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**The Quest for Identity and Self-understanding
in Dickinson's "I felt a funeral in My Brain"
and Poe's "The Tell Tale Heart": from a
Psychoanalytical Viewpoint**

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for a **Master's degree in Literature and Civilization**

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Dedication

This modest work is dedicated to the dearest people to my heart,

My dear sister; Farah for her love, patience, and steadfast support.

My dear parents; Belkacem and FiFi who always encourage and support me.

My dearest and closest cousin Alycia for her support.

All my friends who are always by my side Tinhinane, yasmine, and celine.

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Abstract

The subject of this research work is an exploration through the therapeutic side of literature, the inter relation between psychoanalysis and literature, and the impact of literary works on the person's psyche and mental health, not forgetting the discussion of two psychological issues which are the quest for identity and self-understanding through two literary pieces the poem "*I Felt a Funeral in my Brain*" by Emily Dickinson and the short story "*The Tell-Tale Heart*" by Edgar Allan Poe". The work starts by giving the historical background of the field of psychoanalysis citing the most influential figures including their different theories. The latter relies on the link that these two fields have and the cooperation to one another. Then, it continues with exposing the subjects of identity and self-comprehension in two well-known literary works of the 19th century

Résumé

Ce travail de recherche est centré sur l'exploration du côté thérapeutique de la littérature, l'interrelation entre la psychanalyse et la littérature, et l'impact des œuvres littéraires sur le psyché de la personne et sa santé mentale, sans oublier le débat de deux problèmes psychologiques qui sont : la quête de l'identité et de la compréhension de soi à travers deux travaux littéraires le poème «*I Felt a Funeral in my Brain*» d'Emily Dickinson et l'histoire «*The Tell-Tale Heart*» de Edgar Allan Poe. Le travail commence par donner le contexte historique du domaine de la psychanalyse en citant les personnalités les plus influentes, y compris leurs différentes théories. En deuxième lieu il repose sur le lien que ces deux domaines ont et sur la coopération entre eux. Ensuite, il continue à exposer les sujets d'identité et de compréhension de soi dans deux œuvres littéraires bien connues du XIX^e siècle

Key words: literature, psychoanalysis, therapeutic, psyche, mental health, identity, self-understanding, Emily Dickinson, Edgar Allan Poe.

General Introduction

“A great book should leave you with many experiences, and slightly exhausted at the end. You live several lives while reading.”
William Styron.

Literature, with its power to captivate, inspire, and challenge, has had a profound impact on the field of psychoanalysis and our understanding of the self. Through its nuanced portrayals of characters, narratives, and themes, literature offers a rich landscape for exploring the depths of human consciousness, emotions, and relationships. As readers immerse themselves in literary works, they embark on a journey of self-discovery, encountering aspects of their own experiences, desires, and conflicts within the pages of a book.

Literature provides a unique avenue for self-understanding, as it allows individuals to connect with fictional worlds that mirror their own internal struggles and dilemmas. Characters become mirrors, reflecting the complexities and contradictions of the human psyche. By identifying with literary protagonists, readers are able to gain insights into their own thoughts, emotions, and motivations, ultimately deepening their self-awareness.

Moreover, literature offers a sanctuary for exploring the depths of the unconscious. Just as psychoanalysis aims to uncover the hidden meanings behind our thoughts and behaviors, literature employs symbolism, metaphor, and allegory to delve into the realms of the unconscious mind. Through intricate narratives and vivid imagery, literature taps into the collective unconscious, exploring archetypal themes and universal human experiences. In this way, literature acts as a gateway to the unconscious, unraveling the intricacies of our inner worlds and expanding our understanding of the self.

Two figures of American literature impacted human’s psychological experiences without knowing the poetess **Emily Dickinson** and the poet and novelist **Edgar Allan Poe**, their

writings contains elements which pushes the reader to find deeply himself and his path psychologically, mentally, and spiritually.

One of America's most well-known and enigmatic poets, Emily Dickinson continues to intrigue readers with her reflective and eccentric writing. Her poetry explores topics of mortality, nature, love, and the complex workings of the human psyche, and is distinguished by its condensed and frequently fragmentary style. Although Dickinson's work has been open to many interpretations, one fascinating way to look at her poetry is through the lens of psychoanalysis. Introspective and alone, she frequently surfs into the inner world of thoughts and feelings in her poetry. She examines themes of longing, loneliness, and the search for identity. These subjects can be understood within a framework provided by psychoanalysis, which also sheds light on Dickinson's repressed wants, anxieties, and conflicts.

The second literary figure that inspires psychological aspects in his works is Edgar Allan Poe. The master of suspense and the macabre is renowned for his dark and evocative stories about the human psyche. Readers are still captivated by his works, which are full of gothic aspects, psychological torment, and the examination of the depths of the human soul. A fascinating line of inquiry opens up if one reads through Poe's works via the filter of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis permits us to unravel the psychological complexity and get fresh insights into the uncanny brilliance of one of America's most renowned writers by helping us to understand the hidden meanings, fears, and desires inside Poe's works of literature.

Review of Literature

The relationship between literature and psychoanalysis is a dynamic and reciprocal one. While psychoanalysis has influenced literature, this one in turn, has a profound impact on the development and evolution of psychoanalytic theory and practice; it is however important to acknowledge that interpretations may vary and be subject to individual perspectives, we can name some works that defend some ideas about this theme.

First we have "Reading the Psychosomatic in American Literature and Culture." A work by Castle Gregory written in 2019. Castle examines how psychosomatic sickness is portrayed in American literature and popular culture, using psychoanalytic notions to examine the relationship between the mind and body as well as the psychological aspects of physical symptoms. Then there's the research of Barrett, Laura, and Bolt, David. "Psychoanalysis and the Fantastic: Stories of the Uncanny." 2015, Barrett and Bolt examine the uncanny features, symbolic representations, and unconscious themes found in works of fantasy, horror, and science fiction as they study the wonderful literary genre via a psychoanalytic lens. Then we continue with Bennett, Jill. "Psychoanalysis and Literature in the Digital Age: Interfaces, Encounters, Transformations." 2021, Bennett examines how the digital age has affected the link between psychoanalysis and literature. He looks at how digital interfaces and technology affect how stories are written, how the unconscious is explored, and how reading experiences are affected. Concerning poetry and literary pieces we have Padel, Ruth. "Darwin's Bards: British and American Poetry in the Age of Evolution." 2009, Padel surfs on how poets have incorporated scientific concepts and the unconscious mind in their writing while examining the impact of psychoanalysis and evolutionary theory on British and American poetry. "Emily Dickinson: Psychoanalytic Readings" edited by James R. Guthrie 2003, his collection of essays investigates how to analyze Emily Dickinson's poems using psychoanalytic theories. It covers a range of topics, including desire, repression, gender, and death, and provides many

viewpoints on the psychological aspects of her work. "The Mind of Poe and Other Studies" by D. W. Griffith .2009, in this work, the psychoanalytic profile of Edgar Allan Poe is examined, as well as how his traumatic experiences affected his writing. It explores topics like obsession, paranoia, and the insidious corners of the human psyche. Another piece of work is "The Purloined Poe: Lacan, Derrida, and Psychoanalytic Reading" by John P. Muller and William J. Richardson. 2008, this book analyzes Edgar Allan Poe's short stories using psychoanalytic and deconstructive ideas, focusing on themes of desire, identity, and language. It investigates how literary theory and psychoanalysis interact when interpreting Poe's works.

These are some previous works that provide insights into the history of the relationship that literature and psychoanalysis maintain, and the different studies that was made on Dickinson and Poe's works about mental health and psychoanalysis.

Research questions

The present research work tries to find answers to the following questions:

- 1 what are the relations between the fields of literature and psychoanalysis?
- 2 what is the impact of literature in the person's mind and mental health?
- 3 how can the literary works of Emily Dickinson and Edgar Allan Poe contains and prevents the issues of identity and self-understanding. ?

Methodology

In order to give enough answers to the questions asked during this research work, the dissertation is divided in two fundamental chapters. The first one deal with the history of psychoanalysis including the founding fathers and revolutionary theories in psychology, this first part contains also the necessary information about the links between literature and psychoanalysis. The second chapter introduces human's psychological struggles that are identity and self-comprehension by examining two literary pieces the poem of Dickinson

“*I Felt a Funeral in my Brain*” and the story of Poe “*The Tell-Tale Heart*”, in addition to the therapeutic benefits that we can find in literature.

Purpose of the Study

This research work has for objective to highlight the impact that literature has on psychoanalysis studies and vice versa. It analyses the therapeutic hidden benefits that literary works contains, and finally it raises awareness about the subject of mental health.

Contribution of the Research

Through this dissertation, we hope to encourage students of the department to work more on poetry in their research papers knowing the fact that there’s a lack of works concerning this subject despite the richness of its content.

Limitations of Research

The theme of the research is considered interesting and rich in term of content and information. However due to the limit number of pages fixed this one does not contain all existing elements about the subject.

Chapter One:
Psychoanalysis and Literature

1. A Brief History of Psychoanalysis

From the accidental treatment of a young hysterical girl in 1880, psychoanalysis has moved on to become a profound theory of psychotherapy, a comprehensive system of psychology, a philosophy of living, and in all areas one of the major intellectual forces of the twentieth century.

Generally speaking psychoanalysis is a method of therapy in which the patient talks about personal experiences, early childhood, desires, beliefs, positive or negative thoughts, and dreams set and found by the psychoanalyst and philosopher **Sigmund Freud**. People can feel comfortable while exploring feelings, desires, memories, and stressors that can cause psychological problems in psychotherapy. According to research, the psychoanalytic process' use of self-examination can aid in long-term emotional development.

But to explore better this approach we must travel through time and explain the origin of it and how it appeared.

Like we have mentioned before it was the first case of hysteria that gave birth to psychoanalysis, precisely it was the personal story of One of Dr. Josef Breuer's patients named Anna O, *Studies on Hysteria*, a book Breuer co-authored with Sigmund Freud, has a description of her case. Her real name was Bertha Pappenheim, and she had first sought Breuer's assistance for a number of symptoms, including vision disorders, hallucinations, partial paralysis, and speech difficulties. The young woman was given a hysterical diagnosis by Breuer, who then reviewed the matter with Freud, who came up with his own theories on what caused Anna O.'s illness.

Anna O was not responding effectively to any of the treatment prescribed to her, she even had recourse to hypnosis, but every experience was a fail, until Freud decided to let her speak

about her life, early childhood and repressed thoughts while he was listening, so he proceeded to what is called today a psychotherapy, profound analysis of a person his different stages in life, and what made their adult version. Anna O was the one who came up with the term “talking cure”, the way she was treated had a significant impact on the creation and growth of psychoanalysis, history tells that Anna O was never cured from her illness, but this method was able to reveal the main causes of its appearance.

Now who Sigmund Freud is and who are the other scholars that contributed to the conception of psychoanalysis.

One of the most influential and contentious philosophers of the 20th century is also one of psychology's most well-known figures. As the "founder of modern psychology," Sigmund Freud, an Austrian neurologist born in 1856, is frequently referred to.

Freud altered the way we see and handle mental health issues. Freud developed psychoanalysis in order to better comprehend patients' thinking by listening to them. Modern psychology and psychiatry are still greatly influenced by psychoanalysis.

It's crucial to look into Freud's biography first in order to comprehend his legacy. Much of his views were influenced by his experiences, thus studying more about his life and the times he lived in will help us understand where his theories originated.

In a place called Freiberg in Moravia, which is now known as the Czech Republic, Freud was born in 1856. Among eight kids, he was the oldest. After his birth, his family relocated to Vienna, where he spent the majority of his life, After receiving his medical degree, Freud started working as a doctor in Vienna. In 1885, he was chosen to serve as a lecturer on nervous diseases at the University of Vienna.

Freud's interest in theories relating to the human mind increased after visiting Paris and attending lectures given by French neurologist **Jean-Martin Charcot** (which would later relate to his work in psychoanalysis). Because the Viennan medical establishment rejected the concepts he brought back from Paris, Freud eventually left academia (specifically on what was then called hysteria). Later, Freud produced important works in neurology, such as "On Aphasia: A Critical Study," in which he first used the term "agnosia," which refers to the inability to interpret sensations. Later, "Preliminary Report" and "Studies on Hysteria" were published by Freud and his colleague **Josef Breuer**. Freud proceeded to write his own works on psychoanalysis after their friendship ended.

Due to prejudice against Jews, Freud and his family departed Vienna. He relocated to London in 1938, and he passed away in 1939.

The two figures that we have mentioned (Charcot and Breuer), are also considered in the list of founding fathers of psychoanalysis , Charcot by being Maybe the most well-known doctor in France in the early Third Republic .He received recognition for his outstanding achievements in the clinical domains of neurology, geriatrics, and internal medicine. His network of devoted and gifted medical students that he supervised as well as his colorful stage presentations of clinical disorders earned him even more notoriety, with his practices he cured many patients most of them were women, in other hand Breuer made the essential observations that served as the foundation for early psychoanalytic thinking. He discovered that neuroses might develop from unconscious processes and, furthermore, that the neurotic symptoms could dissipate when these underlying causes became part of the conscious consciousness, it was actually his discoveries that inspired Freud to debut the story of psychoanalysis.

It is obvious to talk about one of Freud's student and also another founder of this discipline, Jacques Lacan. During his professional life, the French psychologist emphasized that his own theory and practice uphold a strict commitment to Freud's findings and the psychoanalytic framework he constructed. Since the 1950s, Lacan has been antagonistic to the predominant school of psychoanalysis, still known as ego-psychology. Lacan's response to this was what he called a "return to Freud," and as a result, his seminars of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s included in-depth, patient readings of Freud's books.

1.1 Psychoanalysis Theoretical Framework

Freud's theories were enormously influential, the most famous one is the psychoanalytical theory, the theory of the personality.

In simple words, Sigmund Freud's theory contends that unconscious drives, memories, and recollections shape human behavior. The id, ego, and superego are said to be the three components of the psyche, according to this theory. While the ego functions in the conscious mind, the id is completely unconscious.

First we have Freud's three levels of mind, **the preconscious** consist of Everything that might be brought into consciousness, then the thoughts, memories, feelings, and desires that we are currently aware of are all stored in **the conscious** mind. This is the area of our brain processing that is open to rational thought and discussion. This also applies to our memory, which is often not conscious but which can be quickly accessed and made conscious, after that comes **the unconscious** mind, a storehouse of memories, urges, sensations, and thoughts that are hidden from our conscious awareness. The unconscious contains undesirable or inappropriate material, such as painful, anxious, or conflicting emotions, even sexual tensions.

According to Sigmund Freud, human personality is multifaceted and comprises more than a single component. In his famous psychoanalytic theory, Freud states that personality is

formed of three aspects known as the **id**, the **ego**, and the **superego**. Complex human behaviors are the result of the interaction of these factors.

The **id**, according to Freud, is the main element of personality because it is the source of all psychic energy, the only aspect of personality that is present from birth is the id. This element of personality, which consists of innate and primordial behaviors, is essentially unconscious.

The pleasure principle, which aims for instant gratification of all needs, wants, and desires, is what motivates the id. A condition of tension or anxiety results if these demands are not met right away, the id is a portion of personality that persists throughout life, even though humans eventually learn to manage it. People are able to restrain their primal d's impulses and behave in ways that are both practical and socially acceptable thanks to the development of their **ego** and **superego**.

According to Freud, the **ego** emerges from the id and makes sure that the impulses id's can be communicated in a way that is appropriate for the outside world. The conscious, preconscious, and unconscious minds are where the ego operates. And the personality trait in charge of coping with reality is the ego. Everybody can have an ego. But, personality and ego are not the same thing. Your unified consciousness of your personality is sometimes referred to as your ego. Your entire personality, not just your ego, is represented.

The informal term "ego" is frequently used to imply that a person has an exaggerated sense of self. The ego in personality does, however, have a benefit. It is the aspect of your personality that keeps you rooted in reality and resists the id and superego's attempts to push you too strongly in the direction of your most primal desires or morally upright ideals. A great feeling of self-awareness is a sign of a strong ego.

Freud described the ego to the rider of the horse and the id to the animal. While the rider gives direction and control, the horse delivers force and motion. The horse would roam aimlessly and perform any desired actions in the absence of its rider. To get the horse where it wants to go, the rider gives commands and directions.

The **superego** is the last aspect of personality development to complete, Freud believed that the superego first appears about age five. The internalized moral principles and ideals that we pick up from our parents and society are stored in the superego (our sense of right and wrong).

The Superego consists of two parts: **The conscience** contains knowledge of things that society and parents deem to be wrong. These actions are frequently prohibited and frequently result in negative outcomes, sanctions, or regretful emotions, and the **ego ideal** which includes the norms and expectations for behavior that the ego strives to.

The superego works to improve and upgrade our behavior. It attempts to get the ego to behave according to idealistic norms rather than on actual principles, suppressing all of the undesirable id's inclinations. Also the conscious, preconscious, and unconscious all contain the superego.

Freud talked also about the Interaction of the Id, Ego, and Superego, explaining that, It is crucial to keep in mind that the id, ego, and superego are not three distinct entities with distinct borders while discussing them. These variables constantly interact to affect a person's overall personality and conduct.

It is simple to understand how conflict between the id, ego, and superego could develop in the presence of so many opposing forces. The capacity of the ego to continue existing in the face of these conflicting impulses is known by Freud as "ego strength."

After naming the famous components of Freud's theory of personality, it is imperative to explore another well-known theory it is the one of sexuality, the **psychosexual** development. A key component of the psychoanalytic sexual drive theory in Freudian psychology is psychosexual development. According to Freud, the erogenous parts of the child's body became the focus of their pleasure-seeking impulses as they went through various childhood stages.

The oral, anal, phallic, latency and genital stages are the five psychosexual stages that, according to Sigmund Freud, are when a child's personality is developing.

Libido (sexual drive or energy) expresses itself differently and through distinct body parts at each level. According to Freud (1905), tension and pleasure are the foundation of life. Freud also held that all pleasure originated from the release of the libido, which he believed was the source of all tension.

Freud sought to indicate that what develops is the way in which sexual energy of the id builds up and is released as we mature biologically when he described human personality development as psychosexual. Note that Freud used the term "sexual" in a very broad sense to refer to all pleasurable behaviors and ideas.

According to him, the formative years are when sexual drive develops. Erogenous zones in the body show this, which gradually changes over time. With variations in sexual energy as biological maturation takes place and continues to evolve over time, sexuality starts in the baby stage and contributes to personality development.

Freud did not come up with this theory just by making studies and analysis, but this is also the reflection of his own childhood thoughts and visions toward the relationship of his parents and the fascinating desire to marry his mother and experience sexual practices with

her, while being jealous of his father, as a child he thought that his mind was weirdly constructed and felt guilty to have these feelings, until his very first years as a psychoanalyst he noticed that patients from different places actually do had the same thought but repressed them constantly. After analyzing and building researches about it he gave a name to that phenomenon, the **Oedipus complex**, the term was introduced in 1899, although it wasn't officially adopted until 1910. It describes a boy's affection to his mother and his animosity of his same-sex parent (father).

The controversial theory claims that kids see their same-sex parent as a rival. In particular, a girl will compete with her mother for her father's attention, or a boy will feel the need to compete with his father for the attention of his mother. The complex is named after the tragic playwright Sophocles' character Oedipus Rex. Oedipus Rex accidentally kills his father and weds his mother in the tale.

Besides that, many of Freud's key theories and concepts are covered in length in his publications. He loved "The Interpretation of Dreams" in particular. On it, he wrote: "[It] contains...the most valuable of all the discoveries it has been my good fortune to make. Insight such as this falls to one's lot but once in a lifetime." Other major books of Freud are "The Psychopathology of Everyday Life"

"Totem and Taboo"

"Civilization and Its Discontents"

"The Future of an Illusion"

Even though he had a huge impact in the world of psychoanalysis, his ideas are still very contested today. For instance, his beliefs regarding sexual development, hysteria, and penis envy have drawn criticism for being sexist and reflecting a lack of knowledge about women.

Because Freud's theories lack the contemporary psychological theories' body of scientific data, people are dubious about their veracity.

But still, it remains true that Freud had a big and long-lasting impact on psychology. He laid the groundwork for numerous ideas that psychologists have utilized and are now using to advance knowledge.

We can finally say that because of Freud's theories', works, hypothesis, and studies profound influence on psychology, psychoanalysis as a whole became a legitimate school of thought. Both the study of psychology and the practice of psychotherapy have been significantly impacted by psychoanalysis, the invention of talk therapy as a method of treating mental health issues was perhaps Freud's greatest contribution to psychology. Talk therapy is currently a common component of many psychotherapeutic procedures aimed at assisting people in overcoming psychological distress and behavioral issues, in addition to serving as the foundation for psychoanalysis.

1.2 Psychoanalysis and Its Impact on Scientific and Academic Research

Since we are dealing with a scientific research using psychoanalysis as a literary theory it is so important to determine the place and the impact of psychoanalysis in academic and scientific research.

First let us have an idea of it academically speaking, and its place in the university, the discussions on the connection between psychoanalysis and higher education often take place within the context of teaching and research. In the context of psychoanalysis, the term "training" encompasses supervision, instruction, and the experience of analysis itself, but in a university setting, there is hardly any distinction between teaching and training.

From the perspective of different researches, the role that university training can or could play for the student is significantly diminished by this lack of differentiation. Before it becomes a

content-focused activity, research and extension in higher education must serve as the pillars that structure a student's academic career. This is why, despite their differences, the terms "training" and "teaching" can be brought closer together in a context that can increase the possibilities that psychoanalysis can provide for academic training while also combating some stereotypes that the psychoanalytical institution has formed regarding academic training.

The primary focus of this part of our research paper is the acceptance that psychoanalysis has received from academic training. Nearly 100 years after Freud's important essay "On the Teaching of Psycho-Analysis at Universities" (1919 / 1955), we are still debating the relevance, significance, and position of psychoanalysis in the academic setting outside of the institutions of psychoanalytic training.

Now the impact of psychoanalysis in both academic and scientific research, let's take as an example our research paper, in this case psychoanalysis is used as a literary theory, it is a research which will treat a subject of literature, a deep literary analysis, the usefulness of psychoanalysis as a literary theory is the angle in which the paper will be studied, the shape that the analysis will take, it will bring to the research the analytical critical side and point of view, transforming a piece of writing so to an academic, methodological process, in addition to improve the cognitive capacities of the student, developing his critical mind and thinking during the writing.

Despite being a well-known method of literary interpretation, it has evolved into one of the mechanisms for deciphering the text's underlying meaning. The results of many studies showed that psychoanalysis is not just a part of medicine; it has also aided in the understanding of many other disciplines, including philosophy, culture, religion, and, most importantly, literature.

2. Psychoanalysis and Literature

Like we have mentioned before, our piece of work, is a research paper in a branch of literature studies, it is based on putting forward a deep literary analysis of famous authors and poets. For that we chose the adequate literary theory which is psychoanalysis, and the purpose is to link both literature and psychoanalysis, but how these two different branches can interfere to one another, and how can they merge together.

When we speak about psychoanalysis as the idea of analyzing ant content of literature, we refer to an exact term, **literary criticism**, is the logical analysis of literary texts and problems. It refers to any literary argument, regardless of whether or not specific works are examined.

Since the beginnings of psychoanalysis, the subject has revealed a strong set of links to literature that may almost be described as a shared fascination. The main link between the two disciplines has been literary criticism, particularly in its academic form. Literary theory, literature, and psychoanalysis are three distinct fields that interact and seek to use one another in unique ways. While psychoanalysis has occasionally attempted to explain literature, it does so much more frequently by using it as a model or source for its own concepts. Literature itself has occasionally sought to creatively utilize psychoanalysis, while literary criticism has attempted to employ psychoanalytic theory to explain literature.

These three domains' interaction reveals specific preferences. For instance, despite the fact that such ideas can be applied to both historical and literary phenomena, literary critics' enthusiasm with psychoanalytic theory from Sigmund Freud to Jacques Lacan has been significantly larger than historians'.

If we follow the right course of events, In order to support his maps of the unconscious and to explain what he discovered there, Freud turned to literature. The best-known instance of this phenomenon is the Oedipus narrative, which became the Oedipus complex after

reaching Freud through the literary form of Sophocles' tragedy. *The Uses of Enchantment*, a classic by Bruno Bettelheim (psychologist), used the world of fairy tales to shed light on child psychology and vice versa. We can also cite Dante's *Divine Comedy*, used for evidential, explanatory, and psychotherapeutic purposes by Helen M. Luke in her book *Dark Wood to White Rose*, which was published more recently in the Jungian school. Lacan himself shifted his focus to **Shakespeare** and **Edgar Allan Poe**. Several authors from the therapeutic field have studied the psychoanalytic foundations of fairy tales, popular literature, and even the Bible.

There are structural and cultural similarities between literature and psychoanalysis. The two greatest literary analyses of the contemporary soul—James *Joyce's Ulysses* and Marcel Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*—appeared around the same time as Freud's seminal *Interpretation of Dreams*, which is not a coincidence from a cultural standpoint. This temporal relationship more closely relates to involvement in a shared culture than it does to influence. Psychoanalysis tells stories and elicits them structurally. It is organized around stories, just like most literature is. Language is a necessary mediator in talk therapy. The complexity of the human soul is a long-standing prominent literary theme that is explored in psychoanalysis. This structural relationship, which was already true for Freud, was strengthened by Jung, whose system of archetypes is connected to both the imagination and to myths, employing the universality of stories to show the existence of the collective unconscious. In his assertion that the unconscious is structured according to the rules of human language, Lacan continues the pattern (as these were conceptualized by the structural linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure and Roman Jakobson). Lacan changes language from serving as a bridge between the unconscious and the therapeutic realm to serving as a definition of the unconscious. Such connections are feasible because psychoanalytic theory has always believed that literature and the arts in general derive much of their appeal from their capacity to express unconscious

content in disguise, as well as from their capacity to serve as vehicles of fantasy and, in Freud's case specifically, as socially acceptable sublimations of erotic drive.

Like we have said earlier literary criticism is the translated image of literature using psychoanalysis, it adopts the methods of "reading" employed by Freud and later theorists to interpret texts. It contends that a literary work is a manifestation of the author's own neuroses and that literary writings, like dreams, express the author's hidden unconscious wants and worries. It is possible to psychoanalyze a specific literary character; however it is typically believed that all such characters are projections of the author's personality, meaning that psychoanalysis is doing a sort of decryption, it decrypt and decode the language behind literary pieces, This method's intriguing aspect is that it supports the value of literature because it is based on a literary key for the decoding. Freud himself declared, "The dream-thoughts which we first come across as we proceed with our analysis often strike us by the unusual form in which they are expressed; they are not clothed in the prosaic language usually employed by our thoughts, but are on the contrary represented symbolically by means of similes and metaphors, in images resembling those of poetic speech";

This analytical endeavor, like psychoanalysis itself, looks for indications of unresolved feelings, psychological conflicts, guilt, ambivalences, and other things within what may very well be a disjointed literary work. The actions of the characters in the literary work can be linked to the author's own sexual struggles, fixations, and other issues from his or her upbringing. Yet, psychological information will be sent covertly, subtly, or encoded (as in dreams) through techniques like "symbolism" (the repressed item is portrayed in disguise), "condensation" (many thoughts or people are represented in a single image), and "displacement" (anxiety located onto another image by means of association).

After explaining in general and having an idea about the relation that history established by literature and psychoanalysis, let's deepen a little bit more and reviling the psychoanalytical touch in every level of literature.

2.1 Psychoanalysis and Theater (Drama)

The dramatic aesthetics of melodrama can be realized through psychoanalysis, which offers the playing out of psychic states and the repression of the repressed to fully articulate the issues that are at stake in our moral and emotional lives. The Freudian models of psychic functioning are anticipated by melodrama. In order for his later work to exhibit some of the melodramatic aesthetic elements, Freud himself appears to be striving for an ever-more melodramatic and legendary presentation of his key psychological ideas.

Plays and similar kinds of entertainment may be important as works of art as well as being the creators' own wish-fulfillment aspirations. In the end, they may also function as reflections of the hopes, ideologies, and emotions of the audiences they entertain; in this regard, one may draw comparisons between dramatic works and the thematic perception tests employed by psychologists. For instance, the audience member's ability to relate to the play's heroes or heroines has always been essential to a play's success. The interpretation, identification with, acceptance or rejection of the acts and sentiments of the characters in a drama, similar to the Thematic Apperception Test, vividly reveals the orientation of the audience's feelings and thoughts. Some well-known plays that put forward psychoanalytical shades and themes are for example the ones of T.S. ELIOT "*The Cocktail Party*", and "*The Elder Statesman*" in 1958, also the tragic one of Shakespeare "*Hamlet*".

It is crucial to explore the psychological corners of each components of a play, starting by the dramaturge and what are his purposes behind the story line; the choice and complexity maybe of the characters, the dialogues, the settings, the ending, sometimes it expose some

social and political, problems if it is the case then what are these problems, and why exposing them at that period of time and not another one, it may have different objectives either denunciation, or prevention, resulting and birthing so different sentiments in the watcher's mind . In the other hand, it can be the playwright's own life and personal experiences, in this case then the audience is attending and watching the author's opening, and confessing his feeling and thoughts, and sometimes reviling the truth behind some accusation toward him or rumors about his life during his carrier under the divers' reactions of the audience.

2.2 Psychoanalysis and Novels

One of the contemporary theories used in English literature is psychoanalysis. It is a theory that serves as a guide for psychoanalysis and is regarded as a theory of personality organization and the dynamics of personality. It is known that the closet connection between literature and psychoanalysis has always been deployed by the academic field of literary criticism or literary theory.

The psychoanalysis method of literary criticism has always been one of the most divisive and least well-liked by readers. Despite this, it is one of the most intriguing and fruitful approaches in the use of interpretative analysis. This psychological analysis has evolved into one of the methods for determining a literary work's secret meaning. It is also beneficial to look into the writer's innate personality as a role in his experiences from infancy until the time he was writing a book.

Psychoanalysis has been used to explain literature, and in the process, literature has been utilized as a source for psychoanalytic notions. Literature has attempted to employ psychoanalysis for creative reasons, as much as literary criticism has used psychoanalytic theory to interpret literature.

Literature is primarily analyzed from a psychological perspective as a reflection of the author's state of mind and personality traits in fictitious form, one of them are novels; an invented prose narrative of considerable length and a certain complexity that deals with fictive scenarios created by the author, legendary tales, or it can be a real story with human experiences, it can even be an autobiography, a letter. And in all the levels of a novel we can find psychoanalytical interpretations, hidden psychoanalysis theories, mental health themes. In a novel, psychoanalytic literary criticism signs can focus on;

The author's mind: Psychoanalytic literary criticism views the author as a manifestation of their own unconscious impulses in their work. The goal of a psychoanalytic reading is to give a text a psychoanalytically biographical meaning by attempting to connect particular characteristics of the text to the author's life.

The mind of the character: The motivations and behaviors of certain characters in an author's work can be analyzed and explained using psychoanalytic literary criticism.

The mind of the audience: Freud draws allusions to the fundamental fears and longings that are shared by all people. The appeal of some works to the collective unconscious mind can be explained by psychoanalytic literary criticism as to why they are so well received by a broad audience.

The text: To understand why an author chooses to utilize particular linguistic and symbolic devices in a book, psychoanalytic literary criticism might be used.

The psychoanalytic ideas that the authors and writers are affected by are mirrored in the characters of their works as well as in their own minds. The following are some examples of how Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic ideas affected the analysis of authors; The primacy of the Unconscious, The Iceberg theory of the psyche, Dreams are an expression of our

conscious, Infantile behavior is essentially sexual, and the relationship between neurosis and creativity...

Studying a novel psychologically will help us to read between the lines, discovering what's hiding behind a certain storytelling, pointing out the problematic, analyzing it then transforming it into what we call at the end the moral of the story, the psychoanalytical approach is used to make sense of different thematic consistencies, to account for disparities between representation, and interpretation, and to evaluate the adequacy for life of the solutions adopted by characters and implies authors. How many literary works have the core of a psychoanalytical problematic, how many novels convey psychological subjects, or fictional stories that actually deal with current affairs disguised by metaphors, or deep malaise, and painful life experiences written in diaries, among those novels to which psychoanalysis has done them a favor by explaining their true backgrounds, *Great Expectation* by Charles Dickens, *Villette* by Charlotte Bronte, *The Portrait of a Lady* by Henry James, *Cold Comfort Farm* by Stella Gibbons, *The Bookshop* by Penelope Fitzgerald, *The Butcher Boy* by Patrick McCabe, *Beloved* by Toni Morrison, *The Tell-Tale Heart* by Edgar Allan Poe, this work will actually have a big impact in our actual research, these novels are of course just some example, There are many other works where we can find traces and theories of psychoanalysis in the world of literature.

2.3 Psychoanalysis and Poetry

This part of literature is a fundamental step in our research paper because later we will proceed to the analysis of some poems and discuss deeply about poetry and psychoanalysis.

Psychoanalysis and poetry have long been closely associated since Freud started publishing his revolutionary new theories regarding the existence and strong influence of the unconscious mind. Poetry was something that Freud himself enjoyed and valued. His writing

is replete with allusions to poetry, and he frequently attributed poets with making the initial finding of the unconscious, which is the foundation of psychoanalysis.

Poetry is an incredibly effective coping mechanism because it can capture all of our anxieties, fears, and traumas in a few well-selected words. Nobody can contest the poet's skill as a master craftsman. Sometimes the meaning is manifested, and showed, sometimes it remains a mystery. Sometimes it is inexplicable even to the poet himself or herself! , But it is consistently alluring, memorable, and profoundly moving. Therefore, poetry and its instrumental sister, music-making, are used to commemorate important events and rituals in our lives. They serve as the memory and trauma keepers, and in some ways, we are better off because of them. By paraphrasing the poet and reciting one or two stanzas with careful modulation, we are better able to cope. There's even what we call poetry therapy, which is a form of therapeutic practice that uses poetry, literature, and other forms of written expression to promote healing and well-being. It is based on the idea that creative expression can be a powerful tool for self-discovery, personal growth, and emotional healing. In poetry therapy, individuals may be asked to read and discuss poems, write their own poetry or stories, or use other forms of written expression, such as journaling or letter writing, to explore their emotions, experiences, and inner world. The therapist may also use specific poems or literary texts to help individuals explore and understand their feelings, thoughts, and behaviors.

Poetry is the writing that uses words chosen and organized for their meaning, tone, and rhythm to elicit a focused imaginative awareness of experience or a particular emotional reaction, The language of a poem is a bit different than the language we can find in a book; the poetic writing can be complex and difficult to assimilate It can be differentiated from prose by its condensed nature, frequent use of meter and rhyme conventions, use of the line as a formal unit, expanded vocabulary, and freedom of syntax. It uses a range of strategies to convey its emotional content, including direct description, symbolism, the usage of metaphor,

and simile. Poems are huge waves of emotions that can contain all sort of personal stories, a poem is considered as the deepest form of intimacy, the poet goes through emotional and mental investment to share these well-structured feelings and emotions that only a psychoanalytical study can decrypt and can analyze the theories, the different mental states, and even the mental illnesses that can a poet suffer from during his writing , here are the names of some poems that shows the existence of psychoanalysis in poetry, Sir Edward Dyer, *'My Mind to Me a Kingdom Is*, William Shakespeare, *Sonnet 116* , Thomas Traherne, *'Walking'*, John Keats, *'Ode to Psyche'*, A. E. Housman, *'The stars have not dealt me the worst they could do'* , A. Mary F. Robinson, *'Neurasthenia*, Wilfred Owen, *'Mental Cases'*, Allen Ginsberg, *'Howl'*, Sylvia Plath, *'The Moon and the Yew Tree'* , Emily Dickinson, *'The Brain is wider than the Sky'* , her poems will also be our object of study in this research.

In conclusion, we arrive at the point where we can say that literature and psychoanalysis are two different fields, with different backgrounds, which co-relate to one another, and mainly helps an author, a writer, and a poet in his quest for identity and deep self-understanding and internal development relying on his own writings and literary works, but also can become an effective way to heal the reader's mind with personal, mental, and emotional issues.

Chapter Two:
Identity and Self-understanding in
Psychoanalytical and Literature

Throughout our long or short passage in life, we go through different phases mentally, where a torrent of existential questions takes an important place in somebody's mind, letting him sometimes lost and empty, and pushing him to a process of reconsideration, questioning so his beliefs, carrier, personal choices, family situations, his spiritual path, and the adult that he became after a long period of fighting traumas. These situations give generally birth to diver crisis, financial crisis, faith crisis, existential, and a frequent one the identity crisis.

The quest for identity and self-understanding is a common experience for all people. It entails examining and comprehending one's own character, principles, and position in the world. Although this process can be difficult, it is necessary for personal development and fulfillment in life.

1. Theories of Identity and Self-understanding

Childhood is the first time that identity is formed; it continues through adolescence and into adulthood. Individuals establish their sense of self during this period, which includes their distinctive traits, values, beliefs, and cultural heritage. Numerous elements, such as family dynamics, social and cultural contexts, life experiences, and self-reflection, can have an important impact on the process of identity formation. Also the development of identity is intimately tied to self-understanding. Developing self-awareness entails learning about one's own attitudes, sentiments, and actions. Introspections, self-reflection, and getting input from others may all be part of this process. Individuals can develop a greater understanding of their own strengths and shortcomings through self-understanding, which can aid them in making decisions and overcoming life's obstacles, achieving this journey can be an essential part of living a fulfilling and meaningful life, and can lead to greater self-acceptance, self-esteem, and overall well-being.

In psychology, identity and self-understanding are strongly related concepts; identity refers to a person's sense of who they are, including their beliefs, values, personality traits, and social roles. Self-understanding entails learning more about oneself, including one's thoughts, feeling and experiences.

According to Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, adolescence is the beginning of the process of creating a sense of identity, which lasts into early adulthood. People explore various facets of themselves and their surroundings throughout this time, gradually coming to terms with whom they are and what they stand for. Erikson who is a German Neo-Freudian psychologist who contributed his own theories and beliefs while accepting many of the fundamental principles of Freudian theory. His idea of psychosocial development is based on the epigenetic principle, which states that everyone goes through eight phases of growth. Meaning split the lifecycle into eight stages, each of which featured a conflict that had to be resolved in order for personality to develop. According to Erikson, the issue that arises during adolescence is "identity versus role confusion." The eight stages are,

Trust vs. Mistrust, This stage, which lasts from birth to 1.5 years old, is focused on helping children learn to trust their caretakers and other people. Children are able to grow the psychological trait of hope when they get attentive care.

Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt, between the ages of 18 months and 3 years, a child goes through this stage, which entails developing a sense of independence and self-control. Success in this phase enables people to strengthen their willpower and resolve.

Initiative vs. Guilt, Children start to explore their environment and exercise more control over their decisions between the ages of 3 and 6 years. Children can gain a sense of purpose by passing through this stage successfully.

Industry vs. Inferiority, The goal of this stage that lasts between the ages of approximately 6 and 12 is to help the child establish a sense of self-worth and achievement. At this stage of development, success breeds competence.

Identities vs. Confusion, Teenage years are a time of introspection. Those that are successful in creating a strong identity grow a sense of loyalty. Those who struggle to succeed in this period could end up feeling uncertain about their place and function in life.

Intimacy vs. Isolation, referring to early adulthood and it is a time when developing healthy relationships with others is crucial. The ability to establish devoted, enduring, and loving relationships with people is a result of success.

Generativity vs. Stagnation, an important step because People start to worry about making a difference in the world and contributing to society throughout this stage that occur during middle adulthood. At this point, having a family and a career are two important factors in success.

Integrity vs. Despair, in late adulthood, the final phase of psychosocial growth entails looking back on one's past. People who reflect on the past with a sense of satisfaction grow in integrity and wisdom, whereas those who are left with regrets may go through bitterness and despair.

Identity and self-understanding are fundamental aspects of psychology which relates to our ability to understand ourselves, and the deepest inner thoughts of our emotions, behaviors, place in the world, achieving the exploration of the self is a long journey of sacrifices and reconstructions, pushing a being out of his limits and comfort zone, letting him find the complete and best version of himself, this path can be violent procedure with a certain category of people , precisely the mentally unstable ones or the ones who suffer with identity

and existential crisis, that's why this process belongs more to the psychotherapeutic branch, because during these crises, individuals may face at different point of their lives periods where he question his values, beliefs, and sense of self, looking desperately the meaning and purpose of life.

People experiencing an identity crisis may feel uncertain about many things, as their career, relationships, status, family situation, they may even wonder who they really are, on the other hand, people that go through an existential crisis can feel a strong state of emptiness or meaningless in their life, reconsidering the purpose of their existence; sometimes these crises are part of personal growth and development of personality, but in some cases where the person is fragile mentally or is dealing with different traumas it can cause severe anxiety, manor or even major depressions, a dissociative disorder, a total confusion in the mind, these people are mainly the ones who needs therapy to reconnect with themselves, a therapeutic approach can help a person with an identity or existential crisis by providing a safe space to explore and express emotions in an non –judgmental and supportive environment, identifying and detecting the cause of the crisis, either a trauma, or a disorder, or a mental illness that must be cured to heal from it, and simply choosing therapy to find answers, and make life easier with the struggles that any crisis can cause.

After highlighting the themes of identity and self-understanding in a psychoanalytical way and following so what's psychology has to say about it, let's jump into the literary side, giving now the attention to what literature has to say about this subject since it is our principle concern in this research.

Identity and self-awareness are significant literary themes because they are fundamental components of the human experience, many literary works explore these themes through their characters' struggles to define themselves and understand their place in the world.

Identity is frequently depicted in literature as a complicated, multifaceted idea that is influenced by a variety of elements, including social standards, cultural expectations, personal experiences, and interpersonal connections. Self-understanding is frequently portrayed as a difficult but ultimately rewarding journey of self-discovery; we can find this diagram in the majority of literary works portrayed generally in the hero, who for example begins a complex physical, moral, spiritual quest full of hope, desires, sacrifices, and mainly doubts, facing tons of problems caused by the antagonist of the story but succeeding at the end to achieve the tumultuous voyage, and reach the complete version of himself where he is proud and interiorly in peace. This kind of events happen more often in stories, and novel, one of the most famous examples of literature exploring identity and self-understanding is J.D. Salinger's *"The Catcher in the Rye."* The protagonist, Holden Caulfield, is a teenage boy who is struggling to find his place in the world and understand who he is. He grapples with feelings of alienation and confusion, and his journey of self-discovery is both poignant and relatable to many readers. Another well-known example is Toni Morrison's *"The Bluest Eye,"* which examines how cultural beauty standards affect a young African American girl's identity and sense of self. The story shows how the protagonist's internalization of white beauty standards and the ensuing feelings of worthlessness impact her perspective of herself.

In real life this hero is in fact the struggle that any human being can fight deep within himself, being able to build a stable mind in a healthy body while dealing with life's ups and down including different crises that interfere and break all the efforts is in fact the hidden battle of any of us, that's what we can call a great war, a subject that is described as well in literature.

Novels are not the only type of literature that contain these psychological topics, we can find them also present in poetry, behind their well-supported style, the complexity of their

contents, and lyrical language poems hide and treat important subjects connected generally to the well-being, and internal struggles of a person.

Since poets frequently use their work as a way to explore and communicate their own personal experiences and perspectives, identity and self-understanding are popular subjects in poetry. Poems can reveal information about the poet's identity and feeling of place in the world.

Metaphor and symbolism are two ways that poets explore their own understanding of themselves in their writing. Poets can construct a language that subtly and effectively expresses their deepest ideas and emotions by utilizing these literary techniques. For instance, a poet might use the picture of a storm to symbolize their own emotional upheaval or for example the image of a butterfly emerging from a cocoon to symbolize development, change, and prosperity; by considering their own prior experiences and recollections, poets might explore identity and self-understanding in many forms. For example, Gwendolyn Brooks describes an old couple who live in poverty in her poem "*The Bean Eaters*," using evocative imagery to imply that their poor circumstances have given them a deeper appreciation for the basic things in life. By depicting this, Brooks makes a statement on the nature of identity, arguing that one's sense of self is not always connected to one's assets or social standing. Another strategy used by poets is to delve into the mind's inner workings, exposing the complicated feelings and ideas that shape one's sense of self. For instance, in Sylvia Plath's poem "*Mirror*," the speaker examines the influence of perception and self-image, using the metaphor of a mirror to suggest how one's sense of self is always changing and evolving. Through her investigation, Plath emphasizes the conflict between outward manifestations and inner sentiments and thoughts, arguing that self-understanding is a dynamic process. We can find some poets that concentrate on the meeting point of individual identity and more

powerful societal and cultural influences. In Langston Hughes' poem "*I, Too*," for instance, the speaker uses his own identification as a lens through which to explore more general concerns of racism and injustice. He celebrates the tenacity and power of the Black community in the face of oppression. Hughes presents a vision of self-understanding that is based on a feeling of shared history and community by emphasizing the importance of communal identity.

Generally speaking, poetry provides a deep and varied examination of identity and self-understanding, offering a window into the inner workings of the human mind and the complicated factors that shape our sense of self.

After having analyzed the way in which literature introduces these psychological subjects, it is time to explore its therapeutic side and how it can be beneficial.

We all believe that literature is significant. However, many of us steer clear of this genre altogether because we believe non-fiction offers so much more information than literature does. But reading literature isn't at all a waste of time. Actually, literature helps us save time.

First, our learning is quickly increased by literature. We gain knowledge through experiences, whether they be our own or those of others. Through literature, we are exposed to a wide range of circumstances and events that would otherwise take years for us to personally encounter. We may safely discover, for instance, what it's like to be divorced, leave your job and travel abroad on a whim, engage in adultery, fall in love, or commit murder. We can experience different lives through literature. Perhaps a Princess or a Prince can be us. Additionally, by exploring what's really on our thoughts, we feel less alone. We have the choice to be either good or bad. We can talk about taboo desires, among other things. Importantly, we can investigate in a way that is generally unsafe and honest for us in our daily lives. We don't need to make concessions.

We form emotional bonds with characters and a sense of community through literature. Both unimaginable generosity and terror are present. And through these encounters, we begin to understand ourselves and others. The proper piece might make us feel as though the author knows us better than we do. It can give meaning to things we have only sensed. We are exposed to a larger range of emotions through literature. By seeing ourselves in another person's situation, we can learn to change our viewpoint. We gain knowledge about our identities and aspirations. Imagine being able to experience the second-order consequences of choices without having to live them ourselves. In a path where a person is completely lost Good literature can be the map of the territory.

We can find an ocean of literary works that contain these two concepts of identity and self-understanding, but the two objects of study that we chose to analyze are; the poem of **Emily Dickinson** titled "*I felt a Funeral, in my Brain*", and the short story of **Edgar Allan Poe** titled "*The Tell -Tale Heart*"

2. Edgar Allan Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart", and Dickinson's "I felt a Funeral in my Brain" from a psychoanalysis approach

2.1 Introduction to the Authors

Prominent American poets Emily Dickinson and Edgar Allan Poe both made important contributions to American literature in the 19th century. Despite the similarities in their literary accomplishments, their writing styles and methods are very different.

With her distinctive use of grammar, capitalization, and punctuation, Emily Dickinson is renowned for her unusual approach to poetry. Her poetry has been characterized as minimalist and very focused, with frequent references to death, nature, and the human experience. Only a few of her poems were published under her own name during her lifetime, and the majority of her writing was only later discovered and published, On December 10, 1830, in Amherst,

Massachusetts, Emily Dickinson was born. She was the second child and grew up in a well-known and affluent family as the daughter of Edward and Emily Norcross Dickinson. She studied at the Amherst Academy, where she was exposed to the writings of Shakespeare, Emerson, and other significant authors of the day.

Despite her schooling, Dickinson had a difficult time making friends since she was a shy and introverted child. She spent most of her time in her family's home as she got older; becoming more and more reclusive while she composed poems and wrote letters to her friends and family. Dickinson was introduced to Reverend Charles Wadsworth in 1855, and the two became fast friends. There is some academic speculation that Dickinson and Wadsworth were romantically involved, although there is no concrete evidence to back up this theory. Dickinson produced approximately 1,800 poems in her lifetime, yet she only saw a small number of them published. She was very private about her writing and frequently only shared her poems with a small number of close friends and relatives, among the pieces that she wrote we can find, "*I'm Nobody! Who are you?*", "*Hope is the thing with feathers*", "*Success is counted sweetest*", "*THE Soul selects her own Society*", "*I dwell in possibility*", "*A Bird came down the walk*" and "*THE Brain is wider than the Sky*"..., Dickinson's poetry is renowned for its distinctive style, which frequently uses atypical punctuation, capitalization, and grammar. Her poems frequently cover brief, focused topics that touch on mortality, nature, and the human experience.

In the 1860s, Dickinson's health started to deteriorate, and she started to withdraw more and more. With the exception of her sister Lavinia and a select group of acquaintances, she hardly ever left her house and received few visits. On May 15, 1886, Dickinson passed away at the age of 55. As a result of her sister's discovery of an extensive collection of her poetry after her passing, Emily Dickinson became known as one of America's greatest poets.

On January 19, 1809, in Boston, Edgar Allan Poe was born. Poe was raised by John and Frances Allan in Richmond, Virginia, as a foster child when his professional actor parents, who were Poe's father and mother, passed away when he was just three years old. A successful tobacco exporter named John Allan sent Poe to the finest boarding schools and eventually to the University of Virginia, where he achieved academic success. However, after less than a year of study, Allan's refusal to settle Poe's gambling debts compelled him to abandon the university. Around this time, Poe started to sell short stories to periodicals, and in 1835, he went to Richmond with his aunt and cousin Virginia and took a job as editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*. He wed Virginia, who was only thirteen years old at the time, in 1836. Poe went on to edit literary magazines over the course of the following ten years, including the *Broadway Journal* in New York City, the *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, and *Graham's Magazine* in Philadelphia. He developed his reputation as a poet, short story writer, and editor during this time. He released some of his most well-known poems and stories, such as "*The Raven*," "*The Tell-Tale Heart*," "*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*," and "*The Fall of the House of Usher*." Poe's longtime battle with depression and drunkenness got worse after Virginia passed away from pulmonary disease in 1847. In 1849, he made a brief trip back to Richmond before leaving for Philadelphia, where he would work as an editor. He made an unspecified stop in Baltimore. He was discovered on October 3, 1849, with only partial consciousness. Four days later, Poe passed away from "acute congestion of the brain."

Poe's contributions to American and world literature as an editor, poet, and critic were significant. He is recognized as one of the pioneers of both detective fiction and horror through his works.

Both Dickinson and Poe suffer from mental health issues, different disorders, and depression; these two poets were among those authors, who found refuge only in their

writings, the only way to take care of themselves and their mental states was to write down the things that couldn't be said or treated at that time, their pain and confusion were united in the lines of a poignant poem and the words of a shattering text.

2.2 Philosophy and Themes of Emily Dickinson

Her writings were primarily influenced by the seventeenth-century intellectual poets and her reading of the bible, particularly the Book of Revelation. She was also inspired by an orthodox, conservative approach to Christianity, which substantially influenced the majority of her writing. She also grew up in a Puritan community in New England, we can notice that the localization had an impact on her personal story, As a poet, she explores a wide range of subjects, including nature, love, suffering, death and immortality, religion and God, aesthetic philosophy, universality, and more. Her poetry therefore covers a very broad spectrum of subjects. She actually travels from the profundity of nature through the humane brain. Many people wonder what is the exact literary genre of Dickinson because of her love for nature we can quickly lean towards the romanticism, but in reality her work is generally considered to belong to a literary tradition that's: American Romanticism, began midway through the 19th century, It was distinguished by its emphasis on independence, creativity, and the beauty of nature. While American Romantic authors had the same interest in examining emotions and interior experiences that's why her poems focuses on uniqueness and self-expression as well as an interest in the mind's inner workings. Her inventive use of language and form has influenced numerous later poets, yet her work also has a very current approach and style.

2.3 The Philosophy and Themes of Edgar Allan Poe

Edgar Allan Poe's themes and philosophy are often dealt centered around sinister subjects such as death, loss, madness, isolation, and macabre. He also explored the human psyche and the dark side of human nature; he was known for his use of symbolism and his ability to create a sense of unease and panic in his readers; Poe's philosophy was mainly and

heavily influenced by his own personal experiences with loss, torment, tragedy, depression, and alcoholism, these aspects of himself pushes him to explore the idea of the afterlife and the unknown making him special and sometimes extraordinary.

Specifically Edgar Allan Poe is a prominent figure in the romanticism literary movement, an era that was characterized by not only beauty of nature and individualism, but also featured supernatural elements as well as an emphasis on the imagination and the inner self. Poe is usually attached with the Gothic sub-genre of romanticism, which focused on dark, atmospheric settings and themes of horror, ghosts, and death. His most famous Gothic works include “*The Raven*”, “*The Fall of the House of Usher*”, *The Tell-Tale Heart*”, and “*The Pit and the Pendulum*” .

3. Identity and Self-understanding in the texts of the Authors

3.1 Analysis of The text “I felt a Funeral, in my Brain”

"I felt a Funeral, in my Brain" is a poem by Emily Dickinson, published posthumously in 1896. The poem describes the sensation of the speaker's mind breaking down and descending into madness.

The opening stanza establishes the mood by portraying a funeral that is happening in the speaker's head. The speaker feels a sensation of sadness and hopelessness as the mourners pass through his or her mind. The speaker's thinking is compared to an unrelentingly beating drum. Then we can say that the speaker of the second verse tells how the mourning made her feel as though she no longer had a sense of self. She feels as though her spirit is steadily eroding until all that is left is an empty shell.

The third stanza describes the moment when the speaker's mind finally gives way. She is plunged into darkness and feels as if she is falling endlessly into a void. The mourners

continue their relentless march, and the speaker feels as if she is being suffocated by the weight of their footsteps.

The final stanza is a lament for the loss of the speaker's mind. She feels as if she is trapped in a coffin, and her soul is lost forever. The poem ends with the stark image of the speaker being left alone in a dark, silent world, with nothing but the sound of her own breathing. As a whole, "I felt a Funeral, in my Brain" is a striking and frightening depiction of mental collapse and hopelessness. It has grown to be one of Dickinson's most well-known and widely-cited pieces.

3.2 The Issues of Identity in Emily Dickinson's "*I felt a Funeral, in my Brain*"

In this poem a torrent of feelings and emotions are expressed beginning by a deep sadness and emptiness and ending it by a complete loss of the self, each stanza is exposed by a tone of bitterness, but our focus will be on highlighting the issue of identity that is hidden between the lines, this piece is a powerful and haunting exploration of the themes of identity because it is structured around a metaphor of a funeral procession, the reader can easily understand the meaning in the wrong way and thinks that the speaker is dealing with the loss of his loved one which can cause a process of grieve and deep sorrow, it is true that a funeral is usually made when we have to burry somebody, but here the poetess is talking about losing ourselves and entering an era where we have to burry and grieve our own person after a long battle with the inner self which is exhausted of searching inner peace, and running behind answers. Dickinson employs dynamic and evocative language throughout the poem to depict the speaker's feeling of disconnection and confusion. According to one account, the funeral procession was made up of "mourners to and fro" who "kept treading - treading - till it seemed that sense was breaking through." The speaker may be battling to retain their sense of self and may even be in danger of losing their identity entirely, according to this. We can clearly notice the link with psychoanalytical aspects, for example every patient that go

through an identity or an existential crisis can feel a form of dissociation from the reality or the current environment which he is living or what it is called in the medical field a dissociative disorder, also in the poem the speaker refers to their brain as a "plank in reason, broke," meaning that their mental breakdown is generating a physical experience of distress and dislocation. The poem also examines the connection between the mind and body. This emphasizes the intricate relationship between identity, mental health, and physical health.

3.3 The journey of Self-understanding of Emily Dickinson

After having analyzed her text we can say that all the things that scholars declared about her are actually true, she was an alienated figure who was confronted a lot to loneliness, because arriving at some point the passion that she has for her writings became an obsession, her poems became her only friends and poetry a comfortable zone far away from the constraints of the society in which she was living, her journey of self-understanding is mainly depicted in her poems, many aspects of her struggle mentally to fully understand who she really is and how to be able to detects the specific element that can put the journey of self-satisfaction in danger, psychologically we think that when poetry becomes a personal diary it is considered a form of therapy to the author, at that time they were practicing what we call now journaling to externalize different thoughts, in this case we assume that writing down the things that were painful for Dickinson was her own mental process to be relieved, every poem full of ups and downs was a therapy session and the beginning of a healing process that can direct her a full healed version of herself.

That's why Emily Dickinson's journey of self -understanding is reflected in her poetry, a mixture of a deep sense of introspection, a connection to the natural world, and a profound exploration of the mysteries of the human condition and abilities.

3.4 Analysis of the Text “*The Tell-Tale Heart*”

Edgar Allan Poe's short story "*The Tell-Tale Heart*" was first released in 1843. An unknown protagonist tells the tale and maintains his sanity despite narrating his horrifying murder of an elderly man with a "vulture eye." The narration is provided by a lunatic who, unable to endure the old man's peculiar eye, decides to murder him. The narrator gets convinced that he can hear the elderly man's heart beating after carrying out the murder, which leads him to reveal the location of the body. The short story, which was first released in a literary journal named *The Pioneer*, is now among Poe's most well-known pieces and exhibits his distinctive gothic style.

The duality of human nature and the fine line separating sanity and insanity are the key themes of the novel. The narrator's sanity is questioned throughout the novel as he develops a growing obsession with and paranoia over the old man's eye, which he thinks is the cause of his discomfort. The narrative is built around the narrator's increasing worry, anxiety, and guilt, which eventually lead to his admission of the murder, and the loss of his mind. Many themes are depicted in this literary work such as guilt and madness, even though he tries to convince the reader of his sanity, but his erratic behavior and delusions reveal the extent of his insanity, another theme that is strongly visible, the human psyche; here we are in front of a powerful exploration of the human psyche and the inner demons that can lead a person to commit horrifying acts, we can also find one of the principle theme, death; while it explores the fear of death and its impact on the human mind, we also can depict the theme of conscience; the narrator is possessed by his own conscience and inner monologue especially when he hears the beating heart of the old man he has murdered.

3.5 The Issues of Identity in “*The Tell-Tale Heart*”

Not every reader will automatically jump into the subject of identity in this short story because of its lack of visibility. It is hidden in the character's mind and psyche, this aspect

start to be uncovered only when we precede to a decortication, first the narrator's psyche is depicted as fragile and unstable. His fixation on the old man's eye reveals his growing obsession and paranoia, and since the narrator's psychological state is revealed through his irrational thoughts and behavior, we can highlight first a person who is suffering from different mental illness, and also the several facets of identity, including the narrator's concept of self. His belief in himself as a reasonable and logical person is central to the narrator's identity. However, as the novel goes on, his actions and ideas become more and more unpredictable, and in the end, his true identity as a murderer is exposed. This emphasizes the notion that an individual's identity may be complicated and diverse, and that an individual's sense of self may be brittle and vulnerable to change.

Psychologically speaking we are referring to the concept of a split personality or a dissociative identity disorder which is another identity-related issue that is alluded to throughout the narrative. The narrator displays multiple personas, exhibiting calm, and composed manner during the day and unpredictable conduct at night. This raises the possibility that he has two separate selves, one of which is a façade and the other is the true reflection of himself, this specific passage of the story can be the proof of our assumptions "True!-nervous-very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am! But why will you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses-not destroyed-not dulled them. Above all was the sense of hearing acute. I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad? Hearken! And observe how healthily-how calmly I can tell you the whole story." We can see in this inner monologue the character's a battle between the reasonable self and the mad man that he is becoming not knowing who he really is, how to control his feelings and emotions, and living in total confusion about his own declaration.

3.6 Edgar Allan Poe's Journey of Self-understanding

Growing up Poe was not a lucky person; imagine a life of an alcoholic author, who suffers from different mental illnesses, we can believe that just by reading his writings because it often reflect his own struggles, particularly depression and anxiety, schizophrenia, borderline personality disorder, which made the relation with himself harder, which justify his love for gothic too, his tricky mind is a sinister and dark place, by creating horror tales he gives us the image and the reflection the internal chaos that exist within him. In his poem "*The Raven*" for example, we can analyze a haunting meditation on grief and loss that is believed to have been inspired by the death of Poe's wife, Virginia.

Just as Dickinson, Poe's self-understanding journey was characterized by many obstacles, but while being completely broke and dysfunctional he achieved greatest things, wrote marvelous story, and published mind-blowing works by transforming the pain to talent.

Many other great stories knew success because their origin is derived from personal experiences or when a psychological struggle is made into a literary piece just like we saw in "*I Felt a funeral in my Brain*" and "*The Tell-Tale Heart*", because it goes beyond the idea of an author telling a random story we have to know that nothing in literature is based on randomness it is actually about him confessing his deepest dark or joyful thoughts it is about sharing it with the same people who also suffer from different torment, letting them having access to an intimate aspect of themselves, at that time these authors didn't have any idea that their works are going to be the remedy of so many readers who want to live through something, who want to reach the softest and healed version, who want to get rid of the atrocities that their heads can say to them, and want to be able to feel peace in their hearts.

General Conclusion

To conclude, this research was based on the significant contributions that psychoanalysis has made to the field of psychology and our understanding of the human mind. Developed by Sigmund Freud in the late 19th century, psychoanalysis revolutionized our vision of unconscious processes and the influence of early childhood experiences on the person's psychological well-being, considering also its huge role introducing therapy to the world.

Psychoanalysis has also shaped debates, different researches, and discussions in academia, stimulating critical thinking and challenging existing paradigms. Its concepts, such as the Oedipus complex, defense mechanisms, and the structure of the psyche, have generated extensive research and scholarly discourse. While some shades of psychoanalysis have been criticized or modified over time, its influence has undoubtedly shaped the development of psychology as a scientific research.

Moreover, psychoanalysis has extended its reach beyond psychology, impacting other fields such as literature, film studies, and cultural analysis. Its exploration of the unconscious processes has provided valuable insights into the interpretation of art. By examining the hidden motivations and symbolic meanings embedded in creative works, psychoanalysis has enriched interdisciplinary research and expanded our understanding of human expression. Furthermore, psychoanalytical studies have an important inter-relation with the world of literature either in drama, prose or poetry; it opens up a space for exploring the author's own psyche and motivations. By analyzing a poet's life and background, psychoanalytic interpretations can shed light on the personal and emotional sources of their creative work.

The best examples that we chose to study and which illustrate so well the presence of psychoanalysis in literary works are *"I Felt a funeral in my Brain"* by the poetess Emily

Dickinson, and “*The Tell-Tale Heart*” by the author Edgar Allan Poe, in these works we surfed on psychological issues that are the quest for identity and self-understanding; profound and timeless journey that individuals embark on through their lives, a fundamental human pursuit, driven by a deep desire to comprehend and define one’s true essence, purpose, and place in the world, here literature served as a powerful medium for exploring and deepening our understanding of identity and self, through its rich narratives, diverse characters, and through provoking themes it encourages introspection and self-examination by posing fundamental questions about who we are, what defines us, how we relate to other and how we heal by delving into the thoughts, emotions, and experiences of literary figures.

Our research has shown us the unveiling hidden desires, conflicts, and unresolved issues that take place in our minds but find expression and freedom in literature and writing. This work allows the reader to appreciate the ways in which literature serves as a medium for self-exploration and a means of grappling with complexities of human existence.

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Abstract

The subject of this research work is an exploration through the therapeutic side of literature, the inter relation between psychoanalysis and literature, and the impact of literary works on the person's psyche and mental health, not forgetting the discussion of two psychological issues which are the quest for identity and self-understanding through two literary pieces the poem "*I Felt a Funeral in my Brain*" by Emily Dickinson and the short story "*The Tell-Tale Heart*" by Edgar Allan Poe". The work starts by giving the historical background of the field of psychoanalysis citing the most influential figures including their different theories. The latter relies on the link that these two fields have and the cooperation to one another. Then, it continues with exposing the subjects of identity and self-comprehension in two well-known literary works of the 19th century

Key words: literature, psychoanalysis, therapeutic, psyche, mental health, identity, self-understanding, Emily Dickinson, Edgar Allan Poe.

Résumé

Ce travail de recherche est centré sur l'exploration du côté thérapeutique de la littérature, l'interrelation entre la psychanalyse et la littérature, et l'impact des œuvres littéraires sur le psyché de la personne et sa santé mentale, sans oublier le débat de deux problèmes psychologiques qui sont : la quête de l'identité et de la compréhension de soi à travers deux travaux littéraires le poème «I Felt a Funeral in my Brain» d'Emily Dickinson et l'histoire « The Tell-Tale Heart » de Edgar Allan Poe. Le travail commence par donner le contexte historique du domaine de la psychanalyse en citant les personnalités les plus influentes, y compris leurs différentes théories. En deuxième lieu il repose sur le lien que ces deux domaines ont et sur la coopération entre eux. Ensuite, il continue à exposer les sujets d'identité et de compréhension de soi dans deux œuvres littéraires bien connues du XIXe siècle.

Mots clés : littérature, psychanalyse, thérapeutique, psyché, santé mentale, identité, compréhension de soi, Emily Dickinson, Edgar Allan Poe.