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***“My Life” (1896) and “The Betrothed” (1903) by Anton Chekhov: An Adlerian Psychological Study.***

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### **Acknowledgements**

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## **Abstract**

*The present research paper is a psychoanalytical study of Anton Chekhov works “My Life” (1896) and his short story “The Betrothed” (1903). My major concern is to understand the characters psychological evolvement and motivation and assert each character unique personality and individual differences. To achieve this purpose I have relayed mainly on The Adlerian Theory of Individual Psychology and Personality Types from which I borrowed some main concepts. Inferiority feelings, the notion of strive for compensation and final goal to analyse the characters, understand their psychological stand and gain recognition of their lifestyle in the first chapter. The concept of social interest which helped the identification of the characters Psychological types to treat the second chapter, providing a better understanding of the characters in both works and stressing their individuality.*

## I. Introduction

Psychology occupies a note-worthy place in the analysis of literary work. It is one of the leading fields that deal with the individual psyche. It helps people gain a better understanding of their thoughts and emotions; it does as well help identifying the origins of their emotions.

Psychoanalysis is one way to consider literary works; this discipline could be applied in to a literary works in several ways, one of which is applied by putting the individual in this particular case the characters as the centre on this study by analysing their attitudes and psychological involvement and asserting the uniqueness of their personality and individual differences.

Considering what is above stated, my dissertation endorses the understanding of the importance of psychoanalysis in understanding a literary work. The main concern of this research is to study and interpret the two works by Anton Chekhov "*My Life*" (1896) And "*The Betrothed*" (1903) from a psychoanalytical standpoint, investigating the characters psychological stand and their reactions to the environmental imposed restrictions, and considering them in relationship to other individuals in their surroundings to explore the uniqueness and individuality of each character. Thus this study will take into consideration all relevant involvement in the characters journeys. To accomplish this I would make reference to The Adlerian Theory of Individual Psychology and Personality types mainly the concepts of inferiority feelings, strive for compensation or superiority, final-goal, social interest, and personality types.

## 1. Review of the Literature

Anton Chekhov's works, received a substantial amount of consideration and criticism. Both, his last short story "*The Betrothed*" (1903) and his novella "*My Life*" (1896) received their fair share of consideration in terms of stylistics and content as both works were approached from different perspectives. We notice that the most common approach to the two works is from a psychological perspective, for instance Durkin, Andrew R in his article "*The Overthrow of Authority in Chekhov's 'My Life'*" emphasised, Chekhov's break from tradition and authority through both the rejection of literary tradition, as well as its several fields of vision from which we could mention the social, psychological, even autobiographical one. He did as well argue that in "*My Life*" not only did Chekhov reject the literary tradition but also issued a challenge to the very concepts of tradition and authority in the social and psychological spheres. Manifested through the rejection of the imposed authority in both his own life and through the character of Misail Plozenov's journey.<sup>1</sup>

In the same work the author also addressed is the depiction of the theme of oppressive paternal authority expressed in Chekhov's work "*My Life*", the story starts with the father beating his son because he went against his will, that did bring about change in the life of the main character, this change was the result of his conscious decision by both Misail and his sister, as they opposed the oppressive power of their father and pursued an independent life.<sup>2</sup> The work considered the psychology both the character of the Father as a symbol of the oppressive authority and his the character of the protagonist as he represents the oppressed. Continually in stressing the importance of the psychological perspective, Mary Garrett Dieterich, in her thesis about "*Chekhovian hero| An approach to mood*" at the university of Montana, the hero in Chekhov's works could be characterized in two different ways. Either through details like: age, social and economic influences, paternal backgrounds, physical features or through the person psychological analysis<sup>3</sup>. Chekhov focuses more on the psychological method, to present his view of what he depicted as the most vital reality of the

individual. As well as the demonstrated great consideration that he gave to the human soul and its existence in the world, illustrated by both protagonists in both previously mentioned works.<sup>4</sup> As to the environment influence on Chekhov's heroes expressed through an internal condition of mounting tension that first affects the soul, going within the protagonist, determining their adjustments and acceptance of the external physical world as well as their ability to such adjustments<sup>5</sup>. Emphasized as well is the fact that life determining decisions made by these characters, depend on their surroundings, families backgrounds, their response to their surroundings, their own desires, ideals, aptitudes, as well as the desires of those surrounding them, all the above mentioned influence the individual as they move toward what is expressed by the author as "his life's work".<sup>6</sup>As demonstrated through the character of Nadya Shimun in "The Betrothed" who showed revolt, through break from social expectations in her quest for more significant independent life.<sup>7</sup>

Similarly in a book entitled "Chekhov and Russian Religious Culture: The Poetics of the Marian Paradigm" by Julie W. De Sherbinin conducted an interesting interpretation of the work "*My life*", including the aspect of how "the social rebel" Misail Plozenov reject the life of a provincial nobility to pursue abasement life of toil, as a reaction of his resentment for the existing social order, as well as an attempt to equalize class disparities.<sup>8</sup>

Received a wide range of consideration is the theme of departure and the provincial verses the city, according to Donald Rayfield, Professor of Russian and Georgian in book "Understanding Chekhov: A Critical Study of Chekhov's Prose and Drama" in "*My life*" as well as in "*The Bride*" and many other stories the protagonist departure is not related to their hate for the town even though it has no minimum living standards, instead it is related to the dishonest, filthy, bribe taking inhabitants.<sup>9</sup> Notable therefore; is the consideration attributed to the mental of the characters and their psychology.

Always in the same frame in his introduction to the penguin "*The Lady with the Little Dog & Other Stories, 1896-1904*", Paul Debreczeny stated that a main theme presented and

common to Chekhov stories and often presented by his protagonists is the one of pointing at positive solutions to social problems or personal quests. Nadya's break from the prearranged marriage and her escape to study in St Petersburg is a representation of the new generation that will ring in change that will face and resolve social problems, as well as achieving her personal quest. Emphasized also is Nadya's need to depart to achieve her personal happiness as well as her nation welfare and to lead a socially useful life.<sup>10</sup> Same is elaborated in another work by Julie W. De Sherbinini argued that woven by Anton Chekhov in the plot of "My Life" are many conversations about the Russian question such as conscious, progress, freedom truth, all above mentioned related to the argument of how to be best useful.<sup>11</sup>

As part of Aliandra Antoniaci study of *"The Crisis Of The Russian Family In The Works Of Dostoevsky, Tolstoy And Chekhov"*, *"The Betrothed"* (1903) considered from a feminist perspective, asserting women's emancipation in Russia throw receiving education.<sup>12</sup> Discussed also is how Chekhov expressed his desire for changing the current order and how the protagonist Nadya represented the emancipated women, who strives to improve her life and achieve happiness outside the traditional frame of the middle class Russian women, choosing a career instead of a loveless marriage and a family life. Nadya's existential crisis is the result of societal expectations from her, emphasized is the role of her break from this social expectations and the importance of her journey in her growing awareness of her worth as an individual and its complete separation from the values and misogyny of her surroundings.<sup>13</sup> Stated as well is that: it is "clear evidence of this new trend in Russian society". In this story the bride and groom's families have arranged everything for them, even finding them a house, yet parental influence on their lives irritates the bride and so pictured the concept of oppressive paternal authority<sup>14</sup>. Nadya like Misail break social expectation and challenged paternal authority represented by her mother and grandmother in her quest for education and an independent life<sup>15</sup>.



In the same work by the same author, discussed Chekhov's "*My life*" in a frame of the legislation of divorce at that time in Russia. The author emphasized the effect of Misail's relationship with Masha; as it represents love and marriage and mainly divorce in the Russian society at that time, so the protagonist presented as a Tolstoy figure, his idealism attracted Masha's attention, Misail on the other hand considered her a person with whom he shared the same principles and ideals and so falls passionately in love with her. Those strong emotions that he had towards her had a great impact on his deeds; as he came to realization that many of his deeds were a desperate attempt to satisfy her; rather than out of his personal conviction, the author shaded light on their divorce be it newly legislated in Russia at that time.<sup>16</sup> As Misail discovers that she is not the woman troubled by social conscience that she pretended to be; rather one in a quest for a more interesting life. Disillusioned with their marriage, he grants her divorce when she asked for it to pursue her new adventure; however this failed experiment did leave a mark in Misail's life and person, made him grow wiser as a man and helped him find meaning in raising his niece.<sup>17</sup>

## **Issue and Working Hypothesis**

From previously cited works and critics, it is clear that the amount of studies conducted on both Chekhov's works "*My Life*" (1896) and "«The Betrothed»" (1903) allowed them to be considered from multiple perspectives, but common to all these studies is the emphasis on the importance of the psychological approach in understanding the mental as well as physical involvement of the characters in both works; while some focused on the major impact and the interference of the different aspect and experiences lived by the characters on their psychological stand, others spotlight on the characters strive to be best useful for one's own and to contribute to the well being of others.

To achieve our study purpose and to reinforce the previously mentioned studies our interest is going to be on the psychological interpretation of the two works by analysing the

characters decisions and actions, in relation to their surroundings, as well as the environmental imposed restrictions.

The choice of a comparative frame for the study aims to emphasize the uniqueness of their personalities and the individuality of their reactions. The selection of the two works, although both pictured and published in different periods of time and in spite the gender difference between the two protagonists, it is done based on the psychological importance that Chekhov accentuates into the two works, as well as the similarity of the process in their quest, Picturing the similarities and differences.

This analysis will therefore be conducted in the psychoanalytical frame of The Adlerian Theory of Individual Psychology, allowing through its main aspects to understand the psychological personality type of each character, by giving an insight on why the characters behave the way they do, what drives them, what are their goals and how socially useful they, as a part of the holistic approach of the theory.

For the fulfilment of our work, as previously mentioned we will be using Alfred Adler's Theory of Individual Psychology and Psychological Types, applied on the characters of both works, emphasizing Adler's concept of social interest presented in Adler's articles as well as the ones presented by different authors whom collected Adler's ideas and works.

## **Methodological Outlining**

This research paper is done following the IMRAD outline format: the introduction method and materials, and finally the results and discussion. In the first part of our memoire we have we presented a general introduction to our topic. Succeeding is the literature review where we have cited several previous studies and critics that we have found conducted on both works by Anton Pavlovich Chekhov, "*My Life*" and "«The Betrothed”", Following we issued working hypothesis where we emphasised the importance of psychological theory in analysing these two works and the characters psychological stand and uniqueness of their personality.

The second part include the Method and Materials, in which we summarized Alfred Adler's "The Adlerian Theory of Individual Psychology and its different concepts", along with his studied on social interest and personality types; it also includes summaries of the two primary sources "*My life*" and "«The Betrothed”", accompanied with biographical sketch of the author Anton Chekhov.

The Third part is dedicated to the results and findings of our research. It gives a concise presentation of the results of the developed hypothesis farther explicit in the Discussion.

Next is the fourth part pledged to a broader discussion and analysis of the findings and the results of our study on both Chekhov's works in a comparative frame; divided to three chapters, each of them explores and applies a particular part of the theory on the characters of the Chekhov's two previously cited works. The first chapter will focus on Alfred Adler's concept of inferiority feelings and his depiction by the characters, succeeded by defining their type following Adler characterization, followed by how the characters compensate and react towards them. The second chapter differentiates the individuality in each character's final goal and life style, highlighting the importance and the manifestation of social interest. Making reference to Adler's theory of personality types to help identify the characters psychological types,

At last is the "Conclusion" this section is devoted to conclude and summarize of the main themes covered by our study.

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<sup>1</sup>Durkin, AndrewR, "*The Overthrow of Authority in Chekhov's 'My Life'*", Hokkaido University Collection of Scholarly and Academic Papers : HUSCAP,(1990),<http://hdl.handle.net/2115/7998>.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid: p04.

<sup>3</sup>Dieterich, Mary Garrett, "*Chekhovian hero/ An approach to mood*" (1960). Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers (1789,22).

<sup>4</sup>Ibid: p23.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid: p44.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid: p45.

<sup>7</sup>Dieterich, Mary Garrett, "*Chekhovian hero/ An approach to mood*" (1960). Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers. (1789:60).

<sup>8</sup>Julie W. De Sherbinin, "*Chekhov and Russian Religious Culture: The Poetics of the Marian Paradigm*"(North-western university press(1997:125-126).

<sup>9</sup>Donald Rayfield, Professor of Russian and Georgian Donald Rayfield(1999).

"*Understanding Chekhov: A Critical Study of Chekhov's Prose and Drama*", The united state of America: University of Wisconsin press,(158-159).

<sup>10</sup>Paul Debreczeny, "the Penguin 'The Lady with the Little Dog & Other Stories, 1896-1904'". the Penguin 'The Lady with the Little Dog & Other Stories, 1896-1904'

<sup>11</sup>Julie W. De Sherbinin, "*Chekhov and Russian Religious Culture: The Poetics of the Marian Paradigm*" North-western university press,( 1997:126).

<sup>12</sup>AliandraAntoniacci, "The Crisis Of The Russian Family In The Works Of Dostoevsky, Tolstoy And Chekhov". University Of Canterbury,(2015:260).

<sup>13</sup> Ibid: P265.

<sup>14</sup>Aliandraantoniacci, "The Crisis Of The Russian Family In The Works Of Dostoevsky, Tolstoy And Chekhov"(Ph dissertation, University of Canterbury (2015:261-262).

<sup>15</sup>AliandraAntoniacci, "The Crisis Of The Russian Family In The Works Of Dostoevsky, Tolstoy And Chekhov" (Ph dissertation, University of Canterbury (2015:261-262).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid: p284.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid: p286.

## II. Method and Materials.

### 1. Method.

This part of our memoir, explore The Adlerian Theory of Individual Psychology and personality types, as developed in Alfred Adler's lifetime works, through the various collected works written by Adler himself or collected by other authors, mainly the work of Heinz L. Ansbacher and Rowena R. Ansbacher(1956), which collected and systematized Adler's writings and his Adlerian theory of individual psychology.

#### *a) The Adlerian Theory of Individual Psychology.*

The Adlerian Theory of Individual Psychology, started after Alder's contrast with Sigmund Freud, on his sexual proclamations, and his major split from the psychoanalytic school. Adler along with few of the members who resigned from the psychoanalytic school, Initiated what was originally entitled "The Society Of Free Psychoanalytic", later renamed "Individual Psychology"<sup>18</sup>. Contrary to what the name may imply; the word individual is taken from Latin word "Individium" meaning indivisible referring thereby to the holistic concept of the approach. Adler conceptualized viewing the person as a fully functioning, indivisible unit, rather than a collection of parts<sup>19</sup>. Its main focus is on personality theories it is therefore, a theory that allows the understanding of the individual in relationship to his surroundings, be it the people or the environment. Considered of a subjective nature, it provides as well an understanding of the motivations that drive the individual, along with their outcomes, and it stresses the importance of the social context.

The Adlerian theory of individual psychology is a therapeutic theory, applied to literary works it could assist through consideration and analysis of the events, to get a better understanding of the characters, their views and drives. Similarly to the therapeutic application, the emphasis of this theory is on how the characters consider the events that occur to them; rather than the actual facts that they encounter or their words and deeds<sup>20</sup>. In order to fully analyze the characters development throughout the different phases of the

works, there are some major aspects of the theory to be considered as presented and later developed through Adler's different lifetime works like "The Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology" (1923), "The Neurotic Constitution" (1912) and "Understanding Human Nature" (1927), Social Interest: A Challenge to Mankind (1933)... etc. from which we mention:

### ***b) The Feeling of Inferiority.***

According to Adler all individuals at one point of their life suffer from an inferiority feeling. He identified a variety of inferiority feelings. The primary feeling of inferiority is one that individuals experience earlier in their life as children, it is the normal feeling that the infant experience due to his incapacity, weakness, and dependency on others.<sup>21</sup>

Inferiority feelings continue to manifest throughout adult life in different degrees from one person to another, nevertheless these feelings of inferiority do not always present in negative frame. Adler argued that this particular feeling of inferiority is what drives individuals to better their lives and to seek compensation in changed or the same categories than the ones where they are experiencing those feelings of inferiority. Thus this could be of a positive outcome for the individual himself as well as to his community.<sup>22</sup> This category of inferiority feeling is introduced according to Adler as "Universal feelings of inferiority" and they are generally compensated for by means of strive for significance, perfection and security, in a respective coexisting environment with other individuals of the society.<sup>23</sup>

On the other hand the second category is what he introduced as "exaggerated feeling of inferiority" this which are the exaggerated personalized an irrational feelings of inferiority that the individual cannot or fails to compensate for, Adler also referred to it as inferiority complex he introduced it as the person with this type of life style seems to fail in finding solutions to existing problem.<sup>24</sup>

Common to both types Adler identified certain categories in which the individual might experience these feelings and they are exemplified as follows: Physical inferiority which comes as a result of physical disability or organ deficiency, physical weakness in general. Intellectual inferiority is often provoked by either a feeling of ignorance, lack of skills or illiteracy and the individual in this position will generally strive to compensate by seeking knowledge. Social inferiority is the result of the individual experience of loneliness, isolation, feeling social exclusion is what would be compensated for by seeking to be part of groups, associations and in general be social accepted and included. The third feeling of inferiority is what the feeling of inferiority experienced by the individual due to poverty or a bad financial situation, compensated for by seeking a better job or means to get rich, better economic position, and financial stability. Worth mentioning is also the psychological inferiority feeling that is generally a consequence of a situation whereby the individual experiences a feeling of guilt that would lead him to low self-esteem, as well as hate and dislike, might even in some situations cause real or imaginary acting unstable.

### ***c) Compensation and Strive for Superiority.***

Adler identified striving for superiority, as a shift from a perceived minus situation to a perceived plus situation<sup>25</sup> people are than trying to compensate for feelings of inferiority through their strive to achieve a better, improved situation. Adler also argued that what the individual perceived as a way to achieve this feeling of superiority are their final, fictional goals. He continued to stress the degree of social interest that the individual displays in his quest for his goal in determining the usefulness or useless of their goal in defining whether their attempt to achieve superiority is on the cost of those around them or for the amelioration of the society and individuals<sup>26</sup>

#### ***d) Final Fictional Goal.***

This concept introduced first by philosopher HansVaihinger in his book “The Philosophy of As if”, he asserted that people behaviours are guided by ideas of their creations<sup>27</sup> Adler later adapted Vaihinger’s view and asserted that goals are necessary for the advancement of the individual and that without recognition of a goal there will be no possibility for various strives to take place.<sup>28</sup> Another main point Also emphasized by Adler in this concept is that the main concern of individuals are future expectations rather than past experiences.<sup>29</sup>As well as the fact that individuals are goal oriented. He also presented multiple types of goals there are short medium and long term goals these last is what is referred to as fictional goals, and they are generally set by the individual without conscious realization.<sup>30</sup> This particular field of research that deals with the study of the fictional goal is named “Teleology”.<sup>31</sup>

#### ***e) Life Style.***

Life style is according to Adler the individual’s unique, chosen way to pursue his final goal in his particular situation, it is as well his line of movements towards his goal<sup>32</sup> in other terms it is the set of attitudes and actions taken by the individual as his version of the correct reaction towards his quest for his final goal, considering the environmental effects imposed on him in his situation. It is formed early in the person’s life mainly around the age of 3 to 5, the family and parents in particular have a great rule in helping to shape the child’s life style.<sup>33</sup>

#### ***f) The Concept of Social Interest and Community Feeling.***

The term social interest is Adler’s chosen translation for the German word “Gemeinschaftsgefühl”, which has several other interpretations like: follow feeling, sense of solidarity, social sense community interest...etc.<sup>34</sup>It is defined as a feeling of unity with other individuals or humans, thus according to Adler a normal person with a well-developed



Gemeinschaftsgefühl is one who strives for superiority and perfection in selfless way by considering and striving for the welfare and the good of all the others instead of his own .<sup>35</sup>

Adler also emphasized the importance and the impact the child's relationship with his parents has on his capacity to develop a feeling of social interest, as well as a healthy life style. He did also consider it as mean to measure psychological health; individuals who possess social interest are therefore viewed to have a useful life and elevated sense of responsibility, whereas individuals who lack or have none social interest are more likely to be self-centred, strive for power and superiority over others.<sup>36</sup>This last is according to Adler a psychologically unhealthy character which he titled a neurotic person.

Shortly Adler's definition of social interest could be presented in one sentence "me with you" instead of "me against you".<sup>37</sup>

### ***g) Psychological Personality Types.***

Alfred Adler distinguished four personality types three of them are based on their manifested levels of energy through their life quest, the four following types all lack social interest but they differ in their degree of activity:

#### ***The Ruling Type***

They are characterized to be aggressive and dominant over the others, they are rather vigorous in their strive for power and lean to push others in the process. They put their welfare above the others, and tend to face life tasks in an antisocial manner.<sup>38</sup>

#### ***The Leaning Type.***

This type manifest low energy levels they are dependent and generally relaying on others help to live their lives and solve difficulties, they often build a shell around them for protection as they tend to be very sensitive people.<sup>39</sup>

### ***The Avoiding Type.***

They have the lowest angry level; their survival is basically by avoiding life and life tasks, and living in their own worlds,<sup>40</sup> some may explain their behaviour as due the overcome of their fear of failure on their desire to successes.<sup>41</sup>

### ***The Socially Useful Type.***

This fourth type according to Adler is considered as psychologically healthy, they have good energy level which allows them to have a feeling of social interest, and they strive for the welfare and the good of all others.<sup>42</sup>

## **2. Materials**

### ***a) The Biography of Anton Chekhov***

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov a Russian physician playandshort-story writer, born in Taganrog Russia, January1860.<sup>43</sup>He was the third of six children, five sons and one daughter.<sup>44</sup> He is the son of the very religious, severe, father and shop owner, PavelEgorovich Chekhov mistreated his children and ignored his business which compelled Anton to work and manage his shop.<sup>45</sup> Chekhov lived a difficult childhood although he had an affectionate mother; his father's attitude and roughness towards him and his siblings had a great impact on his life and his career as a writer; as he later projected these experiences into his fiction. Before, Teenager Chekhov witnessed his father business going bankrupt and his family moving to Moscow, living him behind to support himself; young Anton studied briefly in a local school for Greek boys, then he entered the town high school during 10 years where he received the best possible education.<sup>46</sup> In 1876 Pavel travelled to Moscow mainly to escape his creditors and Anton became lodger in his own home. In 1875 he fell ill he was treated by his school doctor. Dr Schrempf tales of medical life intrigued Anton's curiosity and attention in studying medicine; but it was rather the decent income that both he and his family require, that made him choose a career in medicine. <sup>47</sup> He later joined the

faculty of medicine and graduated in 1884<sup>48</sup>, along with his journey as a medical student Chekhov did as well work on his fiction; but his works were generally published under pseudonyms, his career as writer grew and developed as he met his publisher at that period “Nicholas Leikin” the owner of the “St. Petersburg journal Oskolki”<sup>49</sup> This helped him to reach a wider public in particular the intelligentsia of the capital, but this remained his side job while he continued practicing medicine as his prime job<sup>50</sup> He showed great interest and admiration for the country side, as he spent a considerable amount of time there; which inspired him into the making of several of his works and so did several other marking events in his life like his attacks of spitting blood before 1886<sup>51</sup> and he is eventually diagnosed of tuberculosis, as well as his brother’s Nikolay illness and his death of consumption in 1890<sup>52</sup>. Anton’s health worsened as he had another major collapse in March 1897 his doctor advised him to move to a warmer location and so he did as he spent the winter of the same year in Nice, before moving to Yalta in 1898 where he bought a land and associated with the Moscow Arts Theatre where he met his wife Olga Knipper<sup>53</sup> Anton Pavlovich Chekhov; although he suffered for most of his life from a progressive disease he dedicated his life to both medicine and literature as he stated “Medicine is my lawful wife and literature my mistress; when I get tired of one, I spend the night with the other” and he had a long list of achievements to confirm it. His dedication to his profession continued to his very last days, in the German spa town of Badenweiler, on the 2 July 1904.<sup>54</sup>

## ***b) Synopsis of the Two Works***

### ***i. Synopsis of “My Life” (1896)***

Anton Chekhov’s “*My Life*” subtitled “The Story of a Provincial” written in (1896) and first published in the same year, is one of Chekhov’s longest tales. In twenty chapters the author recounts the protagonist’s journey in his quest for belonging and self-actualization, his urge to feel of significance and his battle to achieve his self-ideals. Misail Poloznev’s own convictions, preclude him from keeping a job that is destined to his social class and that

prerequisite him a reputation of a good-for-nothing. Still he rejects his status as one of the nobility and all duties that came with it, in an attempt to achieve his personal ideals. This decision came after a confrontation with his authoritarian father who ashamed him, even beat him, for the humiliation that he brought on his family as well as their inherited reputation. Misail choose the life of a work-man, decided to live of manual labour and no longer be a burden on anyone. Demonstrating; thereby the protagonist profound sympathy with the working class, as he enjoyed working by their side and found great comfort in it. Before starting work at the railway line for the engineer Dolzhikov, a job that he obtained with the help of his sister Kleopatra dearest friend Aniuta Blagovo, he worked at The Azhogins painting scenes for the theatricals, along with Andrey Ivanov a house painter, known as Radish. Shortly after, he went to see the engineer Dolzhikov for the promised job. He first saw the engineer's daughter Masha for the first time. On his way to Dubetchnya to start his new occupation, he thought and considered the amount of corruption, hypocrisy and dishonesty that Reign over in his society.

Succeeding, he spend quiet a time working at the telegraph lodge, living along with Ivan Tcheprekov an old schoolmate of him and his mother an old lady, on Dolzhikov property which once was theirs. Following a visit from the engineer to the station, Misail felt unpleasant with his disdainful and inconsiderate attitude; thus he left and started working for Radish the contractor, as a painter. He very much enjoyed his new occupation. People's negative response to the protagonist lifestyle was deeply sorrowful, although a few friends like his sister and Dr. Blagovo paid him constant visits. The last whom he shared with intriguing conversations about his believes lifestyle and principles. Misail showed determination and commitment towards his new lifestyle, despite his sister insistance to reconsider it and Dr. Blagovo's argument about the merits of manual labour. Both his determination and confidence received an immense hit at the arrival of autumn, while he confronts the obnoxious side of his new lifestyle. As the cold grow freezing and work

opportunities minimized, he suffered a great deal both the roughness of the cold and that of society. Dr. Blagovo continued paying Misail visits as he lived with his nurse and her son. The protagonist suspected these visits to be more for the sake of seeing Kleopatra, than of socializing as they both often showed up at the same time. As time goes by they grow closer and eventually introduced him to Masha who appreciated his company and independent thoughts and encouraged him to strive for his ideals. After constant visits he grows used to her, but he felt their encounters as a betrayal to his newly chosen lifestyle; therefore, ceased going to see her. Unexpectedly she showed to see him and they gave up to their feelings. Shortly after, they were reunited in a matrimonial union, with the blessing of his sister. The couple moved to Dubatchneya and managed Dolzhikov estate there. Maria Victorovna decided to construct a new school with the help of the peasants. The newlywed happiness did not last long as they started having troubles with the peasants at the farm and at the school as well. The peasants took advantage of them and stole from them they also demanded vodka at every opportunity. Misail grew closer to the peasants, as Masha grew disgusted by them and distanced from her husband even though he did everything in his capacity to please her. The school construction came to end, as did Misail's marriage with Masha. She left him to go to America with her father leaving behind nothing, but a letter where she asked him to give her back her freedom and to grant her divorce. His sister on the other hand, who is now pregnant with Dr. Blagovo's child, is very much ill and only has a little time to live. Both living at Radish's house after their nurse's son asked them to leave there house considering Kleopatra's pregnancy unacceptable. They tried to enjoy each other's company and dream of all the good things that could happen to them. Misail went to visit his father and told him about his daughter's life in danger, but instead of forgiving them, his father continued blaming Misail's decisions for every trouble they encountered. Shortly after his sister's death, Misail took Radish's work and became a contractor and raised his sister's child.

as his own and found meaning in that. Misail is now more silent as though with all the decisiveness he lived came a great deal of maturity along with life expertise.

## **ii. Synopsis of “«The Betrothed” ” (1903)**

“«The Betrothed” ” translated also as “The Fiancée” or “The Bride”. It is Chekov’s last completed story. First published in the issue of “Zhurna IDyaVsekh”(1903). It is the story of twenty three years old Nadya Shumina, living along with her mother Nina Ivanovna and her grandmother in their provincial estate, they enjoyed an easy, wealthy life, with servants to attend their every need. The young women desired to be married from the age of sixteen. Currently the fiancée of the town’s priest son Andrey Andreitch a causeless, shallow young man. The couple’s wedding is set for the 7<sup>th</sup> of July, at a family gathering in Granny’s estate, in the presence of Andrey and his father; Nadya went out looking from the window to her family and enjoying the outdoor beauty and peace, despite that she seemed troubled. Shortly afterwards, she was joined by Alexander Timofeitch, an old family friend also known as Sasha. Both of them initiated a little conversation in which Alexander expressed his criticism and disagreement with their lifestyle; he disheartened Nadya’s will to marry Andrey, as he insulted him and encourages her to change her mind and go to university. According to Nadya, Sasha’s words are nothing new or out of the ordinary, but for once Nadya is touched by them, deep down she agrees with him; but she could not alter a single word, instead she started crying as response. Nadya suffered from sleeping difficulties at night, as a result of her recurrent, obsessive thoughts regarding her marriage, later developed to a depression. Although the protagonist was surrounded by beauty and comfort, her feelings of unhappiness, uncertainty, grow bigger and so did her depression. While visiting their soon to be home, the couple had a conversation where Nadya came certain that this wedding is not something that she really desires. In a conversation with her fiancée where he expressed his deep emotions of love and passion towards her, Nadya discovered

that she felt the complete opposite for him.; As he showed great enthusiasm and longing for their life together; she on the other hand felt more distant and depress. The protagonist tried to open up to her mother that she once considered her idol, about her unwillingness to get married. Nina begged her not to. Nadya faced her mother and criticized her lifestyle; Nina breaks to tears and leaves her room. The next morning, she told Sasha that she will join him and so they planned an escape plan. Entering to her mother's room Nadya took a last look at her mother, then told her grandmother that she will accompany Sasha to the train station to say goodbye. Next as planned at the last minute she joined him on board and so she leaves a life of "philistine materialism for a life of hard work and self-denial"<sup>55</sup>Ronald WILKS(1986) . Nadya started her journey crying and having mixed feelings of sadness and excitement for a better life. After a long time of living abroad alone, Nadya started to feel homesick. She received word from home, that her mother and grandmother forgave her. Nadya finally decided to head home, starting her journey from Moscow, paying a visit to her dear old friend Sasha, who was in very bad health. She continued her journey home to visit her family; both her mother and grandmother received her with great joy. Although their social status and wealth are now diminished, as a consequence of society's reaction to Nadya's escapement of her marital duty and despite the low socioeconomic conditions the family is now living, Nadya enjoyed a good, calm night of sleep for the first time in a while. Time passes by as Nadya enjoyed the change in their town, dreaming of a greater future, her family on the other hand refused to leave the house out of fear of running into Andrey and his father. One morning the family received a telegram informing about sasha's death from tuberculosis. With extreme sadness Nadya received the news. After a moment of reflection Nadya reached the conclusion that she no longer belongs to this place and that she should continue her quest for belonging elsewhere, Thus she went up to her room packing her belongings with big hope of a better future and an independent life.

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## End Notes

<sup>18</sup> Harold Mosak and Michael Maniacci , “*Primer of Adlerian Psychology the analytical-Behavioural-Cognitive Psychology of Alfred Adler*”, (New York: Brunner-Routledge ),06.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid: p06.

<sup>20</sup> Birger Sachau, “*Individual Psychology In The Teaching Of Foreign Language And Literature: A New Approach In Foreign Language Pedagogy And An Adlerian Interpretation Of Selected Works By Theodor Storm*”(Ph Dissertation, The Pennsylvania State University;2004),42.

<sup>21</sup> Heinz L. Ansbacher And Rowena R. Ansbacher, “*The Individual Psychology Of Alfred Adlra Systematic Presentation In Selections From His Writings*” (New York: Basic Books, Inc.),115.

<sup>22</sup> Milliren, Fern Clemmer, Wes Wingett, and Tony Testement, “*The Movement from “Felt Minus” to “Perceived Plus”: Understanding Adler’s Concept of Inferiority,” In Readings in the theory of individual psychology*, ed. Steve Slavik and Jon Carlson (New York: Routledge,2006),351-353.

<sup>23</sup> Richard Royal Kopp, “On Clarifying Basic Adlerian Concepts: A Response to Maddi,” In *Readings in the theory of individual psychology*, ed. Steve Slavik and Jon Carlson (New York: Routledge,2006),74-75.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid: p75.

<sup>25</sup> Milliren, Fern Clemmer, Wes Wingett, and Tony Testement, “*The Movement from “Felt Minus” To “Perceived Plus”: Understanding Adler’s Concept Of Inferiority,” In Readings In The Theory Of Individual Psychology*, Ed. Steve Slavik And Jon Carlson (New York: Routledge,2006),352.

<sup>26</sup> Harold Mosak And Michael Maniacci , “*Primer Of Adlerian Psychology The Analytical-Behavioural-Cognitive Psychology Of Alfred Adler*”, (New York: Brunner-Routledge ),22.

<sup>27</sup> Heinz L. Ansbacher And Rowena R. Ansbacher, *The Individual Psychology Of Alfred Adlra Systematic Presentation In Selections From His Writings* (New York: Basic Books, Inc.),77.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid: P88-90.

<sup>29</sup> Calvin Springer Hall And Gardner Lindzey, “*Theories Of Personality*”,( Wiley,1978),119.

<sup>30</sup> Alfred Adler, “*Understanding Life*”, Ed.Colinbrett (England :Oneworld Publications,1997),XIII.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid :P.XIII

<sup>32</sup> Heinz L. Ansbacher And Rowena R. Ansbacher, “*The Individual Psychology Of Alfred Adlra Systematic Presentation In Selections From His Writings*” (New York: Basic Books, Inc.),172.

<sup>33</sup> Kingdom Umegbewegoodluck And Justin M. Odinioha Gabriel, “*Adlerian Individual Psychology Counselling Theory: Implications For The Nigeria Context*,” *British Journal Of Applied Science & Technology*, (2017):04, Wwww.Sciencedomain.Org.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid: P34.

<sup>35</sup> Jess Feist, Gregory J. Feist And Tomi-Ann Roberts, “*Theories Of Personality, Ninth Edition*”,( New York: Mcgraw-Hill Education, 2018),81.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid: P82-83.

<sup>37</sup> Alfred Adler, “*Understanding Life*”, Ed.Colinbrett (England :Oneworld Publications,1997),XII.



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- <sup>38</sup> C. George Boeree, *Personality Theories, Alfred Adler [ 1870 – 1937 ]*, ( Psychology Department Shippensburg University, , 2006),09.  
[Http://Www.Ship.Edu/%7Ecgboree/Perscontents.Html](http://Www.Ship.Edu/%7Ecgboree/Perscontents.Html)
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid: p09.
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid: p09.
- <sup>41</sup> Kingdom Umegbewe Goodluck and Justin M. Odinioha Gabriel, “Adlerian Individual Psychology Counselling Theory: Implications for the Nigeria Context,” *British Journal of Applied Science & Technology*, (2017):05, [www.sciencedomain.org](http://www.sciencedomain.org).
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- <sup>43</sup> Ronald Francis Hingley, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, s.v. “Anton Chekhov”, January 25, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Anton-Chekhov>
- <sup>44</sup> A L Wyman, “Anton Chekhov, writer and physician wedded to medicine”, *Journal of Medical Biography*, no. 4(1996), 154-155
- <sup>45</sup> Ronald Francis Hingley, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, s.v. “Anton Chekhov”, January 25, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Anton-Chekhov>
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>47</sup> A L Wyman, “Anton Chekhov, writer and physician wedded to medicine”, *Journal of Medical Biography*, no. 4(1996) : 154-155
- <sup>48</sup> Ronald Francis Hingley, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, s.v. “Anton Chekhov”, January 25, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Anton-Chekhov>
- <sup>49</sup> Ibid
- <sup>50</sup> A L Wyman, “*Anton Chekhov, writer and physician wedded to medicine*”, *Journal of Medical Biography*, no. 4(1996) : 155.
- <sup>51</sup> Anton Chekhov, “*Letters of Anton Chekhov To His Friend and Family*”, translated by Constance Garnett,(2002)
- <sup>52</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>53</sup> A L Wyman, “*Anton Chekhov, writer and physician wedded to medicine*”, *Journal of Medical Biography*, no. 4(1996) : 158.
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### III. Results

In the light of our reading of Anton Chekhov both works “«The Betrothed” ” and “*My life*” (The story of a provincial)” and after a brief presentation of the works and critics conducted on both of them in the review of literature, we have noticed a gap, that paved the way for conducting this study from a psychoanalytical approach. It provides a chance to consider the two literary works from a new psychoanalytical lens using mainly the Adlerian Theory of Individual Psychology and Personality Types. In an attempt to understand, interpret and analyse the characters journeys and progress, I have made an appeal to some important concepts of the previously mentioned theory. Provided as well is synopsis of both plots to help accomplish what was previously signed in our work agenda in the discussion reviling the following results.

In chapter one, Anton Chekhov sketched his characters in a way that privileged their psychological features on the physical ones. I discovered diversity in the types of inferiority feelings experienced by the characters through their journeys. Established as well is the uniqueness of each character’s experience and the various causes for his feelings of inferiority. The individual way of compensation be it personal superiority or helped identify each characters as a result of the individuality of their persona.

In chapter two I have concluded that the different characters had different reaction to their inferiority feelings depending on the nature of their final goal, and the degree of their social interest trying. Another reached result is the importance of .notion of social interest, in identifying the characters a psychological type following Adler’s theory of psychological types, Farther help us better understand the individuality of the characters as sketched by the author.

#### IV. Discussion

The discussion part of our memoir shall deal with the different characters of the two works by Anton Chekhov “*My Life*” and “*«The Betrothed»*”, in a psychoanalytical frame allowing analyzing their psychological stand and its progress throughout the different phases of their lives, as well as attempting to define their personality types, to fully understand the works events.

##### **Chapter One: Inferiority Feelings, The Diversity in Development and compensation.**

This chapter investigates Adler’s concept of inferiority feeling with its different types, projected into the characters of both works, mainly the two protagonists. The emphasis is on how the characters developed their feelings of inferiority, as well as defining its type; through examining the diversity in the manifestation of those feelings, how they are demonstrated through their actions and deeds.

Adler asserted that proper understanding of the individual is better done in relation to other individuals and his surroundings, rather than considering him a collection of parts. Chekhov through his plots and particular to his characters presented several types of inferiority feelings particular to each character, he also explicits the difference in the method they each experienced.

Chekhov demonstrated it in the particular case of Misail Poloznev the protagonist of “*My Life*”, the depiction and manifestation of those feelings is done through various situations, from which we mention his exchanged words and deeds with the other characters around him.

Adler emphasised the role of encouragement and especially within the family in developing an individual with a pro-social behaviours; encountered with discouragement those feelings might shift, causing the individual to engage in negative, self-destructive behaviours.<sup>56</sup> Along

with Adler also stressed the inborn human desire for belonging and contributing to a group.<sup>57</sup> This definition seems to fit the way Anton Chekhov presented the relationship Misail had with his father. The presence of the fatherly figure had an impact on the protagonist developed inferiority feeling, Chekhov demonstrated that as he introduced the character of the father and exhibited the unstable relationship that he has with his son. Old Poloznev oppressive authority over his children is exhibited by means of emotional and physical violence. In a conversation with his son Poloznev father did not restrain himself from criticizing, shaming and blaming his son Misail on his chosen path, he shows hatred and opposition with his decisions and discourages any attempt by him to achieve what he believes in. He was rather authoritarian with both his children, as he forced Misail into a life of Intelligentsia out of conviction that he should carry the “holy fire” and the legacy of his ancestors, to work as a member of the intelligentsia.<sup>58</sup> Notable therefore is the absence of what Adler identified as “Encouragement” from the parents, particularly that Poloznev father was the closest figure that both his children had of a family after they experience the death of their mother at a very young age.

Continually in the frame of “encouragement” and “the development self-destructive behaviours”, it is possible to presume that the father Poloznev had failed his psychological task as a parent, who had an important role in defining and shaping the personality of his children and contributing in forming healthy individuals. It is also open to discussion that Misail’s developed feelings of inferiority as a response to his father’s mal-treatment, more precisely the fact that he considered him a burden on him “What do you think about yourself?” my father went on. “By the time they are your age, young men have a secure social position, while look at you: you are a proletarian, a beggar, a burden on your father!”<sup>59</sup> the depiction of the weight these words had on him is made through his lines: “Living here, I was less liable to be seen by my father and his visitors and I fancied that if I did not live in a real room, and did not go into the house every day to dinner, my father's words that I was a burden

upon him did not sound so offensive.”<sup>60</sup> From these instances one can conclude that Misail chooses isolation from any social contacts and to live in poor conditions as a reaction to the depth of the wound that his father’s words and dreadful expressions had on him. The protagonist resoled to isolation from other individuals, which is standard by Adler as a self-destructive behaviour as a reaction to his father discouragement of his innate social orientation.

Farther, at the beginning of the novella in the first chapter, wrapped in a sarcastic tone Misail’s words revealed a preview on the image he drew of himself as an unworthy person, as depicted in his discussion with the superintendent when he told him: “you flatter me too much, your Excellency, in assuming that I am capable of flying” as a response to the superintendent saying that he only kept him out of regard for his worthy father or else he “would have sent him flying long ago.”<sup>61</sup> It appears that the only reason people would show any interest in him is the respect they have for his father, otherwise they have no consideration for his persona. Regrettable is that the father himself does not even demonstrate minimal consideration nor affection towards his son, what could be weighed as the emotional trigger for his feeling of social inferiority.

The protagonist felt more of an outcast. He did not only experience alienation from his father but he did as well experience it within his own social rank. In the second chapter precisely at the beginning of his journey Misail declare:

“I was fond of my native town. It seemed to be so beautiful and so snug! I loved the fresh greenery, the still, sunny morning, the chiming of our bells; but the people with whom I lived in this town were boring, alien to me, sometimes even repulsive. I did not like them nor understand them.”<sup>62</sup>

These words are a legit statement that the lack of the innate human tendency for belonging to a group and contributing to it, or in this particular case to a social rank due to moral

incompatibility with other individuals from the same category, is what drive the character to developed social inferiority feelings, one can assume that Misail felt socially, alienated, and rejected which led him to experience a feeling of social inferiority.

Always in the type of social inferiority, throughout the novella the author showed in several situations and by various means, the amount of compassion and appreciation Misail had for the lower class, especially the ones who live out of manual labour as it shows in the following excerpt:

We talked, and when we got upon manual labour I expressed this idea: that what is wanted is that the strong should not enslave the weak, that the minority should not be a parasite on the majority, nor a vampire for ever sucking its vital sap; that is, all, without exception, strong and weak, rich and poor, should take part equally in the struggle for existence, each one on his own account, and that there was no better means for equalizing things in that way than manual labour, in the form of universal service, compulsory for all.<sup>63</sup>

We can argue that Misail stand is a proof of how much discomfort he felt with how his social class treated people of the lower class, he even felt a shamed of being served by other people and be a burden on them. Those feeling might be considered the main reason that pushed Misail to leave his own rank and purchase a life of manual labour as his attempt to skip that feeling of social inferiority that he experienced along with the intelligentsia.

Depicted as well, is the protagonist feeling of discomfort with the type of intellectual work that he was experiencing as showed in his words: "... I served in various Government offices, spending the greater part of the day in complete idleness, and I was told that was intellectual work. My activity in the scholastic and official sphere had required neither mental application nor talent, nor special qualifications, nor creative impulse; it was mechanical"<sup>64</sup>. Although he always dreamed of a career in the intellectual sphere, he expressed his ignorance and discomfort with the fact of wither or not he is able to do any intellectual work, as a consequence of an established believed that he perceived early in his childhood, at the fourth class. This early recollected feeling could be argued to be what him in a position to feel

inferior to other people from the intellectual sphere and as a result felt to establish any relationship with them as portrayed throughout the work. This case therefore fits Adler's definition of the type of intellectual inferiority.

Continually in the depiction of intellectual inferiority feelings as presented by Alfred Adler, expressed in chapter nine are Misail's feelings of intellectual inferiority presented by the protagonist himself by means a low spirit, due to lack of intellectual capacity precisely agriculture knowledge in comparison with Masha's great knowledge of the subject; as he envied "her cupboard of books and her agriculture"<sup>65</sup> this feeling put him in state of inferiority articulated in his own words: "I knew nothing of work on the land, and did not like it"<sup>66</sup>

According to Alfred Adler: "At an early age, children, through their small physical size and dependence on others for nurturance and protection, realize their inferiority". This feeling of inferiority continues to develop in the children's comparison of themselves with an unattainable ideal perfection defined for them by their parents In the light of what has been said, another type of inferiority feeling is depicted, which could be related to the strict education they received. Recalling what Adler named an early childhood memory, when their father resoled to violence as a disciplinary tool and continued to do so even now that he is a responsible adult as stated "Don't dare to talk to me like that, stupid!" he shouted in a thin, shrill voice. "Wastrel!" and with a rapid, skilful, and habitual movement he slapped me twice in the face. "You are forgetting yourself".<sup>67</sup> The traumatizing impact that this experience had on Misail and his sister was immense, expressed in his own words: "When my father beat me as a child I had to stand up straight, with my hands held stiffly to my trouser seams, and look him straight in the face. And now when he hit me I was utterly overwhelmed, and, as though I were still a child, drew myself up and tried to look him in the face"<sup>68</sup>. The previous extract is an illustration of how the protagonist developed a feeling of physical

inferiority as a response to the violence his father preformed against him. Adler's definition of physical inferiority feeling seems to fit Misail feelings of weakness and intimidation.

As to the idea of the expanse of the previously mentioned feelings by means of comparison with unattainable ideal perfection defined by the parents, it could be exemplified by what his father frequently convey as an ideal perfection which is his ancestors and their inherited reputation, that was to Misail standards for many reasons unattainable as stated in the following passage:

Understand, you dense fellow -- understand, you addle-pate, that besides coarse physical strength you have the divine spirit, a spark of the holy fire, which distinguishes you in the most striking way from the ass or the reptile, and brings you nearer to the Deity! This fire is the fruit of the efforts of the best of mankind during thousands of years. Your great-grandfather Poloznev, the general, fought at Borodino; your grandfather was a poet, an orator, and a Marshal of Nobility; your uncle is a schoolmaster; and lastly, I, your father, am an architect! All the Poloznevs have guarded the sacred fire for you to put it out!<sup>69</sup>

Another illustration of a felt inferiority feeling by the protagonist early in his childhood, that continues to have an impact on him, is what is concluded from the story that rouse after Misail crossed path with his old schoolmate Ivan Tcheprakov portrayed in this excerpt :

We used at one time, during autumn, to catch goldfinches, finches, and linnets together, and to sell them in the market early in the morning, while our parents were still in their beds. We watched for flocks of migrating starlings and shot at them with small shot, then we picked up those that were wounded, and some of them died in our hands in terrible agonies (I remember to this day how they moaned in the cage at night); those that recovered we sold, and swore with the utmost effrontery that they were all cocks. On one occasion at the market I had only one starling left, which I had offered to purchasers in vain, till at last I sold it for a farthing. "Anyway, it's better than nothing," I said to comfort myself, as I put the farthing in my pocket, and from that day the street urchins and the schoolboys called after me: "Better-than-nothing"; and to this day the street boys and the shopkeepers mock at me with the nickname, though no one remembers how it arose.<sup>70</sup>

Regarding this case, we can conclude that the protagonist experienced a feeling of inferiority in comparison to his schoolmates, those feelings are due to the lack of both physical and intellectual skills and are mainly what categorized him in the column of what Adler entitled "a felt minus situation", this situation is what caused Misail to break societal expectation and rebel against the existing social order as well as his authoritarian father. . His reaction



towards his inferiority feeling does as well show that he is consumed by his inferiority feelings which makes him able to look properly outside himself and to be of use to others.<sup>71</sup>

The character of the father also pertains to a particular type of inferiority feeling that could be put under the category of what Adler identified as superiority complex, a result of accumulate and ignored felt inferiority feeling or several inferiority feelings like physical inferiority feeling that is due to his incapacity to endure physical work taking as prove the protagonist description of his father physical condition to be weak<sup>72</sup>; which consequently pushed him to hate manual labour and forbid his son to pursue such a career. Intellectual inferiority that raised by his lack of skills pictured in several passages by the protagonist himself as he emphasised Father poloznev lack of taste and creativity when regarding his work as an architect<sup>73</sup> that led him to deprive both his children to experience the intellectual sphere by exhorting his oppressive authority. Misail stated that his father “worshiped himself, and nothing was convincing to him but what he said himself” this excerpt to the point Alfred Adler’s definition of the neurotic character, but it fits as well what we said previously about the superiority complex all that is previously listed father poloznev saw in the lower class which led him to hate, and sickened by this social class and see himself as superior “And as usual he proceeded to declare that the young people of to-day were on the road to perdition through infidelity, materialism, and self-conceit, and that amateur theatricals ought to be prohibited, because they seduced young people from religion and their duties.”<sup>74</sup> He is characterized by Chekhov for several traits but most highlighted is his oppressive authority, his dominance and his violence depicted in the storylines especially against his children, and a particular category in his society.

Anton Chekhov presented the character of Kleopatra with a deadly illness from which she suffered most her life, relatable to the fact that he himself suffered from tuberculosis, which fits Adler’s theory of physical inferiority and Organ deficiency. Throughout the events

Kleopatra's organ deficiency and physical weakness is depicted; although this may or may not be the author state of his own condition the character fits Adler's definition of physical inferiority. Kleopatra does also exhibit another type of inferiority feeling which is illustrated by her lack of social life or the absence of it. This may be the result of the lifestyle her father imposed on her as expressed by Misail: "allowing her to walk arm in arm with no one but himself, and imagining for some reason that sooner or later a suitable young man would be sure to appear, and to desire to enter a marital relationship with her from respect for his personal qualities. She adored my father, feared him, and believed in his exceptional intelligence."<sup>75</sup> She manifested no social interest, but rather a final goal of personal superiority and exaggerated feelings of inferiority. Kleopatera Plozenov seems to be of a submissive nature. Farther her life style and her final goals seem to be free from any commitment to her society. Her failure to compensate for her feelings of inferiority could be the result of the fact that she is overwhelmed by her personal inferiority. On the other hand her complete reliance on her brother depicted mostly by the ending of the work<sup>76</sup>,

Successive is another's character distinctive depiction and manifestation of an inferiority feeling, according to what Adler identified as following: "There is another way in which people respond to inferiority besides compensation and the inferiority complex: You can also develop a superiority complex. The superiority complex involves covering up your inferiority by pretending to be superior. If you feel small, one way to feel big is to make everyone else feel even smaller!"<sup>77</sup> Masha's feeling of loathing and disgust with the peasants as a reaction to the felt minus situation the peasants then self-put her in and so the manifestation of her feeling of inferiority was by a superiority complex exemplified in her words: "And all the time Masha frowned grimly and said nothing, or murmured to the doctor with exasperation: "Savages! Petchenyegs!"<sup>78</sup> Another inferiority feeling that is so relative with this character is the one of economic inferiority as the author kept referring to her as daughter Dolzihkov and the engineer's daughter as his way to refer to Masha's complete dependence

on her father financially and socially as it is portrayed throughout the work. Mariya Viktorovna felt a lone and alienated as noted in her discussion with Misail: ““Don’t desert me,” she said, and her eyes filled with tears. “I am alone, utterly alone.”...”Alone! *My life* is hard, very hard and in all the world I have no one but you. Don’t desert me!”<sup>79</sup> Her words are an honest statement of her felt social inferiority as she found herself in a position with no social contacts and experienced a feeling of loneliness; her reaction was one of despair as she found herself begging Misail to not cut his relationship with her. Masha’s goals and her strive to compensate for her feelings of inferiority are self-centred; and voided from any commitment for her society.

Correspondingly to what have been said about Misail , Nadya Shumin the protagonist of “*«The Betrothed»*” witnessed similar emotions. Her journey to self-actualization started with a feeling of alienation both with her society and family. Driven by a feeling of restlessness with the chosen social pattern conducted by her family, Nadya felt discomfort in living accordingly and so choose to go against her innate social orientation and decided to isolate herself. The character is often presented far from the family and often looking at them from the outside, as if the author is emphasising the idea that she does not belong to them. Chekhov intended to sketch the picture of the family without the presence of the protagonist, as his way of showing her feeling of distance and alienation Portrayed in the opening scene “Nadya -- she had gone into the garden for a minute could see the table being laid for supper in the dining-room, and her grandmother bustling about in her gorgeous silk dress”<sup>80</sup>. This could be partly what pushed her to isolate herself from social contacts as well as to feel discouraged to establish her own life following her family footsteps. As stated previously Adler stressed the role of the family in developing the innate social need to contribute to society, “Adler’s belief was that everyone is born with social interest defined as a need to contribute to the family and eventually, to the society in which he finds himself. He further stated that when an individual loses social interest or engages in antisocial behaviour, this

individual is generally a victim of a discouraging social structure, specifically the family.”<sup>81</sup> Concluded therefore is that the protagonist is experiencing feelings of estrangement that put her in a felt minus situation.

Nadya grow distanced and gloomy as the family initiated the arrangements of her marriage; what forced her to rebel against social expectations, to give up her societal role as a housewife and to take part of what she believed is destined for her. The protagonist entered a state of depression as she witnessed a feeling of alienation as a consequence of several circumstances that could be interpreted according to Adler as “a stimulus to experiencing a felt minus situation”, which could be farther completed to a social inferiority feeling in this particular case. As an example of the above mentioned circumstances we can highlight the following passage from chapter three:

“It was clear to her now that she had ceased to love Andrey Andreitch or perhaps had never loved him at all; but how to say this and to whom to say it and with what object she did not understand, and could not understand, though she was thinking about it all day and all night”<sup>82</sup>

This passage introduced how Nadya came to a conclusion that a life with Andrey Andreitch is not what she desires and that she has no feelings for him, however what triggered her feelings of inferiority was rather the fact that she has no one to share this with, out of fear that no one will comprehend her. In a discussion with her mother in chapter four, as the protagonist predicted her mother dismissed her in her first attempt to articulate her feelings put in her.<sup>83</sup> Farther she tried to oppress her by convincing her that she will surpass these emotions and eventually having a breakdown and shouting at her daughter as a last attempt to persuade her as it shows in the next quotation:

Mother, listen to me!" said Nadya. "I implore you, do understand! If you would only understand how petty and degrading our life is. My eyes have been opened, and I see it all now. And what is your AndreyAndreitch? Why, he is not intelligent, mother! Merciful heavens, do understand, mother, he is stupid!"

Nina Ivanovna abruptly sat up.

"You and your grandmother torment me," she said with a sob. "I want to live! to live," she repeated, and twice she beat her little fist upon her bosom. "Let me be free! I am still young, I want to live, and you have made me an old woman between you!"<sup>84</sup>

From this instances, we can assume the oppressive authority that the protagonist was exposed to be it from her mother, grandmother fiancé or society are what led her to develop a type of social inferiority.

Social inferiority feeling experienced by the character of Nadya might also be the result of the gender discrimination that was very spread in Russia, taken to account the time frame that Chekhov gave to the story, it is as well illustrated in the storylines in several passages. as an example we can take the previously stated passage where Andrey took Nadya to visit their soon to be home Anton Chekhov exemplified the male dominance and authority by symbolizing it Andrey's arm around Nady's waist guiding her in the house showing her all the decisions he made by himself concerning their life together. Stated : "Andrey Andreitch led Nadya about the rooms, all the while keeping arm around her waist; she felt weak and conscience- stricken."<sup>85</sup>

Similarly to Misail, Nadya was not pleased with the existing social order as well, her empathy with the servants was a proof of the so-called affection that she had towards them; Chekhov demonstrated that in many passages throughout the work form which we mention this passage from the first chapter: "She could hear from the open windows of the basement where the kitchen was the hurrying servants, the clatter of knives, the banging of the swing door; there was a smell of roast turkey and pickled cherries, and for some reason it seemed to her that it would be like that all her life, with no change, no end to it."<sup>86</sup> . Nevertheless, the following excerpt is a particular proof of so, as it does not only confirm these emotions, but farther shows her reaction towards them:

... My dear girl, you must think, you must realize how unclean, how immoral this idle life of yours is," Sasha went on. "Do understand that if, for instance, you and your mother and your grandmother do nothing, it means that someone else is working for you, you are eating up someone else's life, and is that clean, isn't it filthy?"

Nadya wanted to say "Yes, that is true"; she wanted to say that she understood, but tears came into her eyes, her spirits drooped, and shrinking into herself she went off to her room.<sup>87</sup>

Nadya ignored her existing feelings of empathy with their servants, does as well show how terrible she felt by taking part of this "immoral", "Idle life", consequently Nadya isolated herself in her room. The protagonist was against being assisted by other people she even despised how the poorly the servants were treated at her house and the fact the she couldn't do anything to change that pushed her to experience feelings deep distress particularly with her social rank, what we could be categorized as feeling of social inferiority.

Another type of inferiority feelings, that may as well be experienced by to the protagonist of «The Betrothed» is one of intellectual inferiority, she witnessed it in different situations, under various forms, whether is by the amazement and adoration that she looked at Sasha as she has always found him very intellectual and inspiring<sup>88</sup> or by the disillusionment and the failed ideal that she feels, now that she no longer see her mother the "exceptional woman" put in her own words : "had listened with pride to the things she said; and now she could not remember those things, everything that came into her mind was so feeble and useless."<sup>89</sup> This might be what pushed Nadya to purchase university studies to overcome her so called inferiority feeling. In comparison the protagonist of Anton Chekhov's work "«The Betrothed»", is found to present the same character traits as the previously mentioned protagonist of "*My Life*". Nadya Shumin strive was for the success to all humans, her strive to compensate was guided by a goal of positive change in her society

The character of the mother in "*The Betrothed*", although similarly to the character of the father in "*My Life*" expressed oppressive authority towards her daughter, Nina Ivanovna did not stay on her position through-out the tale and so did here feelings of inferiority. illustrated in her conversation with father Andrey in chapter one are both her feeling of intellectual inferiority and her psychological inferiority as she exhibited both low self-esteem,

and her lack of knowledge in her saying: "'Though I cannot venture to argue with you," she said, "you must admit there are so many insoluble riddles in life!"'"<sup>90</sup>. Emphasised pejoratively as well by the author by the end of the work is Nadya's mother financial reliance on her mother in law in his own words: "she still lived in the house like a poor relation, and had to go to Granny for every farthing."<sup>91</sup> ; Which made her feel restrained and inferior. It may as well be what she insinuated earlier in the narrative when she said: "'You and your grandmother torment me," she said with a sob. "I want to live! to live," she repeated, and twice she beat her little fist upon her bosom. "Let me be free! I am still young, I want to live, and you have made me an old woman between you!"'<sup>92</sup> Through our conducted analysis of the character of Nina Ivanovna , taking in to consideration her final goal, her inferiority feelings and her strive to compensate for them, we notice that she shows evidence of no energy, her lifestyle is self-cantered and strive is for personal superiority only.

Alexandr Timofeitch, also known as Sasha is another character presented to have the same medical condition as the author, but emphasized is his denial of his condition by leading his life as if he is not suffering from any physical weakness and despite he's apparent symptoms. Sasha continued his journey in complete denial for his state, as illustrated in a conversation with Nadya when she confronted him about his illness he responded: "No, it's nothing, I am ill, but not very..."<sup>93</sup> instead he prefers to focus on other matters that passionate him. What is said about the character is a statement of a case of inferiority feeling according to Adler's theory of individual psychology and precisely his concept of denying physical weakness as a reaction to a perceived inferiority feeling. Noted as well is that Sasha expressed few clues of another type of inferiority feeling that demonstrated in his lack of independence that might be the result of the absence of his parents in his childhood, and his dependence on grandma both economically and socially this could be interpreted for a feeling of socio-economic inferiority. It could as well justify his empathy for the servants as he witnessed poverty at an early age as stated by the author: "... Maraya Petrovna, a thin, sickly little woman who had sunk into

poverty, used to come to the house to ask for assistance. She had a son Sasha.”<sup>94</sup> Depicted from the above analysis is that the character’s strive to compensate for his inferiority feelings is stimulated by a “final goal of social interest” as presented by Adler.

Correspondingly to what has been said about the character of Masha, Andrey Andreitch the protagonist fiancé is described by Chekhov to show a great admiration for his father as well as leading a life with complete reliance on him. Throughout his presentation in the work two types of inferiority feelings could be highlighted the first of economic inferiority that shows Andrey’s reliance on his father as he has no occupation and he shows no interest in any illustrated by the narrator in this passage “Ten years before he had taken his degree at the university in the Faculty of Arts, but had never held any post, had no definite work, and only from time to time took part in concerts for charitable objects”.<sup>95</sup> That along with a feeling of psychological inferiority feeling showed by means of low self-esteem. As evidence for: ““Yesterday, you remember, Sasha blamed me for doing nothing,” he said, after a brief silence. “Well, he is right, absolutely right! I do nothing and can do nothing.”<sup>96</sup> Andrey’s character is presented to demonstrate no interest in the greater good of no one but himself, his goals are of a subjective interest and his life style is voided of any creativity.

Anton Chekhov managed to capture in both works the similar journeys of the characters, along the individuality of each characters experience. He managed as well to convey the similarity of the characters perceived inferiority feelings and identify their different types, using The Adlerian Individual Psychology Theories. The above work provides a solid base to further examine one of the theories major aspect, which is how the characters reacted towards their inferiority feelings to enhance our comprehending of the theory and the characters, this particular point is going to be further developed in the next chapter of this dissertation.



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## End Notes

- <sup>56</sup> Steve Slavik and Jon Carlson, Readings in the Theory of Individual Psychology (New York: Routledge, 2006), 268.
- <sup>57</sup> Ibid: p268.
- <sup>58</sup> Anton Chekhov, My Life: the story of a provincial (Russia: Constance Garnett, 2014), 02.
- <sup>58</sup> Ibid: p02.
- <sup>59</sup> Ibid: p01.
- <sup>60</sup> Ibid: p01.
- <sup>61</sup> Anton Chekhov, My Life: the story of a provincial (Russia: Constance Garnett, 2014), 1.
- <sup>62</sup> Ibid: p08.
- <sup>63</sup> Ibid: p19.
- <sup>64</sup> Ibid: p03.
- <sup>65</sup> Ibid: p30.
- <sup>66</sup> Ibid: p31.
- <sup>68</sup> Anton Chekhov, My Life: The Story Of A Provincial (Russia: Constance Garnett, 2014), 02.
- <sup>69</sup> Ibid: p02.
- <sup>70</sup> Ibid: p11.
- <sup>71</sup> Journal psyche <http://journalpsyche.org/alfred-adler-personality-theory/>
- <sup>72</sup> Ibid: p02.
- <sup>73</sup> Ibid: p04.
- <sup>74</sup> Ibid: p01.
- <sup>75</sup> Ibid: p04.
- <sup>76</sup> Anton Chekhov, My Life: the story of a provincial (Russia: Constance Garnett, 2014), 51.
- <sup>77</sup> Dr. C. George Boeree, Alfred Adler [ 1870 – 1937 ] Personality Theories (Psychology Department Shippensburg University, 2006 ), 08.
- <sup>78</sup> Ibid: p40.
- <sup>79</sup> Ibid: p32.
- <sup>80</sup> Anton Chekhov, The Betrothed (Zhurnal Dya Vsekh , 1903), 01.
- <sup>81</sup> Steve Slavik and Jon Carlson, Readings in the Theory of Individual Psychology (New York: Routledge, 2006), 268.
- <sup>82</sup> Anton Chekhov, The Betrothed (Zhurnal Dya Vsekh , 1903), 07.
- <sup>83</sup> Ibid: p09.
- <sup>84</sup> Ibid: p10.
- <sup>85</sup> Ibid: p07.
- <sup>86</sup> Ibid: p01.
- <sup>87</sup> Ibid: p06.
- <sup>88</sup> Ibid: p10.
- <sup>89</sup> Ibid: p09.
- <sup>90</sup> Ibid: p03.
- <sup>91</sup> Ibid: p14.
- <sup>92</sup> Ibid: p10.
- <sup>93</sup> Ibid: p13.
- <sup>94</sup> Ibid: p01.
- <sup>95</sup> Ibid: p03.
- <sup>96</sup> Ibid: p08.

## **Chapter Two: The Importance Of Social Interest In The Process Of Personality Type Identification.**

This chapter explores the characters reactions towards their feelings of inferiority as part of what Adler identified as the notion of strive. Exploring the main concepts covered in this part of the theory and how they are projected in the storylines.

Anton Chekhov provides an illustration of how the character experienced the notion of strive each on his own terms, as presented by Adler this concept came as a reaction to the previously mentioned inferiority feelings. Adler did as well emphasise the particularity of this notion as he farther explains how each individual reacts differently and uniquely in his journey to compensate for his feelings of inferiority. This diversity is what makes the particularity of the strive and defines it. He also distinguished four psychological types that have a big impact in identifying the individual's persona. Adler emphasized that three out of these four types are negative.<sup>97</sup> Although they all suffer from insufficient social interest, there is one of the main criterias in identifying the person's psychological type, based on their levels of energy in expressing their social interest.<sup>98</sup> Chekhov in his works presented the different characters and each one has his particular personality. What is previously stated in both chapters provides specific traits and details that are according the main norms in identifying the character's psychological type.

The notion of strive is developed by Adler to reach its final definition which asserts that each individual as a child is blessed with certain physical capacities and some deficiencies that raise in him a feeling of inferiority. Those feelings pushed him to seek ways to compensate and surpass these feelings.<sup>99</sup> Relevant to this concept Adler distinguished two main subdivisions stated as following: "he limited striving for superiority to those people who strive for personal superiority over others and introduced the term striving for success to

describe actions of people who are motivated by highly developed social interest. Regardless of the motivation for striving, each individual is guided by a final goal.”<sup>100</sup>

The author builds the character of the protagonist of “*My life*” and his journey to fit this theory. Misail strives to compensate for his feelings of physical inferiority by means of seeking manual toil where he puts to use his physical strength. Misail is thus compensating for his physical weakness by performing tasks that develop his strength, endurance and putts them to test. He occupied two jobs that both require great strength and he enjoyed both of them. He stated his excitement for such work: “when I was new to the work it made my feet burn as though I were walking on hot bricks, and when I put on felt boots they were hotter than ever. But that was only at first; later on I got used to it...”<sup>101</sup>. Same applies to his experience in the meadows a side with the peasants as he stated that working in the yard and painting roofs is his favourite chore it is accordingly the physical display that attracted him more to this chore.<sup>102</sup> This enhances the previously stated hypothesis and proves that Misail choice of job is his way to strive to compensate for his inferiority feeling and his attempt to reach what Adler introduced as a “felt plus” situation.

Noted through our reading of the work is the protagonist strives to compensate for another type of inferiority feeling, which is one of social inferiority. Misail tried to overcome his feelings by striving to widen his social circle, as he revolts against his father and the existing societal order. He does as well show empathy with the working class, by making an effort to belong and to establish new relationships, as a reaction to the alienation he experienced among the intelligentsia. Misail revolt goes beyond his personal interest to include the well being of all society as he commences a journey of change and deconstruction by which he creates equal opportunities for all individuals and battle all stereotypes and discrimination.

As illustrated in his conversation with Dr. Blagovo when he stated:

We talked, and when we got upon manual labour I expressed this idea: that what is wanted is that the strong should not enslave the weak, that the minority should not be a parasite on the majority, nor a vampire for ever sucking its vital sap; that is, all, without exception, strong and weak, rich and poor, should take part equally in the struggle for existence, each one on his own account, and that there was no better means for equalizing things in that way than manual labour, in the form of universal service, compulsory for all.<sup>103</sup>

This idea does not only fit Adler's definition of strive to compensation for feeling of inferiority but it does as well highlight another main concept that Adler developed relevantly this theory which is "the final goal" as he states that individuals strive for a final goal of either personal superiority or success for all human kind. Although the final goal is fiction and it is the product of the creative power it helps understand the individuals strive and unifies his personality 104. Accordingly and from the above statement Misail's journey and life style is stimulated by a final goal of mainly belonging and self actualization but this subjective goal created a line of actions that are stimulated by another sub goals but common to them all is his strive for success for all humanity, exemplified by his refusal of Dr.Bagovo's suggestion of a career that puts him in a superior place in society and his choice of creating equality and success for all humans instead.

Misail attempts to compensate for his inferiority feelings by finding a method to strive towards a "felt plus situation". New relationships established by Misail, including his matrimonial relationship with Masha and his friendship with Dr.Blagovo could be considered as so. Misail is therefore compensating for the lack if not absence of encouragement in his life by means of establishing relationships with individuals that were warm and encouraging to his new lifestyle. Subsequently these new relationships came with great benefice for him and his society. His relationship with Masha helped enlarge his intellectual capacity as he learned and improved his knowledge of agriculture. It did also strengthens his relationships with the peasants as he grows to know and appreciate the better in his and that is an opportunity that is a result of his marriage with Masha and their work in Dubetchnya. Another example is his

help in building a school for the children as he stated: “ I drew a plan of a school for sixty boys”<sup>105</sup> he did as well helped Masha supervise the work and encouraged her not to give up on the peasants. Along the physical display of his strength that was of a plus to his society as well.

Through the above conducted analysis on the protagonist reaction to his inferiority feelings. It is apparent that Misail’s journey for compensation is loaded with high consideration for the well-being of his society. Although Misail strive appears of personal superiority, further consideration uncovers it to be beneficial for society as it is consequence to his goal of deconstructing classism. He is therefore demonstrating a high level of what Adler introduced as social interest and community feeling. Accordingly it is irrefutable to say that Misail strive falls under the category of “striving for success” as he puts the interest and good of the society above his own. Demonstrated by his actions and final goals as well is the commitment he shows in accomplishing success for his society as he pursued a revolutionary course of events as portrays , that is both time and energy consuming ; Proving his willingness to do anything for the greater good of his society. The character of Misail is therefore sketched by Chekhov to fit perfectly the psychological type that Adler identified as “The socially useful type”.

The character of Father Plozenov pursued a somehow diverse way in his journey to compensate for his previously noted inferiority feelings, as he chooses to oppress both his children in an attempt to feel superior both in terms of society as he disowned his son to convince him not to strive for what he wants, out of fear that he will lose his position in society, and the respect people have for him. As this plan did not work Father plozenov resulted to using the governor’s authority as a solution to this problem and so proving his strength and authority over the others. It is thus unquestionable that his strive for a felt plus situation is over the others instead of for the others, and it is therefore according to the theory,

compensation for a felt inferiority but in sake of personal superiority. Noted previously are his inferiority feelings and his failure in compensating for them; thus Chekhov intended this character to show no social interest. He rather is portrayed to insult and bully his children for example Polozenov father also used insulting dreadful expressions when addressing his son such as “good for nothing”, “unworthy”, “a Burden on your father”.<sup>106</sup> He showed the same disdain with the lower class, as his way to classify him as the ruling type. Although this category is one out of the three that are negative in nature, the individuals that belong to this category are stated by Adler to be the most energetic of them.<sup>107</sup> Father Poleznov energy is depicted in the extract efforts he made to practice his oppressive authority on his children especially Misail as he resulted to violence <sup>108</sup> as well as querying the interference of the governor to intimidate his son in to changing his decision<sup>109</sup>. The two stated examples farther confirm the character’s adherence to the ruling type as he exhibits their” tendency to push over anything and anybody who gets in their way.”<sup>110</sup>

Compared to her Brother’s strive, Kleopater’s reaction towards her inferiority feelings, and her chosen path to strive for compensation, seems of a subjective interest only. Kleopatera chooses to compensate for her social inferiority by engaging in a relationship with a married man and getting pregnant with his infant. She did as well strive to compensate for her father’s repression by doing what he hates most as he states in his conversation with Misail : “... the young people of today were on the road to perdition through infidelity, materialism and self-conceit, and that amateur theatricals...”<sup>111</sup>” which she fails extremely due to her lack of courage and talent., the fact that she only chose it as her way to prove herself to others and to herself. She did as well strive to compensate for her physical deficiency and her illness by reading and spending a considerable amount of time imagining as she states:

I read a great deal now," she said, showing me the books which she had fetched from the public library on her way to me. "Thanks to your wife and to Vladimir, they have awakened me to self-realization. They have been my salvation; they have made me feel myself a human being. In old days I used to lie awake at night

with worries of all sorts, thinking what a lot of sugar we had used in the week, or hoping the cucumbers would not be too salt. And now, too, I lie awake at night, but I have different thoughts. I am distressed that half *my life* has been passed in such a foolish, cowardly way. I despise my past; I am ashamed of it. And I look upon our father now as my enemy. Oh, how grateful I am to your wife! And Vladimir! He is such a wonderful person! They have opened my eyes!<sup>112</sup>

This passage indorses what is previously noted about the character and it does farther confirms that her strive is drained from any interest for society but rather one of strict “personal superiority” as stated by Adler, which Insinuate the absence of any energy which makes her psychologically categorized in the case of the avoiding type. As she spent her life time avoiding life and relaying on others. Kleopatera as stated by her brother resulted in to dreaming of creating a new life<sup>113</sup> which fits the following statement from Adler’s definition of the avoiding psychological type: “the end result of entirely retreating into one’s self.”<sup>114</sup>

Anton Chekhov sketched the character of Masha in a particular way as she seems to be both shallow and authentic. Taking her actions as evidence Masha seems to be a do-gooder as exemplified in her supporting Misail’s journey and cause, her excitement for a life of toil as well as her building a school so the children of the villages could obtain education. However in profound analysis of the character we notice that her actions are not out of social interest as it is apparent. Masha superiority complex led her strive to be for personal superiority only as she attempted covering for her felt inferiorities by doing things that are beneficial to her at first degree then the society confirmed by the following statement of Adler’s theory: “Some people create clever disguises for their personal striving and may consciously or unconsciously hide their self-centeredness behind the cloak of social concern”<sup>115</sup>. It is safe to say so because Masha had a goal in all of that which is one of convincing Misail that she shares the same values as him to keep him as her entertainment as he stated: “Our meeting, our marriage, has been only one of the episodes of which there will be many more in the life of this vital, richly gifted woman”<sup>116</sup> he said as well: “... I was only the sledge -driver who drove her from one entertainment to another”<sup>117</sup>; whereas in reality just like her father she

despises the peasants and their life style, she insulted them at every occasion, which proves the selfishness of her strives and puts her under the category of “strive for personal superiority”. Using her creative power, Masha fools people around her, mainly Misail into believing her false value to protect herself, this implies her “sensitivity” to defend her true believes, and it does as well exemplifies “the shell she constructed around herself”<sup>118</sup> for protection. Her reliance on her father and later on Misail is another point that emphasizes her classification in the category of “the leaning type”.

In comparison to what has been said about the investigation of strive to compensate for inferiority feelings and the importance of social interest, by the different characters of Anton Chekhov’s work “*My life*” we conducted the following analysis concerning another work of the same author which is “«The Betrothed””, following the same basis.

The protagonist of “«*The Betrothed*”” reaction towards her feelings of inferiority is completed by imposing her new and personal alteration on society. Nadya’s journey to a “felt plus situation” is a unique one as she strives to compensate her feelings of inferiority she took into consideration a radical change in society. As she set a goal of strive for superiority but superiority for all human kind by creating a new societal order in which all individuals will have equal opportunities.

“People who strive for success rather than personal superiority maintain a sense of self, of course, but they see daily problems from the view of society’s development rather than from a strictly personal vantage point”<sup>119</sup>. According to what is stated in this passage, demonstrated by her strive to compensate for the discouragement she witnessed by both society and her family particularly her mother. The protagonist’s revolt against social norms and the oppressive dominance of the male gender in the society and challenged gender discrimination. Chekhov presents Nadya strive for compensation for social inferiority by revolting against her family chosen lifestyle as her station against classism and social discrimination proved by her



sympathy with the servants. She did as strive to compensate her social and intellectual inferiority feelings by rebelling against social roles and choosing to pursue university studies, as her attempt to change her society and to defend her own gender as symbolised in her words in this passage: "...oh, if only that new, bright life will come more quickly- -that life which one will be able to face one's fate boldly and directly, to know that one is right, to be light hearted and free"<sup>120</sup>. From this conducted analysis it is unquestionable that the protagonist compensation for her felt inferiority feelings and strives for success fits at point Adler's concept of strive for success for all human kind; which she achieved going against social expectation, destructing stereotypes, and fighting years of established societal order; all of which are so "angry" consuming. But her hope for a better future to her society was enough motivation for Nadya , thus it is irrefutable that her character belongs to Adler's psychological category of "the socially useful type".

Another similarity is depicted concerning the two characters Father Poleznov and Nina Ivanovna strives to compensate for inferiority feelings and their degree of social interest. Nina Ivanovna demonstrates low level of social interest in her strive to compensate for her previously stated inferiority feelings. Her notion of strive fails under "Some people strive for superiority with little or no concern for others."<sup>121</sup> As she strived to compensate for her feelings of intellectual inferiority by striving to superiority in studying and becoming religious: "" I have become religious, as you see," she said. "You know I am studying philosophy now..."<sup>122</sup>.As for her social inferiority Nina compensated for by avoiding people, specially that they lost their position in society: "they had no position in society, no prestige as before, no right to invite visitors"<sup>123</sup> Nina therefore avoids going out " for fear of meeting Farther Andrey and Andrey Andreitch"<sup>124</sup> . As for her economic dependency on her mother in law the author stated: "she still lived in the house like a poor relation, and had to go to Granny for every fathering"<sup>125</sup>. Thus it is concluded that Nina Ivanova's creative power set for her a goal of personal superiority that is voided of any social interest and community feeling. she

draw's back out of fear of facing life and consuming her energy, she is therefore living life by avoiding it, exemplified by the fact that although she is a person with intellectual baggage: "But your mother speaks French, you know, and acts in private theatricals. One would think she might understand".<sup>126</sup> She has no job nor a social ties, her relationships are limited to her family as demonstrated in the storylines. Accordingly unlike Misail's father who belongs to "the Ruling type", Nadya's mother fits to the category of "the avoiding type."

Next is the character of Alexander Timofeitch suffers from the same medical condition as the character of Kleopatera in "*The Betrothed*", but although both characters developed a physical inferiority feelings due to this physical deficiency their journey to strive and their motives are not the same. If we consider Sasha's final goal we notice that it is of one of social success as he compensated for his feelings of inferiority by offering his talent to society, as well as choosing combat classism and class discrimination for example he was the voice that defends the servants and their poor conditions an example of that is this passage:

Your mother, in her own way of course, is a very good and sweet woman, but . . . how shall I say? I went early this morning into your kitchen and there I found four servants sleeping on the floor, no bedsteads, and rags for bedding, stench, bugs, beetles . . . it is just as it was twenty years ago, no change at all. Well, Granny, God bless her, what else can you expect of Granny? But your mother speaks French, you know, and acts in private theatricals. One would think she might understand.<sup>127</sup>

He does as well to do well by his society by supporting others to study and to change the current order in hope for a better future illustrated by his statement "'Only enlightened and holy people are interesting, it's only they who are wanted. The more of such people there are, the sooner the Kingdom of God will come on earth.'<sup>128</sup> Although on his own expense as Sasha's strive is stimulated by a goal of social interest as he only considered the greater good of all humans instead of focusing on his physical deficiency; His life style gives us the idea of his reliance on others to carry him through life difficulties according to the following

statement: “They lack energy, in essence, and depend on the energy of others.”<sup>129</sup> This could be exemplified in Sasha’s “obsession” with convincing Nadya to cancel her wedding and to pursue a new life in by which she could change society<sup>130</sup>, as well as his economic and emotional reliance on Nadya’s family and specially her grandmother. The above emphasized ideas put Sash’s character in the same psychological type as the character Masha in “*My life*”, which is the category of “the leaning type.”

Andrey Andreitch on the other hand chose to compensate for his feelings of by means of striving for personal interest as he looks to Nadya as the person to switch his reliance on. After his depends on his father. He also expressed his unwillingness to work for his country and he despised the people who are working for it, he stated: “When we are married let us go together into the country, my precious; there we will work! We will buy ourselves a little piece of land with a garden and a river; we will labour and watch life. Oh, how splendid that will be!”<sup>131</sup> Proved in this statement is the selfishness as nature of his striving. According to what is stated by Adler the character of Andrey Andreitch, share the same nature of strive as the character of Masha in Chekhov’s work “*My Life*”; which is one based on a goal of personal superiority and no reflection on the success of society”. He is therefore living his life in complete reliance on his father. He is stated by the author to never have worked a day in his life: “he had never held any post”<sup>132</sup>. This character is essentially avoiding life as he shows no interest in working or establishing a creative life nor in engaging in any social useful work. It is therefore concluded that he manifests the lowest angry level, which asserts his belonging to the avoiding type.

From our conduct analysis, we notice that through Chekhov’s plot and his sketch of the different characters in both works; how he managed to capture the aim of each character in his journey to compensate for his felt inferiority feelings, as well as the role of the final goal in defining the individuals’ type of strive. Another main point highlighted by Adler in his theory

and is emphasized by Chekhov in both works is the importance of social interest. And how Identifying each character's psychological type serves of clearness. Although there is an immense resemblance in the characters journeys the comparison between how each, gives a clearer understanding about the particular way each character expressed his psychological type and highlighted the authenticity of each character, and provides the chance of considering the holistic approach of Adler's theory.

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## End notes

<sup>97</sup> Sylvie Meiliana, Compulsory “*Courses Psychology of literature Concentration of Literature English Literature Study*” (National University program, September 2020 Edition), 15.

<sup>98</sup> Dr. C. George Boeree, “*Alfred Adler [ 1870 – 1937 ] Personality Theories*” (Psychology Department Shippensburg University, 2006 ), 09.

<sup>99</sup> Jess Feist Gregory J. Feist, Tomi-Ann Roberts, “*Theories of Personality Ninth Edition*” (New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2018): 76.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid: p76.

<sup>101</sup> Anton Chekhov, “*My Life*”: *the story of a provincial*” (Russia: Constance Garnett, 2014), 15.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid: p34.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid: p19.

<sup>104</sup> Jess Feist Gregory J. Feist, Tomi-Ann Roberts, “*Theories of Personality Ninth Edition*” (New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2018): 76.

<sup>105</sup> Anton Chekhov, “*My Life: the story of a provincial*” (Russia: Constance Garnett, 2014), 37.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid: p01.

<sup>107</sup> Journal psyche <http://journalpsyche.org/alfred-adler-personality-theory/>

<sup>108</sup> Anton Chekhov, *My Life: the story of a provincial* (Russia: Constance Garnett, 2014), 46.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid: p28.

<sup>110</sup> Dr. C. George Boeree, “*Alfred Adler [ 1870 – 1937 ] Personality Theories*” (Psychology Department Shippensburg University, 2006 ), 09.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid: p01.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid: p48.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid: p52.

<sup>114</sup> Journal psyche <http://journalpsyche.org/alfred-adler-personality-theory/>

<sup>115</sup> Jess Feist Gregory J. Feist, Tomi-Ann Roberts, “*Theories of Personality Ninth Edition*” (New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2018): 78.

<sup>116</sup> Anton Chekhov, “*My Life: the story of a provincial*” (Russia: Constance Garnett, 2014), 46.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid: p46.

<sup>118</sup> Dr. C. George Boeree, “*Alfred Adler [ 1870 – 1937 ] Personality Theories*” (Psychology Department Shippensburg University, 2006 ), 09.

<sup>119</sup> Jess Feist Gregory J. Feist, Tomi-Ann Roberts, “*Theories of Personality Ninth Edition*” (New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2018): 78.

<sup>120</sup> Anton Chekhov, “*The Betrothed*” (ZhurnalDyaVsekh ,1903), 14.

<sup>121</sup> Jess Feist Gregory J. Feist, Tomi-Ann Roberts, “*Theories of Personality Ninth Edition*” (New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2018): 78.

<sup>122</sup> Anton Chekhov, “*The Betrothed*” (ZhurnalDyaVsekh ,1903), 14.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid: p13.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid: p14.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid: p14.

<sup>126</sup> Anton Chekhov, “*The Betrothed*” (ZhurnalDyaVsekh ,1903), 02.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid: p02.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid: p05.

<sup>129</sup> Journal psyche <http://journalpsyche.org/alfred-adler-personality-theory/>

<sup>130</sup> Anton Chekhov, “*The Betrothed*” (ZhurnalDyaVsekh ,1903), 05.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid: p08.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid: p03.

## Conclusion

Considering the importance of the psychoanalysis in the process of interpreting and understanding literary works, this study has attempted to discuss Anton Chekhov works "*The Betrothed*"(1903) and his novella "*My Life*" (1896), psychoanalytical approach using as method The Adlerian Theory of Individual Psychology and Personality types.

Concluded after conducting the analysis of the two works using the above mentioned theory by putting the characters of both works in the centre of this study. That it provided a better understanding of their reactions towards environmental imposed restrictions, and their lifestyle and their degree of social interest, asserting the individuality of their experiences and psychological stand, allowing the identification of each characters psychological type.

Resulted as well is that Anton Chekhov privileged the psychological features on the physical ones in portraying his characters; He managed as well to convey the similarity of the characters perceived inferiority feelings and identify their different types. The characters reacted towards their inferiority feelings to enhance our comprehending of the characters. Highlighted also is the importance of social interest in identifying each character's psychological type serves of clearness. I discovered an immense resemblance in the characters journeys gives a clearer understanding about the particular way each character expressed his psychological type and highlighted the authenticity of each character. The uniqueness of each character is another drawn conclusion that is the consequence of the differences in the motivating final goals, lifestyles, different energy levels, As well as the willingness to contribute in the better good of others.

The distinction of these diversities could only be done by regarding the individual in relationship to others and to his surroundings, emphasizing therefore to holistic approach elaborated by Alfred Adler as an important base of the theory.

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