum the Tortoise* at the instance where Anum wittingly tricked the leopard into falling into his own trap and consequently freed his friend Jaga from harm.

Carroll (1987) in Salinas (2013:7) posits that Trickster is commonly ascribed two interrelated roles: culture hero and selfish buffoon. Salinas further explains the roles as he aver that the "Trickster is culture hero because it provides necessary tools for social and physical survival. It is selfish buffoon because it usually reveals those tools through its own comic folly, misadventures, and hedonistic appetites". It is therefore not enough to act like a trickster by relying on deception or quick wit. Rather, trickster figures perform a much deeper and necessary role in literature. Trickster figures represent 'the mythic hero who stands at the nexus of mortality and immortality, structure and anti-structure, the individual and society' (2013: 24). In this way, the trickster serves as the glue that holds these societies together. Its multifaceted nature helps shape our understanding of humanity in different but equally complex ways as the heroic monomyth.

Continuing with same thought, Salinas (2013:8) observes that one of the more commonly used depictions of the trickster role in contemporary scholarship comes from William Hynes. Without categorically defining the roles, Hynes (1993:34) summarizes the six commonalities of the trickster as:

1. Ambiguous and Anomalous (fundamental personality)
2. Deceiver and Trick- Player,
3. Shape-Shifter,
4. Situation-Invertor,
5. Messenger and Imitator of the Gods,

## 6. Sacred and Lewd Bricoleur.

Hynes does not however, suggest that these characteristics of the trickster are present in all trickster performances. Rather, they are generalizations that are often but not necessarily found in trickster tales.

As an educational agent, trickster has served to question the validity of cultural and societal codes in a world always in flux. If the codes were pertinent to the survival and progress of a people, then they were reaffirmed through trickster. However, if they were harmful, or shown as too restrictive, then trickster revealed the danger of their continuance and prompted the people to change and adapt to current times. The trickster tales were therefore repeatedly reorganized and reinterpreted to accommodate a changing world (Ratt, 1996:8). Additionally, Kroeber (1979:82) says that the educative function of trickster stories pivots on “a lesson of balancing and controlling oneself amidst life’s exigencies”. Stories “permit fantasy indulgence in taboo behavior...and therein exists both cautionary message and psychic release”. Kroeber explains that through trickster and his acts “the subtle dynamics of a culture are realized, affirmed, and taught” (83).

### **Trickster Archetype as Theoretical Framework**

This paper analyzes Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo’s *The Adventure of Anum the Tortoise* through the trickster archetypal lens as propounded by Carl Jung. The model is used as analytical tool because it has a considerable preference for content relating to the human psyche. This is corroborative to Hull’s (2014:3) reasoning on the subject when he avers that archetype “designates only those psychic contents which have not yet been submitted to conscious elaboration and are therefore an immediate datum of psychic experience”. Archetypes, according to Jung, are “primordial images”; the “psychic residue” of repeated types of experience in the lives of very ancient ancestors which are inherited in the “collective unconscious” of the human race and are expressed in myths, religion, dreams, and private fantasies, as well as in the works of literature (Abrams,;10, 112). Hence, archetypes are one of the important assets of every psyche because it forms the “treasure in the realm of shadowy thoughts” (17).

The archetypal trickster of the Jungian model of psychoanalysis is the figure represented as a malicious prankster fond of sly jokes. Carl Jung views Trickster as an “expression of the shadow side of a culture, the embodiment of all that is repressed and disowned- the greedy, needy rascal that lives somewhere inside every one of us...the Trickster is the mythic embodiment of ambiguity, ambivalence, contradiction and paradox”. The submission above enunciate that trickster narratives helps in revealing the human truest identity and what they must need do in order to survive in a world enmeshed in chaos. Agreeably, Lincoln (1986 p. 143) writes that trickster helps explain the world and people’s place in the world. The following proposition intuitively that the trickster gives people a sense of mythic origin which emerges, and re-emerges, in the present each time trickster appears in a narrative such as Akachi’s *The Adventures of Anum the Tortoise*.

The trickster figure in narratives usually engages in various adventures thereby displaying his dual nature of one half an animal and the other a divine figure. The trickster is therefore not a hero nor a villain, but a master of tricks to save himself or others from danger or harm through malicious tricks. Thus, Tapio (2018:15) asserts that “deception is their trade and they are often characterized by their dissatisfaction with the established social order, which they seek to disturb”. Jungian archetypes propound the ideology of the human psyche which considers human desires as a general source for psychic energy that influence a wide range of human behaviors. To Jung, the human future aspirations have significant effect on their behaviors and that these behaviors are formed from an encounter with certain archetypes which are stored in the collective unconscious mind. Since archetypes are considered as part of the human individuation process, which triggers the psychological change in the individual (Bassil-Morozow, 2017:10), children who engage with children’s books, stand a great chance of unconsciously interacting with certain archetypes which consequently becomes conscious to the child.

Thus, the Trickster remains as influential a force over the daily life of modern humankind (children, my emphasis) as it ever, even if most people fail to recognize the impact of the archetype on their daily conscious experiences. This form of archetypal representation will be explored using Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo’s *The Adventure of Anum the Tortoise*

### **The Trickster Antics in Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo’s *The Adventures of Anum the Tortoise***

#### **Malicious Tricks**

Akachi’s representation of Anum the tortoise is anthropomorphically designed. The archetypal trickster imbued in the character of Anum is not only evident in his gender, that is, the male factor. But is also in the recurrent malicious trickery that permeates Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo’s *The Adventures of Anum the Tortoise*. These tricks

constantly refer us to the definitive characteristics of the trickster archetype. Tricks are the indicative essential features of Anum the Tortoise. For Anum, trickery is a means to an end which is why he seldom allows reasoning to guide his decisions and actions. Anum, his wife Alia and their daughter Little Tortoise live like a typical human nuclear family. Anum and his family live in a cottage. He loves them dearly and he usually plays and teaches his daughter many things about life. They talk and have conversations like human beings do and have properties and items just like human beings. This posits to the child reader, the summation of life and as such, whatsoever Anum does can be attributed to that of any human; same is the case with any character or figure in the narrative.

The predication of Anum and his family's existence in the narratives, and precisely in the first adventure is geared on a search of herbal medicine that can heal his dying little daughter. As a caring figure, he subjects himself to dangers unknown in the course of the difficult journey through the forest and across a river to meet the herbalist. Within the adventurous journey of Anum, though trickily, he is heroically able to save Jaga (the human friend he meets who helps him through the course of his journey) from the devouring hands of the leopard. He usually indulges in these acts to either save himself and others from troubles or to just have his way easily through life. His acts entertain and simultaneously fool others even while they do not realize they are being fooled; Anum takes advantage of the situation for his gain. This attribute forms a major character of Anum which prevails in all the stories captured in the text.

The heroic feature of the trickster archetype is well illustrated in "Tortoise, Man and Leopard", this exhibits an outside force heralding the trickster to action. Unlike other factors (trickery), this is an outside call from someone that needs help. More like the hero, which most children usually attribute their passion for, the portrayal of Anum as a saviour of a human, Jaga, from the canines of the leopard (death) paints the trickster in a more honourable and appealing manner. On page 16 of the text, Anum, whose action is often guided by trickery, played tricks, in this case, with the leopard. Upon realizing that leopard wants to eat his friend Jaga, the human that helped him on the quest for the herbal medicine that cures his little tortoise, Anum requested cunningly by first praising leopard as very clever animal and then asked him to demonstrate how he was caught by the trap and how Jaga helped him out (16). Unknowingly of what Anum intended to get from the act, the leopard foolishly worked himself into the trap and that was how Anum and Jaga left the leopard in the trap. By this trick he played, the leopard was made incapable of devouring Jaga.

This is a common trait associated with the trickster figure as Jung describes the trickster as a master of tricks through which he saves himself and others from harm. Though Anum saves Jaga from death, his meeting with the leopard demonstrates his swift tongue and his inherent ability to deceive. Just like most trickster characters, we are constantly reminded that Anum is only happier whenever his heinous actions are successful. This is captured thus; "the trap clicked and held fast. Anum laughed. "you're caught in the trap again", he said to Leopard" (16). Even though Anum tricked Leopard, his action further reveals the heroic attributes of the trickster figure which the child reader could emulate as well as exhibit in life. This is in tandem with Conradie's (2015:39-40) view that the trickster figure is 'representative of a savior'. A child may instinctively develop an attachment to this figure throughout the adventure and likely neglect or create a defense mechanism towards the negative or flawed nature of the trickster.

The particular incident that freed Jaga, led Anum into many inescapable journeys enmeshed in trickery. These tricks are further explored in the adventure entitled "Tortoise and the Blacksmith's Daughter". The tricks Anum plays on the leopard catapults him into another trouble. Jaga with whom Anum had become good friends, praises Anum a lot to the dismay of the Chief who wonders how an ordinary and common tortoise is so praised by Jaga. Once again, a fundamental nature of the trickster archetype resurfaces. The Chief gives Anum an almost impossible task. This task reveals Hyde (1998:335) conjecture which holds that the typical trickster figure is one that is placed in a position of power almost always by own actions or intellect. This is evident in the manner in which Anum carried out Chief's 'impossible task'. In the narrative, he is to use a bag of maize to get the chief a beautiful woman to marry within three months or lose his life if he fails. Jaga, on realizing what his praises caused his friend, he begs the chief not to give such an impossible task to Anum but the king abnegate Jaga's pleas. Anum seeing his predicament, states to the Chief that: "if I succeed, you will give me half of all your land to do what I like with it" (26). Though the Chief was silent for some time, he agrees to Anum's bargain. Anum begins his adventurous and malicious tricks with the bag of maize by first, stopping at the house of a man who rears chickens. In the house, he keeps the bag of maize at the chickens' room so that they could eat all the maize. In the morning, he raises the alarm that the man's chickens ate all his maize. In compensation, the man gives Anum a chicken to go with.

Anum continues with his adventurous journey to another place where he is received by a man rearing goats. At this man's house, he claims the man's goats trampled the chicken to death (a chicken he claims to be his commercial source of income). This man compensated him with a goat. He does the same kind of trick on his quest with the goat and was given a cow. It is with the cow that Anum saw a group of mourners and he proposed an exchange deal between his cow and the corpse of the young lady.

Having gained this exchange, Anum pulled the cart with the corpse and on reaching another village he asked to be taken to the house of the man that has many daughters in the village. At the man's house, he told them he was escaping from a war region and his friend's daughter was quite tired and sleeping, and should be allowed to sleep in the daughters' room. As expected, the girl did not wake up in the morning and Anum claimed that the man's daughters crushed his friend's daughter to death. Anum, in serious pretense, broke down and wept bitterly, swearing that if he had known such would happen at the man's house, he would not have entered his house. The narrative accounts that Anum "pressed his back to the ground; his four feet kicked the air. No one watching him doubted his sincerity. In fact, most of the people there were now sorry for him, including the blacksmith." (38). In order to compensate him for the loss of his friend's daughter, Anum was asked to take one of the seven daughters and he chose the most beautiful among them. Thereafter, he took the girl back to the Chief, thereby accomplishing the task in two months. The Chief took the girl as a wife and as promised, gave Anum half of his land, which Anum gave to his friend Jaga because he has less need of it. In the preceding pages of this paper, Hyde (1998:335) avouches that the actions and intellectualism of the typical trickster figure places him in a position of power. It is therefore Anum's actions and wittiness that gave him the opportunity of trickily defrauding people of their possessions and also privileges him the impetus of taking ownership of the Chief's land.

Through Anums' antics, the young child is unconsciously informed by this behavioural attitude, and though he may consciously grow with different perceptions that his superego may behold that may make his unconscious part of his mind repressed the acknowledgement of probable portrayal of the attitudes of the trickster archetype in him, he might in future display such tendencies when faced with challenging situations. There is indeed a seeming instance of trickery displayed by one of the respondents (child) during an interview/observation session where another respondent who needed to also view the picture viewed by his co-reader but the other blatantly refute the request by saying "if you give me your indomie, I can let you see the picture in the story book". Though the curious respondent allowed him to have some of his noodles, yet he shunned him completely. This act replicates Anum's trickery on Leopard and also extensively indicates that the behaviour of the character of Anum triggers the trickster figure resident in the child's collective unconscious mind thereby affecting the child's behavior, psychological development and growth.

In yet another adventure entitled "Tortoise and Akidi", Anum in this series is seen playing his malicious tricks on his wife, Alia. He decried on the quantity of food Alia usually offers him. As She explains to him that the prices of food items have increased, Anum who felt she was only keeping the largest portion for herself and little tortoise, decides to trick her so he can get enough food for himself. Firstly, Anum feigned meeting with heads of families at his house in order to discuss the rising prices of food items. Secondly, to keep his wife and family away from home, Anum harvested some palm nuts and asked his wife and daughter to help with the harvest. Thirdly, he pretended to receive a call from the 'head of families' which gave him reason to go back home in order to attend the meeting which he 'called for'. The aforesaid are the strategies Anum adopted for days and succeeded in deceiving his wife. Just as it is typical of the trickster archetype, Anum acted the same trick the third time and Alia became suspicious of his acts as no changes occur in the prices of food items. Alia and little tortoise followed him minutes later only to find him alone eating the food.

Upon realizing that Anum had been fooling her, she vowed not to cook ever for him again unless he tells her the name of the favorite dish she has been cooking. Alia's stance and the state of Anum's stomach triggered yet another trick. So he went to the market and trickily claimed to accidentally spill one of the trader's wares. It was at that moment the woman shouted "what are you doing with my akidi" (53) that he heard the name. Having heard the name, Anum hurriedly told his wife and she forgives him with the promise to always give him enough food. In Anum's bid at playing mischievous pranks to get what he wants, the child reader understands that the trickster, though smart, can be very foolish for not realizing that he is likely to be caught and severely punished if he continues playing the same trick consecutively just as his wife finally caught him.

In yet another series, "Tortoise and the Old Woman", Anum performed another trick. Famine caught up with the land and Anum's family was quite in lack of food such that Little Tortoise cries herself to sleep every night. People and animals were dying all over the land and Anum knew he had to do something (typical of every human

being when faced with life threatening situation). One certain night, on his way back from searching for food, he perceived the smell of his favorite dish, akidi from a certain hut. Anum wonders thus:

Who was able to have such food when everyone else was starving? Where did the food come from? There was drought in the land. There was famine in the whole place. And yet here was food cooking and smelling so sweet (73-74).

Anum then devised another trick to decipher where the sweet aroma of the food is coming from. He gathers sea shells and dried pods and strung them entirely on his body. With this, Anum danced around the old woman's hut while making horrible noises and telling the old woman to run for her life or be killed. This is captured thus:

He circled the hut and stopped behind it. With a loud cry, he called the old woman and urged her to run for her dear life. He said that she was about to be trampled to death by a monster. At the same time, Anum started to jump up and dance about like a mad person; as he danced all the things he wore or tied to his body made terrible noises. The pots crashed against one another. The pods rattled and the shells knocked together and made a terrible noise. It was frightening (76-77).

Anum frightened not just the old woman away but even all other animals (including the giant elephant) she invited to come to her rescue. Whenever he frightens her away, he usually runs into the hut, eats some of the food and carried the rest home for Alia and Little Tortoise. Just as he did his tricks continuously in "Anum and the Agidi", he foolishly repeated the same acts of trickery.

Having no other place to go for help, the old woman invited Chameleon, who finally caught him by first changing its color to that of the bamboo pole where he was positioned inside the hut. To buttress this stance, Ratt (1996:9) affirms that the Trickster is typically seen as a wanderer whose crudeness, curiosity, and duplicity get him into interesting predicaments. He plays a trick on someone and he is invariably tricked in turn. This is what played out in this instance. Afraid of being punished by the old woman and the animals, Anum begged Chameleon not to reveal his identity. The chameleon made him swear not to ever play tricks on the old woman again thus: "Anum thanked Chameleon and hurried out of the hut as fast as his short legs could carry him. He never went near the old woman's hut again" (85). This incident reveals the last of his tricks as he wished he was never caught. According to Ratt (1996:9), most of the trickster adventures have a scatological element to them which serves to remind us (children as well) that we are still victims of our appetites and that we are all in some sense "uncivilized" beings.

The repetitive tricks exhibited by Anum in the text are akin to human nature. It emphasizes that for every situation in life, humans (children) have innate tendencies of sorting out themselves however possible. These speak volume of who humans are and how they struggle to survive. In this wise, it is therefore salient to apportion proper meaning towards an ardent understanding of the trickster antics. In Radin's (1956:24) view, he says that "interpreting trickster and his acts is a form of speculum mentis (mirror for the mind), and only when trickster and his acts are viewed as an attempt by man to solve his problems inward and outward, does the figure of trickster become intelligible and meaningful". Radin's postulation corroborate Lincoln's (1986:126-127) stance on the subject. Lincoln (ibid) offers an all-encompassing definition of trickster's function as a teacher who:

Teaches comically, by negative example, that this shifting world bears careful study, that masking and duplicity remain basic to nature, and that we survive despite this trickery, perhaps even learning from it. We come to count on trickster in this world of recurrent difficulties, stay clear of him, depend (sic) on him to keep us alert, laughing, and keen to the rules of survival. The unknowns in all this necessary tricking makes us conscious of the contingent variables and critical play in a deceptive natural world. The acted-out-dangers, comic or close to the bone, serve to wake us up.

The submission above enunciates that trickster narratives help in revealing the human truest identity and what they must of necessity do in order to survive in a world enmeshed in chaos. Lincoln (1986:143) writes that trickster helps explain the world and people's place in the world. He says that trickster "embodies the generative paradox of an ancient reality that won't settle down or stay put: the base curiosity and relentlessness in man, snaking him into and...out of trouble". Lincoln (1986:142) claims that narrators of trickster stories (such as Akachi) talk "backward to look sensically forward, inverting things to right them". In other words, the trickster antics give people (children) a sense of mythic origin which emerges, and re-emerges, in the present each time trickster appears in a narrative. Lincoln states that "trickster wanders around, from folly to foolery, instructing by recreant exaggeration".

### Reliance on Instinctual Behaviour

The trickster archetype is a figure that most times makes decision without rational thought. Conradie (2015:39) describes the trickster figure as “an impulsive, unconscious and animalistic character. Despite his better judgments, he does not use reason to guide new decisions, but relies on instinctual behavior”. Anum has several character flaws of his own, chief among them being incredible laziness and insatiable greed, especially for food. His appetite is always insatiable and drives the majority of his dastardly deeds but greed obviously leads to failure, or humiliation as seen in “Tortoise and Snail” where he was disgracefully thrown out of the audience awaiting to hear him sing. Throughout *The Adventures of Anum the Tortoise*, the character of Anum quite displays the inferior and unconscious character of humans – the animal part that usually relies on instincts and not reason. Good reasoning would have informed Anum the trickster that if he continues with the same format of tricks he would be caught, but since he as a prankster relies mostly on instinct, he is bound to be caught on many occasion. It is his instinctual behavior that made him consider scaring an old woman away for her food instead of critically thinking of a logical means through which he can save himself and his family from their ordeals. It is the same instinctual behavior of his that eluded him into performing the same trick; he would not have been finally caught in the act.

In *Tortoise and Akidi*, it is the same behaviour that led him to lie to his wife about a meeting that is to take place at their house. He made this phony decision just so he can get to satisfy his belly. He would have, instead, dialogued rationally with his wife so as to handle the predicament, but his reliance on instinct do not only made him to play this phony trick on her once but repeatedly until he was disgracefully caught.

The trickster figure/archetype in his bid to solve problems or escape a dire trouble usually causes displeasures and pain to others. This is discernible in the character of Anum. All the characters that Anum played his malicious pranks on are usually hurt or pushed into a displeased state. The child reader registers to his or her mind from the consumption of this narrative the pertinent features of the trickster, majorly as a figure that is fond of playing malicious pranks and tricks on others and in such doing is usually exposed to torture, pain and disgrace as in the case of Anum. The child reader also realizes through the trickster’s antics that he is a figure that lives for the moment by relying mostly on his instinctual behavior rather than on logical reasoning. While he is seen as a hero by some (as in the case of Jaga his friend), he is a figure that causes displeasure and destroys the happiness of others (as could be seen in the lives of those he played his tricks on).

Thus a reading of Akachi’s *The Adventures of Anum the Tortoise* by the child reader provides a vista through which those unconscious archetypal contents are brought to fore. Haven made conscious, the child takes his understanding of these contents from the wells of experience innate in them to form an acceptable personality as they grow into adults. As it is earlier stated in this paper, Ratt (1996:3) expounds that the audience of trickster narratives comes to know their world “physically, emotionally, psychically, and spiritually through trickster’s antics”. Trickster celebrates human capabilities of overcoming any obstacle because, by depending on his human qualities to overcome problems, he teaches human beings about being human. This applies to children as well.

### Conclusion

The trickster has an evident effect on individual development, which is a pivotal point that emphasizes the need for the continued re-telling of the trickster story. This effect does not solely remain an individual experience and individual awareness, but becomes apparent to the collective, considering its wide-ranging influence in literature. According to Jung, the trickster guides human development and aids the integration of material from the unconscious with the conscious. By means of doing this, the individual (child) does not remain fixed in avoidant responses to seemingly illogical and unconventional behaviour, but develops an attuned sense of awareness about actions that have negative results. One who acknowledges the human nature and flaws of life becomes conscious and is more open to transformation. Conradie (2015: 41-42) says that the desired effect of the trickster figure is to remind us (children) of an earlier stage of human development that can still find its way into the current flow of events and cause dire consequences. The trickster may be a character with negative traits and bad intent, but if interpreted correctly may cause transformation when most needed.

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