

**The Shadow in Edgar Allan Poe's Selected Poetry: A Jungian Archetypal Analysis of
Gothic Psychology**



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April 30 (Spring-2025)

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Gothic Psychology**

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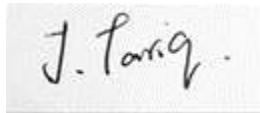
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BA in English

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

I hereby declare that this thesis is the student's own work and effort. All sources of information incorporated here have been duly acknowledged. This thesis has been submitted with my approval.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature appears to be "J. Farig" with a small flourish at the end.

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DECLARATION

This thesis is a presentation of my original research work. Wherever contributions of others are involved, every effort is made to indicate this clearly, with due reference to the literature, and acknowledgement of collaborative research and discussions.



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Dedication

This is dedicated to everyone who supported me and stood by me. This would not have been possible without your unwavering support and encouragement.

But most importantly, I would like to dedicate this to my mother. Ma, I finally made it!

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Abstract

This dissertation analyzes Edgar Allan Poe's seminal works "The Raven", "Annabel Lee", "Ulalume", "A Dream Within a Dream", and "Alone" using Carl Jung's theory of the Shadow archetype. It examines the themes of loss, grief and self-destruction and how they reflect Poe's early traumatic experiences, mental illness and personal struggles. Using the Jungian theory of psychoanalysis, this study dives deeper into how the Shadow gets projected externally, through Gothic symbols, metaphors and supernatural imagery, and internally through self-reflection about the perception of reality and existentialism. It argues that Poe's works are not only Gothic but also a reflection of his unconscious mind, where inner chaos meets symbolic creation. This paper draws attention to the duality of the projection of the Shadow and contributes to the broader field of psychoanalytic literary criticism by showing that literature can become a place for confronting the unresolved trauma and inner conflicts.

Keywords: Edgar Allan Poe, Shadow, projection, Carl Jung, Gothic genre, trauma, repression, psychoanalysis

Chapter One

Introduction

Edgar Allan Poe has famously quoted in his short story, “The Premature Burial”, “The boundaries which divide life from death are at best shadowy and vague” (278). This quote captures the essence of blurred lines between reality and the unconscious, which are recurring ideas in Gothic literature. Fred Botting, in his book *Gothic*, has defined this genre as the “writing of excess” that seeks the “negative, irrational, immoral and fantastic” elements while “shadow[ing] the progress of cultural modernity with counter-narratives”, which reveals the darker side of “humanist values” (1). With its emergence in the late 18th century, Gothic literature allowed writers to explore the darkest aspects of the human experience, such as death, fear, madness, and the supernatural. Even though it has often been identified for its mysterious settings and strange symbols, the traditions have always been focused on the exploration of the human mind, using external horror to reflect the inner turmoil. Over time, this genre engaged with psychological theories, which allowed it to explore deeper into the dark and hidden recesses of the mind and put the repressed emotions onto paper. In light of this, Edgar Allan Poe is considered the founding figure of Gothic literature, who chose a different approach through his unique narrative technique and clever ways of using literary elements, to bring the inner demons to the surface and let the speaker battle with them. Filled with painful experiences like the death of loved ones, abandonment, financial hardships, substance abuse, mental illness- the pain from real life can be seen reflected in his poetry, making them rich for psychoanalytic study.

This dissertation selects Poe’s seminal works “The Raven”, “Annabel Lee”, “Ulalume”, “A Dream Within a Dream”, and “Alone” and uses Carl G. Jung’s theory of the collective unconscious and the archetypes, emphasizing the Shadow archetype. Poe is often researched for

his gothic traditions and the presence of the macabre. However, this study attempts to dive deeper into what the narrators reveal about the human mind through their struggles and breakdowns. This research finds the literary relevance of choosing his poems not only because of the aesthetic qualities and symbolism but also their exploration of the deep and complicated emotions. His use of atmosphere, repetition and powerful imagery combined with themes of death, loss, madness and guilt, generates poetry filled with intense emotions and a sense of despair about life. The speakers' hidden fears, buried emotions, and broken sense of identity make them suitable for a Jungian reading. Implementing the concept of the Shadow, which fits naturally with the Gothic themes of Poe's poems, aids in better understanding the complex nature of the psychological conditions of the narrators.

In the context of Gothic literature and psychoanalysis, Poe's works have been extensively researched. However, a notable gap remains in applying Jung's concept to his poetry. Scholars have explored the grotesque in his short stories, but his poetic narrators are under-examined from a Jungian archetypal standpoint. By doing a focused psychoanalytical reading of the five selected poems, this study addresses the gap by revealing the Shadow's influence on the narrators' emotions, which gives it a Gothic tone. By doing so, it helps to see Poe's poetry in a different light and shows how Jung's ideas can provide a better understanding of the Gothic themes.

This study aims to examine the Shadow archetype's manifestation in Poe's selected poems and its reflection of Gothic themes. To accomplish this, the study looks at the speakers' deep emotions and inner struggles, analyzes the Shadow's function, and explores the repeated themes of guilt, loss and self-destruction using Jung's psychoanalytic view. In addition, it also connects Poe's personal experiences with the psychological states reflected in his poetry,

highlighting how the repression of the Shadow leads to emotional collapse in his poetic narrative.

The core argument of this dissertation looks into how the Shadow archetypes appear in the selected poems of Poe. It will reveal that they appear in two primary ways across the poems. One is through external projection into mysterious landscapes and supernatural figures; another appears through internalized projections, depicted through the narrator's psychological derangement. This paper argues that both the projection and internalization of the Shadow lead to the speaker's emotional and psychological turmoil. By failing to acknowledge or integrate the Shadow, the narrators face extreme consequences such as madness, existential crisis, and isolation. Eventually, this study will show how refusing to confront the Shadow results in emotional damage, building on the Gothic tone of Poe's poetry. Furthermore, this paper also argues that Poe's works not only follow the conventions of the Gothic horror genre, but also how he brings his life into his works, making it a reflection of personal psychological conflicts. As a result, his poetry becomes a place where Gothic and autobiographical meet seamlessly.

Guided by this argument, the research is established around two central questions: How do Poe's personal experiences and psychological struggles shape the Shadow's presence in his poetry? How does this influence themes of guilt, loss and self-destruction? These questions follow the aim and objectives of the research by seeking to connect Poe's personal and literary world through a Jungian framework and revealing how his narrators represent the broken mind, haunted by the repressed Shadow self.

Finally, this dissertation is organized into five chapters. The first chapter includes the general introduction with the background of the study, the review of existing literature on Poe studies, a focused theoretical framework, and an outline of the methodological approach. The

theoretical framework describes Carl Jung's concept of the collective unconscious and the Shadow archetype and justifies using it to analyze Poe's poetry. It argues that Poe's his poems use symbolism to express repressed emotions and psychological conflicts, making Jung's theory a more appropriate lens than Freud's for exploring the dark recesses of the human psyche in literature. Chapter Two focuses on Poe's background, how his personal experiences influenced the repetitive themes of grief, loss and self-destruction in his poems. The main analytical portion using the Jungian lens begins from Chapter Three, where three of the five poems: "The Raven", "Annabel Lee" and "Ulalume" are discussed at length, focusing on the Shadow's manifestation through themes like obsessive love, grief and madness. Chapter Four continues with the analysis of "A Dream Within a Dream" and "Alone", highlighting the effects of trauma, identity and existential crisis. The final chapter, which is the Conclusion, will reflect on the main findings of the research and its contribution to the greater body of knowledge on Poe studies and psychological literary criticism.

Critics have examined Edgar Allen Poe's works for many years due to their literary, psychological, and biographical aspects. They have studied his depiction of madness, the gothic style and the psychological complexity of his characters. Existing research on Poe has been conducted from various angles, ranging from psychiatric evaluation of the mental states of his characters to discussions on his fascination with gothic themes and motifs, his subversion to the idea of sublime, and narrative structures that arouse fear and anticipation. The direct impact of his life experiences, such as losses, financial hardships, and his struggle with alcoholism, on his writing, has been the subject of much research. This literature review is organized thematically into psychological disorders, gothic aesthetics and narrative techniques, biographical influences, and his impact on modern crime fiction. Combining these discussions, this review seeks to

identify the existing research gap, especially in integrating Jungian psychoanalysis to analyze Poe's poetry.

To begin with, in a research paper "Psychological Aberration, Obsession, and Horror in Edgar Allan Poe's Selected Works," Farkhanda Shahid Khan explores Poe's characters' complex psychological abnormalities and compares them to modern diagnostic criteria from the DSM-5 (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders). This study displays that Poe's characters frequently exhibit signs of schizophrenia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, monomania, and psychosis, which are brought on by life's challenges and traumas. For instance, the narrators' hallucinations and paranoia in "The Tell-Tale Heart" are indicative of paranoid schizophrenia. Similarly, another short story by Poe, "The Premature Burial," exhibits monomania and catalepsy. This psychological lens effectively underscores an introductory exploration of mental illness in Poe's works, and Khan's study also provides useful insights into the portrayal of mental disorders. However, this paper focuses solely on Poe's short stories and could further explore how these psychological states reflect broader gothic themes of existential dread and the absurd in his poetic works.

Edgar Allen Poe's subversion of conventional Romantic values is reflected in "Morbid Conditions: Poe and the Sublimity of Disease," where J. Alexandra McGhee highlights the sublimity of illness in Poe's works by arguing that his characters' disturbing mental states show an outlet to a psychic void where the ego disintegrates rather than reaching a level of enlightenment. Poe views the sublime not as gaining insights or getting enlightened about oneself but as being overwhelmed by experiences, opposing the Burkean or Kantian notion of the sublime. He presents characters incapable of bearing the burdens of their inner demons. McGhee emphasizes how Poe's main characters, such as Roderick Usher and Egaeus, are caught

in a cycle of mental decline because of their excessive sensitivity and compulsive fixations, which corrupt their perceptions of reality. Rather than saving the characters from their downfall or providing psychological relief, Poe's writings reinforce the Gothic idea of psychological collapse, where characters give in to their darkest desires. Thus, McGhee's study underscores how Poe's fixation with mental illness is not only metaphorical but also linked to a philosophical investigation of the self's incapability to see eye-to-eye with its darkness.

Similarly, Dennis Pahl discusses in "Poe's Sublimity: The Role of Burkean Aesthetics" Poe's disregard for the traditional Romantic values and argues that his conception of the sublime defies idealist traditions by highlighting fear and dissociation from reality. It establishes the instability of the characters- a key issue in Gothic psychology. Additionally, their research shows how Poe's use of horror is a philosophical comment on the limits of human perception and identity rather than only serving the aesthetic purpose. Thus, Poe's works regularly dramatize the conflict between the ego and the overpowering shadowy aspects of the unconscious, and this perspective supports the argument that his poetry should be seen through the Jungian lens.

Moving on, many researchers have looked into Poe's literary techniques, such as his unreliable narrators, creepy atmospheres, and vivid imagery. Like Chunyan Sun's "Horror from the Soul—Gothic Style in Allan Poe's Horror Fictions", discusses Poe's creative ability to evoke terror, emphasizing narrative devices such as suspense, symbolism, and first-person narration. They argue that Sun argues that the distinctive nature of terror readers get through Poe's first-person narratives, which gives them a close insight into the narrators' psychological states. The psychological impact is further enhanced by symbolism, such as the decaying house of Usher in the short story "The Fall of the House of Usher," representing the mental and familial collapse. To maintain the persistent feeling of dread, Sun also highlights Poe's use of anti-closure, which

leaves the stories open-ended for the readers to interpret the ending. Even though their paper is abundant with narrative analysis, it lacks the addition of a psychological theory that could strengthen the discussion to better understand the motivations of the characters in Poe's tales.

Comparatively, Jocelyn Dupont, in their paper, "Mad I am not"...or am I? Poe's Voices of Madness" examines the storytelling technique in Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart" by looking into the first-person narrative. However, this study points out how the narrator manipulates language to rationalize their actions and prove their sanity. It analyzes Poe's "genius effect" as established through his "linguistic creativity" (Dupont 2). Dupont draws attention to Poe's characters' denial of his insanity, which is a recurring factor in most of his works. This paper effectively connects Poe's work to psychoanalysis and shows how he redefined the psychological horror genre. But it does not address other storytelling techniques, such as eerie settings or supernatural forces, which could have given depth to the discussion.

On the other hand, Floyd Stovall's "The Conscious Art of Edgar Allan Poe" argues that Poe was a conscious artist and contradicts the idea that his writing was only instinctive. He defends Poe by saying that psychoanalysis reduces his works to a personal diagnosis and highlights how his stories and poems are meticulously created with a philosophical and artistic goal. This study displays Poe's belief that truth should be sought out through beauty, which appears in his poems "The Raven" and "Annabel Lee," where themes of loss and grief are skillfully crafted to evoke strong emotions. To accomplish his intended effects, Stovall also emphasizes Poe's use of exact storytelling tactics, such as symbolism and repetition, which strengthens the belief that his writings are thoughtfully crafted literary works rather than merely a result of emotional outbursts. This study successfully challenges the oversimplifying

interpretations of Poe, but a further examination of how his creative decisions influenced his craft could have strengthened the discussion.

However, other researchers have looked into Poe's life and experiences to look for influences on his writing. In their paper, "How Poe's Life Leaked into His Works," Ellie Quick explores how Poe's personal tragedies, mental health issues, and financial difficulties directly impacted his themes. It examines how loss, abandonment, and depression influenced his obsession with death, melancholy, and the supernatural, and also claims that his writings are profoundly autobiographical rather than just a product of his imagination. The author highlights that Poe's fascination with themes like loss and grief stems from the losses of women he loved and idealized in his life, which can be seen reflected in his poems "The Raven" and "Annabel Lee," where the speaker cannot move past the tragedy. Additionally, the study creates a link between Poe's alcoholism and depression to his protagonists' psychological vulnerability, particularly in their self-destructive natures and delusions. Although Quick's study effectively establishes the connection between Poe's poetry and his inner conflicts due to personal struggles, it mainly focuses on biographical analysis, which leaves space for more research into the gothic literary traditions of his works.

Following the autobiographical theme, Mariwan Hasan, Rayan Karim, and Sara Muhsin, in their paper, "Sense of Gloominess and Despair in Edgar Allan Poe's Selected Poems," examine how existential angst, grief, and loss dominate in Poe's Poetry. In this study, a detailed analysis of the poems "The Raven" and "A Dream Within a Dream" exhibits that Poe's personal tragedies clearly influenced the mournful tone of his poetry. The authors highlight how Poe illustrates the fragile nature of life and mortality through symbols like the raven, the sea, and the passing of time. They claim that in "The Raven," the narrator's spiral into insanity and inability

to accept loss is symbolized by the recurring use of the word “nevermore.” Also, in “A Dream Within a Dream,” the speaker feels a sense of hopelessness as he compares the slipping of sand through his fingers to the transient nature of life. The study's analytical approach creates a relationship between Poe's life and his art; however, a substantial theoretical framework, like a psychoanalytic perspective, could strengthen it.

Looking through a different angle, Karen J. Renner's essay “Poe and the Contemporary Serial Killer Narrative” examines Poe's profound impact on the serial killer arc in pop culture and real-life killers. It makes a connection between his mentally distressed narrators and criminal profiles in both media and fiction. It emphasizes how Poe's first-person narrator-murderers in his short stories “The Tell-Tale Heart” and “The Black Cat” show compulsive violence, dissociation, and obsessive rationalization of their crimes- traits similar to the psychological characteristics of contemporary serial killers. The author claims that Poe's characters exhibit a fractured sense of self that contemporary criminology acknowledges in serial murderers. Furthermore, this study also looks into Poe's dual role as the founder of psychological horror and the inventor of the detective genre, showing how his writings dwell between chaos and order. This research finds that Poe had formulated a structure that has shaped the world of murder, both fictional and real-life. This essay takes an interesting approach to analyzing Poe's works. Nonetheless, a deeper insight into the psychological themes, such as the uncanny, repression, and moral ambiguity, could have been more compelling.

Finally, this paper looks at Shuyu Chen's research on “A Jungian Archetypal Analysis of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher*” as it applies Jungian archetypes to interpret the psychological complexities of the protagonists, Roderick Usher, Madeline Usher, and the narrator. It says that in the story, Roderick, Madeline, and the Narrator represent the Jungian

Shadow, Animus (unconscious masculine archetype in feminine psyche), and the Persona (the social mask), respectively, who are going through the degradation of their psychological landscape. The analysis suggests Poe's preoccupation with mental instability, duality, and the supernatural in the collapse of the House of the Ushers, which reflects the collapse of the human mind. Chen's discussion of Poe's narrators highlights that their unreliable narration distorts reality, indicating the fragile minds of the Usher family. While the study provides a compelling psychological lens through which to interpret the text, it overlooks Poe's other works for such theoretical analysis, creating a gap in this field of study.

This literature review consists of research papers, articles, and essays on Poe's life, his narrative techniques, his rejection of Romantic ideas, and psychological analysis of his characters through themes of death, loss, grief, and the uncanny. This existing scholarship has provided a foundation for analyzing Poe's poetry through the lens of Carl Jung's Shadow. However, a noticeable gap remains- Poe's work, especially his short stories, has undergone much analysis and criticism. But his poetry has not been given enough attention, that too from the Jungian perspective. Thus, this research aims to bridge the gap and contribute more knowledge to the growing body of psychoanalytical studies.

To bridge this research gap, this study uses Carl Gustav Jung's psychoanalytic theory of the collective unconscious and archetypes, emphasising the concept of the Shadow as the guiding framework. Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Carl Jung established the theory of analytical psychology in the early 20th century as a response and a contrasting idea to Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory. Freud focused on the personal unconscious and psychosexual development. However, Jung pioneered the concept of the collective unconscious- a layer of the psyche that is universally shared and contains patterns and symbols known as Archetypes.

Jung claims that the human psyche has three parts: the conscious, the personal unconscious, and the collective unconscious. The conscious mind holds the ego, the “I,” identifies and categorises acceptable behaviour, helps in the decision-making process, and creates identity in society. As he explains, the personal unconscious consists of “contents which have at one time been conscious but which have disappeared from consciousness through having been forgotten or repressed” (Jung 56). These experiences or memories are completely personal to individuals, thus the term. However, he emphasises that this is only the surface or “more or less [a] superficial layer of the unconscious” (3) and beneath it lies a deeper, much more complex layer which he terms the collective unconscious.

Jung explains that the collective unconscious is a “psychic system” that contains universal patterns of behavior, thought, and emotion that are “identical in all individuals” (43) and go beyond the individual experience. He calls these patterns or universal symbols Archetypes, and they appear in myths, dreams, and creative works like literature or art. Some of them are the Hero, the Great Mother, the Trickster, the Wise Old Man, the Anima/Animus, and the Shadow, and these symbolize aspects of the human experience and their personality. These are symbolic representations of the instinctive forces, forming foundational elements of human personality.

This research concentrates on the Shadow Archetype, which Jung defines as one of the most critical and complex archetypes of the unconscious. It is “...a living part of the personality...” (20), a part that represents aspects of the self that the ego refuses to acknowledge, traits that are often negative, inferior, or socially undesirable. It appears in dreams or is projected onto other people. It is closely related to the personal unconscious, which Jung claims it overlaps with Freud’s concept of the unconscious. Because it is not limited to sexuality or trauma and it is

morally complicated as it not only contains the bad qualities but anything that is not compatible with the consciousness. Jung does not see it as an abnormality but as part of self-development. Trying to deny these will only make them show up in distorted and self-sabotaging ways, as it “wants to live with [the personality] in some form” (20).

Jung emphasises that confrontation with the Shadow is not only inevitable but also psychologically necessary. He says that “the meeting with oneself is, at first, the meeting with one’s own shadow” (21). He describes meeting with the Shadow as like passing through a “narrow door” with many painful obstacles. When the Shadow is not recognized, it dominates the self as if being possessed by it, and it continues to stand in the light of an individual, making them fall into their own traps (Jung 123). Thus, the Shadow is both a threat and a key to growth; the repressed self must be brought to consciousness to find the true self.

Questions arise on using the Jungian lens instead of Freud's psychoanalytic theory, for which multiple reasons can be presented. Freud’s theory focuses on repression, and the return of the repressed trauma happens through psychological symptoms or other disguised ways. However, Jung argues that repression causes unconscious expression through images, myths and dream scenarios which can be seen in literature and art. A Freudian reading of Gothic literature might have explained it as an expression of unresolved issues or repressed sexual tensions present in the author’s psyche. Nevertheless, Jungian reading explores the universal patterns of ongoing conflict between the ego and the unconscious, especially the Shadow. Unlike Freudian literary analysis, which relates literature to the author’s psyche, Jungian archetypal analysis observes the manifestation of the collective unconscious.

The Shadow archetype shows up in literature as villains, monsters or dark entities who reflect the repressed soul. Jung points out examples like Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust*

where the devil is Faust's repressed ambition and desire and E.T.A. Hoffmann's *The Devil's Elixir* where the protagonist is haunted by the consequences of their dark desires (284). Modern literature shows characters like Professor Moriarty, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Frankenstein's monster, and Count Dracula, who personify the contents of the Shadow, expressing urges and instincts that society does not accept. These figures help readers engage with the text and characters by symbolizing repressed materials. Ana Kechan and Sezen Ismail have explained in their paper, The "Shadow Archetype: Casting Light on Evil", that "literary portrayal of archetypes is the most wholesome and safest way to be dealing with unwanted psychological contents" (25). Thus, it makes literature a powerful space for exploring the darkness of the human psyche.

Although Poe's work has often been approached with Freudian, Gothic or biographical texts lens, this study addresses the critical gap by applying Jung's concept of the Shadow to his poetry. His poems are saturated with archetypal imagery and unconscious projections that reflect deep psychological issues. They are not merely an expression of grief but a symbolic representation of the speaker's fractured inner self. Using Jung's theory, this research examines how the repressed emotions like grief, guilt, obsession, and irrational longing come to the surface through Gothic symbolism and reveals the darkness of the psyche. This framework helps to understand how Poe expresses pain and internal conflict through poetry and why his dark and emotional world can still be relevant to the readers.

This research paper has chosen to do a qualitative, close reading of Edgar Allan Poe's selected poems - "The Raven", "Annabel Lee", "Ulalume", "A Dream Within a Dream", and "Alone". It chooses Carl Jung's psychoanalytic theory of Archetypes as the theoretical lens, particularly focusing on the Shadow Archetype. This method allows for an in-depth analysis of

the poems, identifying the shadow's manifestation and the reflection of psychological struggles in the characters and in Poe himself. This research method is not empirical as it does not revolve around statistical data but rather around textual analysis, focusing on uncovering the underlying meanings and symbols in the poetry.

As this paper examines the psychological dimensions of Poe's characters in his poetry, Jung's text *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* will provide a foundational framework for how the Shadow manifests within the human psyche. This text elaborates on the role of the shadow in the unconscious mind, which is key for interpreting the psychological torments in Poe's poetry. It also connects shadow with self-actualization and self-destruction, common themes that align with the tragic fall of Poe's poetic narrators. Implementing this theory in Poe's selected poetry can be insightful since each of the poems addresses a different dimension of human experience- love, grief, existential crisis, isolation- and reflects psychological conflicts. Also, the close reading of the poems allows for inspections of the imagery, symbolism and language, covering the maximum area for analysis. Through this method, the research will explore the psychological depth of Poe's poetry, emphasizing the interaction between the conscious mind and the repressed unconscious.

Chapter Two: Influence of Edgar Allan Poe's Background on His Poetry

I became insane, with long intervals of horrible sanity.

(Poe qtd. in Harrison 287)

Edgar Allan Poe's works have always been questioned and subject to controversy, with scholars and critics questioning his sanity. Some critics have argued that Poe's writing is detached from any artistic expression. In contrast, others contended that his poems and narratives are deeply interconnected with his life's psychological turmoils and experiences. However, Poe views his madness as a genius and remarks in his short story "Eleonora", "madness is or is not the loftiest intelligence –whether much that is glorious– whether all that is profound– does not spring from disease of thought –from moods of mind exalted at the expense of the general intellect" (296). Thus, this chapter looks into how Poe's childhood and other tragic life events have shaped his poetic vision, examining whether his works are reflections of his unconscious fears and desires, translating to his heightened form of intelligence and creativity.

Many of Poe's works, especially his poems, have a recurring theme which is the loss of a loved one, especially a woman. It is taken from his own life as his life started with significant trauma and loss from a very young age. By the age of three, Poe had lost both of his parents—his father abandoned him, and his mother died of tuberculosis. This early exposure to death and instability likely contributed to his fixation on themes of loss and mourning. Afterwards, unofficially adopted by John and Frances Allan, he shared a warm bond with Frances, who encouraged his love for poetry. Still, his relationship with John Allan was strained, leading to a childhood where Poe felt both cared for and emotionally neglected. These experiences of abandonment and emotional neglect formulated Carl Jung's concept of the Shadow archetype,

which represented Poe's repressed grief and alienation throughout his life. For instance, in his autobiographical poem "Alone", he writes, "From childhood's hour I have not been / As others were—I have not seen / As others saw" (lines 1-3); this reveals his sense of isolation from his childhood. His recognition of being essentially different from others reflects a deep-rooted battle with his Shadow.

The recurrent loss and betrayal of significant women profoundly impacted Poe's emotional world and literary output. It all started with the deaths of his mother and his adopted. Then he lost his first love, Elmira Royster who betrayed him and married someone else. After that, his wife Virginia Clemm died at a young age. All of these deaths and losses have left permanent marks on his psyche, leading to repeated themes of mourning and the idealization of lost women in his poetry. Poe wrote "Annabel Lee" after the death of his wife Virginia, where he romanticizes a lost love, portraying an eternal bond untouched by death: "But we loved with a love that was more than love— / I and my Annabel Lee" (lines 9-10).

Similarly, "Ulalume", which was also written right after Virginia's death, dives into the unconscious repression of grief, with the speaker unknowingly returning to the tomb of his dead beloved. This symbolizes the manifestation of the Shadow through suppressed memory and trauma. Jungian psychoanalysis suggests that unresolved grief and repression of painful emotions contribute to a more potent Shadow. Thus, it can be said that Poe's own unintegrated shadow is often displayed by his narrators, who become obsessed with their deceased lovers, paralysed by their loss. They are obsessively fixated on their dead loved ones, which shows that unresolved trauma and suppressed grief has a way of trapping the conscious mind in a vicious cycle of guilt, mourning and destruction of their own selves. The narrator's paralysis is a mirror image of how

Poe coped and repressed his trauma, thus defining his poetry by deepening the impact of the Gothic atmosphere.

Throughout Poe's life, he not only struggled with personal losses but also with constant financial instability. In spite of being a literary genius, he has always lived in debt, depending on low-paying editorial jobs at literary magazines where he reviewed other authors' works and published his own. These economic hardships, combined with emotional traumas, contributed to the themes of instability and self-destruction found in his writings. In his later works, his frustration with reality appears powerfully, highlighting the tension between his anxiety and external hardships. He wrote "A Dream Within a Dream" near the end of his life, which captures his dissociation from reality and feelings of helplessness. Here, he tries to come to terms with all he has endured in his life and explores the fleeting nature of success and stability and the existential fear of losing control. He writes, "All that we see or seem / Is but a dream within a dream" (lines 9-10). These lines encapsulate the existential angst that supports his works, the fear of the reality being unstable, and often human efforts going in vain. From the Jungian perspective, this disillusionment is a form of the Shadow archetype. Here, Poe's repressed fear, projected into his poetry, represents the transient and illusionary nature of reality and control. Thus, it seems that his own life experiences seep into his narrators' personalities, suggesting that his psychological darkness is inseparable from his works.

Poe's struggles with depression and alcoholism were deeply intertwined, both feeding into each other and shaping the melancholic tone of his works. His life was marked by continuous loss, financial instability, and emotional isolation, leading him to seek solace in alcohol. However, rather than serving as an escape, drinking intensified his inner turmoil,

mirroring the obsessive despair and psychological unravelling seen in his poetry. His writings reflect this sense of unavoidable grief and approaching disaster, particularly in “The Raven”, where the speaker, much like Poe, succumbs to his grief instead of confronting it, allowing it to manifest in externalised forms—whether through alcohol or the sinister presence of the raven. Poe’s battle with alcoholism was not indulgent but mere symptoms of more profound struggles with emotional distress, reinforcing the Shadow’s grip over him as his darkest fears and sorrows overtook his mind both in life and in literature.

In the later stages of his life, Poe's mental and physical health deteriorated, leading to unstable behaviour and an intensified obsession with themes of the supernatural, dreams, and death. This blurring of reality and hallucination is mirrored in his poetic works. Poe’s one of the most popular poetry, “The Raven”, serves as a direct confrontation with his Shadow, where the speaker's grief drives him to madness as he keeps talking and trying to rationalise with the mysterious raven: “And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor / Shall be lifted—nevermore!” (lines 107-108). The narrator projects his Shadow onto the raven, transforming it into the external symbol of his repressed grief and inevitably descending into madness. Thus, Poe’s emotional turmoils parallel the madness depicted in his poetry, reinforcing the psychological horror that penetrates his works.

But this immense focus on the mind’s collapse sets Poe apart from many of his contemporaries within the Gothic genre. To understand this distinction, the Gothic horror genre needs to be dissected and examined for its broader characteristics. It is defined by its investigation of fear, death, decay, and the supernatural. This type of literature is often set against landscapes like graveyards, abandoned castles, haunted houses, and forests. As Fred

Botting notes in his book *Gothic*, “[these] atmospheres—gloomy and mysterious —have repeatedly signalled the disturbing return of pasts upon presents and evoked emotions of terror”

(1). Alongside the settings, it involves otherworldly figures like spirits, ghosts, monsters, or some sort of supernatural entity to intensify the experience, both for the reader and the characters. In addition to that, it often deals with boundaries between life and death, sanity and madness and uses the supernatural elements as a means to weaken the sense of reality in the characters. Furthermore, Botting suggests that “External forms [are] signs of psychological disturbance, of increasingly uncertain subjective states dominated by fantasy, hallucination and madness” (7), meaning that this terrifying imagery of monsters and entities is often the reflection of the speaker's emotional and psychological imbalance.

Even though Poe uses many conventions of the traditional Gothic horror genre, such as deteriorating castles, tombs, supernatural figures, and the constantly present theme of death and decay, his approach is notably different. He internalizes the horror by making the mind the primary source of fear, instead of showing external elements. His narrators’ mind becomes their sole enemy as it is plagued by repressed guilt, grief, and obsession. The settings, symbols, and images make his poems like a fever-dream, making readers wonder if the horrific experiences are real or the figment of the speaker’s troubled imagination. Poe focuses on the mind rather than only using the Gothic components as an external source of horror, and makes it internal. The absolute horror comes from the emotional breakdown and deep feelings of fear and grief. He connects the outside world of disturbing settings with the inner world of his narrator’s thoughts and feelings, making his works more personal and relatable.

The way he turns the external horror more inwards is by incorporating his own experiences of loss, grief, and emotional instability. Losing his loved ones, especially the women he loved and admired, scarred him deeply and these emotions can be seen through his speaker's obsessions and emotional collapse. Poe uses his pain as his muse for creating these poems that reflect his sadness, alienation from the world and his wish to escape. It witnesses his innermost suffering and anxiety through the manifestation of the Shadow. Because of this, his poetry transcends the Gothic horror genre and offers the readers an intimate view of his mind, where his personal and psychological landscape is represented by the haunted atmosphere and the eerie settings.

To conclude this chapter, Edgar Allen Poe's poetry goes beyond the Gothic horror genre; it serves as a window into his personal and psychological landscape. His early experiences of loss, financial instability, struggles with depression and alcoholism, and obsession with death are intricately woven into his literary creations. Applying Jung's theory of the Shadow archetype provides a framework to understand how Poe's repressed fears, grief, and despair become apparent in his works. Recognising the influence of Poe's life on his poetry enriches the interpretation of his contributions to literature. This understanding sets the stage for the subsequent chapter, which will delve deeper into the Shadow archetype before applying it directly to Poe's poetry.

Chapter 3: Externalizing the Shadow Through Gothic Imagery

This chapter explores the Jungian Shadow archetype in Edgar Allan Poe's most poignant and symbolic poems: "The Raven", "Annabel Lee", and "Ulalume". Each of these poems has a male speaker who is overcome with melancholy, and his emotional collapse demonstrates the destructive power of repressed emotions, unresolved trauma, and death of the psyche. Using Carl Jung's theory of archetypes, specifically the Shadow, this chapter highlights how Poe crafts hauntingly vivid scenery in which memory and madness are inseparable from sorrow. These poems display the Shadow as both a psychological force within the psyche and as an external, often mysterious figure that embodies the speaker's darkest fears and most passionate desires. According to this view, Poe's poetry illustrates what occurs when people fail to take control of their Shadow. This leads to being emotionally fragile and mentally broken, not just for his protagonists, but possibly for the poet himself.

After publishing "The Raven" (1845) in the newspaper *New York Evening Mirror*, Poe finally found literary fame amid personal grief and psychological instability. The slow, lingering death of his wife had been haunting him for years, as his wife, Virginia, was suffering from tuberculosis. This poem portrays the descent of the grief-stricken, unnamed scholar into madness due to the death of his beloved Lenore. It is composed of eighteen six-line stanzas written in trochaic octameter, with heavy use of internal rhyme and repetition, which gives the poem almost a musical quality as well as mirrors the speaker's obsessive state of mind. The Gothic mood of the poem, with mystery lurking in the darkness, a supernatural element like the anthropomorphic raven and a sense of impending doom, reflects the inner situation of the unnamed narrator. Finally, Poe's signature use of the unreliable narrator, who is not certain if he is awake, asleep, or hallucinating, contributes to the surreal tone of the poem.

The atmosphere of the speaker's chamber initiates the psychological descent, as it is filled with grief and isolation. Poe uses diction and vivid imagery that form a dreamlike space between the conscious and unconscious. The opening line, "Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,"(line 1) blends the fantastical tone of a fairy tale of "once upon" with the heavy and depressive weight of "dreary" and "weary". This juxtaposition sets the stage for the poem's psychological atmosphere, suspended between reality and dream. The speaker is caught between the midnight hour, between sleep and wakefulness, which symbolizes the limited space between consciousness and unconsciousness, between reason and delusion. This aligns with Jung's assertion that individuals must descend into the depths of their unconscious to hope for self-actualization. However, this poem reveals that the speaker was consumed by the depth of his unconscious and ended up in a psychic paralysis. He could not understand or recognize his Shadow, thus ended up projecting it outwards and trapping himself in a cycle of denial, euphoria and despair.

Poe's use of imagery in the line "each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor" (line 8) evokes the ghost of his past, the memories of his lovely Lenore, with each burning light. The whole room turns into a symbol for the psyche, where the "forgotten lore" is piled up around the room, a striking use of metaphor that represents the narrator's repressed memory and unresolved longing. The speaker's control over his conscious mind starts to weaken through Poe's use of internal rhymes and repetition of words like "napping", "tapping", and "rapping". It almost sounds hypnotic, as if it is mimicking the voice of the unconscious. From this moment, his ego gets taken over by the forces of psyche, preparing for the Shadow to emerge fully.

The boundary between the speaker's inner world and the external world gets disturbed by the raven's appearance. In the seventh stanza, the raven appears-

“Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;

But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door—

Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door—” (lines 39-41)

It enters the chamber, neither showing any respect nor being scared of the human. This gives the raven an eerie autonomy, as if the bird is not a creature of nature but a symbolic manifestation of a force that is beyond the speaker’s control. It intrudes into the psyche (the chamber) without any invitation, just like when the unconscious Shadow breaks the barrier of consciousness.

Moreover, he sits on top of the bust of Pallas or Athena, the goddess of wisdom, and it further highlights the juxtaposition of reason and rationality getting pushed aside by the irrational Shadow caused by unacknowledged grief. As Jung states, “The shadow personifies everything that the subject refuses to acknowledge about himself” (284), the disowned Shadow surfaces into the psyche in the form of the raven.

The speaker’s projection of his Shadow starts growing as he starts talking and asking questions to the raven, like “thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee” (line 81) or “is there balm in Gilead?” (line 89). The bird symbolizes his own pain, guilt and grief, which makes it even more difficult to deal with when it only says “nevermore” to all of his questions. In Jungian terms, projection is when someone pushes parts of themselves away so that they do not have to confront them, but they end up seeing these parts in someone or something. The speaker, not recognizing his Shadow as the Raven, starts treating it like an angel, a prophet, a demon, and even a messenger from above to take him away to his beloved Lenore. Thus, he loses control over his emotions and gives more power to the darkness inside him.

The poem goes on, and the speaker keeps asking the raven questions in hopes of finding a solution or a balm to ease his pain. He asks, “ Tell me what thy lordly name is...Tell

this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,/It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore” to which the raven only responds “nevermore”. At the beginning of the poem, this reply seemed random or strange, but as it progresses, he starts believing that “nevermore” means he will never find peace, never see Lenore again and never escape his pain. The raven becomes the symbol of his Shadow, which completely takes over his psyche, and he is unable to see that it only reflects his own thoughts. The chamber is filled with dark imageries such as “midnight”, “bleak December”, “dying embers”, “purple curtains”; and these are not only Gothic elements but a reflection of the narrator’s inner state, his deep unconsciousness. His Shadow is personified in everything in the room, which was supposed to guide him to enlightenment, but ended up causing him more pain and hopelessness.

The final stanza concludes in utter defeat: “And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor/ Shall be lifted—nevermore!” (lines 107-108). This line expresses how the speaker failed to achieve individuation, a resurrection from his grief, by bringing the Shadow into the conscious mind. Since he did not make much moral effort to recognize his Shadow, he is now the prisoner of his own unconscious mind. As per Jung’s warning regarding repressing emotions and memories, the Shadow becomes more powerful and destroys the fragile boundaries of the ego. In this poem, the speaker did not end up dying, but with a psychic paralysis, his soul unable to move past the pain of the loss of his beloved Lenore.

“The Raven” shows a man who is overwhelmed with grief and haunted by his own projection of his Shadow. “Annabel Lee”, however, shows a more gentle, romanticized picture of death. In contrast to the agonized scholar in “The Raven”, the speaker in “Annabel Lee” maintains a perfect memory of his beloved, keeping her innocence intact in a picturesque notion of everlasting love. But beneath the poetic voice and fairy tale imagery, Poe persists in his

examination of repression, mourning, and the unconscious. In this poem, the Shadow appears not only through horror or insanity, but by the speaker's romantic refusal to the death of Annabel Lee, the idealization of innocence, and his inability to relinquish what is lost.

“Annabel Lee” is one of Poe’s last poems, published in the *New York Daily Tribune* after his death in 1849. Traditionally, it is considered a tribute to Poe’s wife, Virginia, who died of tuberculosis at age 24. “Annabel Lee” tells the tale of the love shared by the speaker and Annabel Lee, which was so great that it made the angels jealous and take her away from him. Even after her death, the speaker feels that their soul are deeply connected, and he continually lies next to her tomb each night. It follows a ballad-like form, which gives it the musical quality and the fairy-tale diction, such as “kingdom by the sea”, “maiden”, highlighting the innocence, while the darker realities of death and obsession lurk as the poem progresses.

Poe opens the poem with the lines, “It was many and many a year ago, /In a kingdom by the sea,” (lines 1-2), which sets the tone for a dream-like place cut off from reality. The speaker reminisces over their love, which was so perfect and innocent that it does not even feel real. To him, Annabel Lee is not only a woman but a symbol of purity and the idolized embodiment of his lost happiness. But through this idealization of their love, he is denying the natural end of human life, his fear of forgetting her, his unacknowledged grief and anger, which indicates the presence of a dark Shadow. The Jungian philosophy says that if individuals can “see their Shadow or bear knowing it”, it would solve a small part of their problem (20). But in this case, the narrator creates a false sense of their love being alive by avoiding confrontation with the repressed parts of himself, using fantasy and memory to bury the emotional burden of his loss.

Poe is best known for his use of repetition of certain words or phrases, which gives them an enchanting quality. For this instance, the repeated variations of the phrase “kingdom by the

sea” reinforce a mythic setting which is detached from real time, where the speaker is living. This false setting also creates an opportunity for him to escape the reality of the situation, to escape from the pain of loss. In this poem, his choice of diction is child-like, singsongy rhymes usually used in nursery rhymes; for example, “we loved with a love that was more than love” (line 9), and also in “my darling—my darling—my life and my bride” (line 39). This creates the emotional and psychological tone of the poem. Furthermore, the simplicity, repetition of words, and exaggerations indicate that he is trying to express bigger emotions through limited words, as he might be unable to process and get the right words in. This lullaby-like rhythm imitates his emotional situation; it reflects the regressive state of his psyche, holding onto the comfort of illusion.

Jung terms this sort of emotional regression a coping mechanism in which individuals refuse to confront the Shadow. The speaker finds his “shadow so disagreeable” (265) and finds solace in the safety of romantic memories, thus choosing not to process complex emotions like anger, fear and hopelessness. The dreamy surface of the poem buries these emotions and idealizes innocent and pure love, so the speaker can have control over not confronting his Shadow. As the sorrow is intertwined in the language, it almost seems pure. However, Poe makes sure to blur the lines between love and delusion and compels the readers to visualize the obsessive nature of his passion towards Annabel Lee by the speaker’s revelation of him sleeping next to her tomb every night. Then the childlike language becomes a tool to illustrate his psychological repression, shaping the speaker’s inner narrative and letting readers go into his unresolved issues, which he never confronts, but only romanticizes.

As the poem moves forward, the speaker starts blaming the supernatural forces for Annabel Lee’s death, saying “The angels, not half so happy in Heaven,/ Went envying her and

me—”. This way he denies the natural order of mortality, projecting his repressed anguish into imagined things. This is a classic example of a Jungian defense mechanism, as Poe’s use of the supernatural imagery of the “angels” acts as a metaphor for the speaker’s emotional displacement. Jung’s remarks on this are: “projection always contains something of which the subject is not conscious and which seems not to belong to him”. Thus, projecting the emotions outwards seems non-threatening to the speaker than confronting them and dealing with the fact that mortal love ends in death, which the ego cannot handle.

Near the end of the poem, the speaker’s attachment grows bleaker and possessive as Poe writes-

“And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,
In her sepulchre there by the sea—
In her tomb by the sounding sea.” (lines 38-41)

The image of the speaker lying next to the tomb of his beloved depicts the extent to which he has psychologically declined. The pure and innocent concept of love becomes entangled with death and decay. He is not mourning in her memory anymore, but rather clinging to her cold, dead body, both physically and symbolically. It blurs the line between love and possession. The rhyme, rhythm, wording, and even the setting may give an illusion of a fairy-tale love; however, this poem reads more like a ghost story of a tragic love full of obsession and romanticization of the eternal dedication of the speaker’s life and sanity.

Furthermore, the fixation takes a darker tone, considering the biographical context where Poe married Virginia Clemm when she was only 13. He wrote this poem as a tribute to her death, which could raise some discomfort. In “Annabel Lee”, the speaker insists, “I was a child

and she was a child” (line 7) when they fell in love, which is a reflection of Poe’s attempt to rewrite his story, his marriage with Virginia in poetic terms, externalizing their bond in the literary world. This also reflects Poe’s own Shadow; he copes with the pain of her death by rewriting his life into poetry, rather than confronting the pain. The overall Shadow may be subtle and not shown explicitly as descending into madness, like in “The Raven”. Nonetheless, the speaker, completely overpowered by his Shadow, merges death with his idealized fantasy of his love for Annabel Lee. Thus, it shows a more insidious version of repression, hidden behind the dreamy guise of loyalty and love.

For the final poem analysis of this chapter, Poe’s “Ulalume” will be looked into. On one hand, “Annabel Lee” disguises the Shadow archetypes' presence behind romanticized memory and lyrical brilliance; however, “Ulalume” confronts it directly by teleporting the reader to a darker, more uncanny land of grief residing in the unconscious. The gentle delusion in “Annabel Lee” contrasts with the speaker’s unconscious journey through an eerie landscape in “Ulalume”, where repressed memories merge together, giving the reader a strange experience. The Shadow is so deeply buried that the speaker is unaware of its pull. It neither romanticizes nor uses projection to avoid confrontation. Poe’s ultimate use of uncertainty and emotional as well as physical landscape enables this poem to delve deeper into the unconscious by presenting a speaker who is trapped in the unsettling repetition of trauma rather than denial. In this last poem, the Shadow surfaces not as a symbol or person but as a place, shaped by memory, loss, and the unspoken scars of the psyche.

Shortly after Virginia's death in 1847, Poe wrote “Ulalume,” published in the *American Review* and is one of his most psychologically complex poems. It revolves around the narrator

travelling through a dream-like, surreal world in October. He is walking with his Psyche, his soul or conscience, through the misty forest of Weir, by the lake Auber. He stumbles upon the tomb of his beloved Ulalume unconsciously. His unknowing return to the burial place of his lover reveals the return of the repressed trauma and misery, haunting memory, and his unconscious. This poem, unlike “The Raven” or “Annabel Lee”, the suffering of the speaker is not dramatized or does not show any projection on external beings. Rather, it shows that when the trauma gets buried too deeply within the unconscious, the ego does not recognize it as trauma until the memory comes back with intense force and in this case, gets projected as the haunting landscape.

In this poem, Poe takes natural elements like the wood, the lake, the morning star, and the moon and gives them a supernatural power, representing internal chaos. These elements, the outside world, reflect the disturbed and repressed psyche. The poem examines repressed pain and memory by setting it in a gloomy, surreal landscape in “the lonesome October of [the] most immemorial year” (line 4) and combining natural imagery with internal monologue. The skies were “ashen and sober” (line 1), the leaves in the woods were “crispéd and sere” (line 2), insinuating the deteriorating emotional state of the speaker. He walks through “the ghoul-hunted woodland of Weir” (line 9); this strange, scary place marks the presence of a dark Shadow. From the Jungian perspective, the speaker is being controlled by the repressed grief of his lost love and getting pulled into the Shadow without his knowledge. This suggests Jung’s claim that the unconscious works without conscious awareness (281). Thus, Poe shows here that the speaker believes that he is only walking through a strange place, but he is actually moving through his unconscious, which is active beneath his awareness and pulling him towards the hidden truth.

The Shadow's pull becomes more evident when Poe reveals that the speaker is not alone, but a personified piece of his mind, which he refers to as "Psyche" or "soul", is guiding him and trying to rationalise with him. When he sees the morning star or Venus in the form of Astarte, a Phoenician goddess, he wishes to follow the light so that he can get out of this place. His Psyche tries to stop him: "Sadly this star I mistrust—/Her pallor I strangely mistrust—" (lines 52-53), and tells him to leave before going too deep. However, he does not listen to her voice as he believes this star will guide him out of his misery as "it flickers up to Heaven through the night" (line 71). This dialogue between him and Psyche highlights the tension between his ego, or his conscious self and his repressed unconscious.

Psyche is the conscience, the reason against the speaker's unconscious drive. Later in the poem, he refers to her as "sweet sister" (line 78), which symbolically distances him from her as he considers her a separate being rather than his inner voice. This reflects Jung's idea of the unconscious having a "tendency to autonomy", meaning the autonomous unconscious makes the speaker follow the star-goddess by listening to Psyche (278). Choosing to ignore Psyche's discomfort, the speaker stumbles upon the tomb of Ulalume, surrendering to the temptation of the Shadow. Jung also highlights that "love and hate, joy and grief, are often enough to make the ego and the unconscious change places" (278), and this is vividly portrayed in this poem. As the speaker's suppressed emotion takes over his consciousness, he walks towards the tomb, which reveals the Shadow's domination over him.

Poe's use of changing natural imagery explores the changing emotional climate of the narrator, especially through how he describes his heart. In stanza two, he acknowledges his heavy heart by saying: "These were days when my heart was volcanic" (line 13). It also indicates

that he has been feeling anxiety lately, not only grief, but something chaotic inside. He relates this feeling to “the restless rolling of lava in the scoriac river” (line 14) and also “the sulphurous currents down Mount Yaanek” (line 18). The “groaning of the lava” can be heard from “realms of the boreal pole” (line 19); all of these imageries represent the hostile nature of his inner world and his unwillingness to deal with these intense emotions by placing them. However, in the ninth stanza, when he reaches the tomb, the image of the “volcanic heart” changes to an “ashen and sober” heart, resonating with the decaying landscape from the beginning of the poem. The anxiety turns to numbness. Moreover, the repetition of the words from the first stanza, “sere”, “year”, and “Weir” highlights the cruel loop the speaker is stuck on, which makes him relive the same pain without any positive outcome. Even if he tries to move past the grief, his Shadow pulls him right back into the raw emotions embedded in his unconscious.

The speaker of “Ulalume” is not mourning consciously; rather, he goes on a journey of unresolved pain. He is emotionally dead, distant and is not aware of his unconscious guiding him to the Shadow, which contrasts with the mad man in “The Raven” and the romantic lover in “Annabel Lee”. The Shadow is not direct; instead, it slowly builds up as he keeps walking through the misty wood. It is silent, buried deep and powerful, which shows up from under the musical language and the setting. The more he tries to forget or repress his pain and get out of the wood, the more his Shadow takes him back to the tomb of his beloved Ulalume.

The analysis of Edgar Allan Poe’s three significant poems, “The Raven”, “Annabel Lee”, and “Ulalume” reveals that his narrators are not only haunted by the death of their beloveds, but also by their unwillingness to confront their pain drives them to the darkness. Jung’s concept of the Shadow illuminates that their actions and perceptions are influenced by

their denial, repressed pain and obsession with memory of the past. The Shadow is shown differently in each poem through the speakers' descent into madness, the idealization of lost love and memory, and as an intense guiding force that takes him to forgotten places. Readers can observe the conflict between consciousness and the hidden psyche through Poe's rich imagery, symbolism and repetition, creating a metaphoric landscape of the speaker's inner turmoil. Thus, these poems not only represent the loss and their mourning, but also an insight into the self that demonstrates how the unintegrated Shadow can control lives.

Chapter 4: Mirror of the Self: Internal Shadow and Identity Crisis

For the final analytical chapter, this dissertation paper chooses Edgar Allen Poe's more underrated poems, "Alone" and "A Dream Within a Dream", for a Jungian Shadow analysis. These two poems are different from the other three from the previous chapter as they focus on the Shadow's impact on the speaker's sense of identity, meaning of life and reality. It does not contain any ghostly figures or a talking raven, instead, it deals with abstract ideas and feelings such as isolation, existential crisis, alienation, and questioning reality, internalizing the Shadow's projection. Applying Carl Jung's theory of archetypes, particularly the Shadow archetype, this chapter illustrates how Poe employs imagery and symbolism to reveal the psychological landscape. "Alone" examines how the Shadow forms from the early childhood experiences of isolation and "A Dream Within a Dream" portrays the consequences of not recognizing one's Shadow and being trapped by the illusion of reality. This analysis shows how the Shadow forms in childhood and how it dominates the mind in adulthood, fracturing the psyche.

"Alone" is a lyric poem, written in 1829 and published in 1875, long after Poe's death. It is intensely autobiographical as it is offering a rare and unfiltered peek into Poe's inner world. In twenty-two lines, Poe encapsulates his emotional isolation and psychological difference from others, beginning from his childhood. The speaker of the poem, representing the poet, grieves over how his inability to experience joy and perceive beauty like others has affected the quality of his life, which suggests a deep-rooted sense of alienation. "Alone" is more of an introspective and confessional poem, unlike Poe's more narrative or gothic poems. It is a personal expression about feeling different and hurting, drawing from Poe's actual experiences at an early age with loss of parents, feeling misplaced in society, struggling with mental health issues and substance

abuse. For these reasons, “Alone” has a solid foundation for applying the Jungian concept, particularly how the Shadow forms and stays in the troubled mind.

The poem opens with these lines-

From childhood’s hour I have not been

As others were—I have not seen

As others saw— (line 1-3)

These lines reflect the speaker’s alienation from society, which causes a psychological split from a very early age. According to Jungian psychology, this split happens when the persona (social mask or self) is distanced from the Shadow self. Since the speaker has always felt different from others around him, he starts feeling isolated and cannot connect with people in a “normal” way. This experience formed the core of his inner darkness, filled with rejected qualities, known as the Shadow.

This feeling alienated is deeply autobiographical to Poe himself, as he was orphaned at a young age, raised by foster parents who never fully accepted him, and constantly in conflict with paternal influence, like his foster father, John Allan. The only person appreciative of his talent was his foster mother, who passed away when he was a child as well. He grew up with a deep sense of emotional rejection and instability. There is a deep sense of longing and yearning for love and affection in his tone, mixed with the feeling of not being enough and resenting himself for it. All of these are classic signs of the repressed Shadow.

Later in the poem, Poe writes, “Then—in my childhood—in the dawn/ Of a most stormy life—was drawn/From ev’ry depth of good and ill/The mystery that binds me still—” (lines 9-12). This can be interpreted as Poe going back to his childhood memory where he started with a “stormy life” referring to emotional instability and trauma. The “mystery” that “binds”

him might represent the Jungian Shadow, developed in early childhood due to a lack of emotional connection. Poe never integrated his Shadow; however the speaker seems to have made peace with it as Poe writes, “I could not bring/ My passion from a common spring” (lines 3-4). He is aware of his Shadow, but has not come face-to-face with it for a profound self-realization.

Poe’s imagery in this poem portrays his solitude in a way that emerges in his childhood and grows into a lifelong alienation. Here, the speaker cannot perceive things the way other people could, which talks about how the fundamental difference between him and others creates a sensitivity to the world that isolates him. Nature and its elements like “torrent” (waterfalls), “mountains”, “red cliff”, “lightning in the sky”, “thunder and storm” and the “golden fall sun” evoke a sense of sublime, but he only perceives these beauty alone which highlights the speaker’s disconnection. However, the haunting image of a “demon” in the shape of a “cloud” where the “rest of the [sky] was blue” (line 21) captures the invasion of the Shadow into the consciousness of the speaker. An ordinary and bright moment turns into something dark and ominous, serving as a metaphor for channelling his Shadow into a symbolic image in nature. It may seem that he has found peace within nature, but not being able to share these experiences impacts his psyche, and Poe uses this as a way to reveal his isolation and misery. Thus, “Alone” offers a quieter, more introspective decline where the speaker does not fight with his Shadow, nor does he freeze at the sight of it, but chooses to live with it, accepting to see the “devil” in a clear, blue sky.

Poe’s exploration of feeling different and being isolated from childhood has shaped the narrative of “Alone”; however, “A Dream Within a Dream” takes the emotional struggle to adulthood. In this poem, the speaker is not dwelling in the past but questioning life and reality

itself. He questions if life is real or only a dream as he feels helpless, trying to hold onto everything as it slips away too quickly. The Shadow here develops from the fear that nothing in life is real or lasts long, and shows how Poe's inner chaos has grown larger and more disturbing.

"A Dream Within a Dream" was published shortly before Poe died in 1849, and it deals with the emotional turmoil and existential dread he felt in the final days of his life. The financial hardships and deteriorating mental and physical state can be the inspiration for Poe to write this poem due to the tone of hopelessness and disillusionment. It begins with the speaker bidding farewell to his loved one: "Take this kiss upon the brow!/ And, in parting from you now" (lines 1-2), and saying that everything he believed to be true in this world seems like a dream within another dream, and nothing seems to be in control. Later in the poem, this image of illusion becomes more disturbing as he stands by the ocean, trying to hold on to grains of sand tightly, but they slip away. This metaphor paints the horrid picture of his fear that life, love and reality are nothing but an illusion, life is beyond the control of humans, which he does not want to accept, but believes it to be true. Using this haunting imagery, Poe expresses his frustration that life is nothing but a "dream within a dream" (line 11).

The tender opening of the poem, with a "kiss," contrasts with the harsh message it intends to give and immediately suggests the speaker's fragile emotional state. He accepts that his "days have been a dream" (line 5) but quickly turns to a broader philosophical notion: "All that we see or seem/ Is but a dream within a dream" (lines 10-11). He doubts if the world really exists the way it appears because his experiences feel like he is not in control of them, like the "dream" he is in is not even his. This moment of disorientation might indicate the presence of the Shadow in the form of his uncertainty and existential crisis. This overwhelming state of the speaker aligns with Jung's concept of the Shadow: "the unconscious content overwhelms the

conscious aim and inhibits, falsifies, even destroys its realization” (164). Thus, the first stanza of the poem introduces the fragmented psyche that no longer feels confident about what is real and has lost control over the narrative of his own life.

The second stanza has the speaker standing “amid the roar/ Of a surf-tormented shore” (line 12-13), trying to grasp the “Grains of the golden sand” (line 15) so desperately. The sand becomes a powerful symbol of the fleeting nature of reality, where the beautiful and precious moments pass by so fast that it cannot be controlled. The speaker cries as he cannot keep holding on to the sand, expressing how pointless it is to decipher the meaning of life and reality. The vast and unpredictable sea, washing the grains of sand away, is a metaphor for the unconscious mind, as Jung would symbolize water with it. In Jungian terms, the beach scene can be interpreted as the speaker losing connection with the conscious world and being pulled into the Shadow realm, a “realm of the sympathetic system, the soul of everything living” (21). Hence, it means that the speaker is standing right at the border of the conscious and the deep unconscious, trying to hold onto something from the real world so that he does not slip away.

In this poem, the speaker does not reject the Shadow but is consumed by it. He pleads to God: “O God! Can I not save/One from the pitiless wave?” (lines 21-22). This shows that he has become too vulnerable to even hold onto something real; nothing in his life seems to give him that. This also reveals that this is not the consequence of only losing love but also having to confront the harsh reality of the world with no stability. So, the Shadow is not only made up of his grief but also his fear of not being able to trust anything real. Thus, the pain of not knowing what is true turns into the fear of not being able to find anything to believe or hold on to at all.

The poem's final lines return to its central concept and questions: “Is all that we see or seem/ But a dream within a dream?” (lines 23-24), with little to no hope, the speaker still seeks

answers. Jung suggests that “nothing is more disillusioning than the discovery of [one’s] own inadequacy” (23) and describes the exact feeling of the speaker, where reality collapses and he is left in existential distress. The Shadow is not an external being or force, but how he sees the world. He is suffering because he comes to terms with the fact that he may not be able to outrun this. Everything becomes dreamlike and unreliable, which makes the poem not only about the grief of losing but also about the existential horror of him drifting into the illusion.

To conclude this chapter, Poe’s poems, “Alone” and “A Dream Within a Dream,” examine the Shadow through personal reflections on identity, reality and loss. “Alone” shows the Shadow’s development due to childhood experiences causing alienation, but “A Dream Within a Dream” shows how the Shadow can lead to confusion in adulthood if left unchecked. Unlike “The Raven”, “Annabel Lee”, and “Ulalume”, these two poems do not contain any ghostly figures, guiding souls or even a symbolic bird. Rather, they work with the fear and darkness that comes from within. Using the Jungian lens, it reveals that a mind that is struggling with its deep-seated fears and repressed thoughts can be dangerous, and the consequences can be grave if the repression is left unacknowledged.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

To sum up, this dissertation unveils how Edgar Allan Poe's poetry is deeply influenced by his own Shadow, which is shaped by his early childhood experiences, unresolved trauma, deaths, financial instability, battle with depression, and substance abuse. It applies Carl Jung's theory of the Shadow archetypes and shows how the themes of loss, grief, and self-destruction are not only used as poetic devices but also to explain that these are manifestations of his inner conflicts. In the selected poems, "The Raven", "Annabel Lee", "Ulalume", "A Dream Within a Dream", and "Alone", the narrators are often haunted by memories of their lost beloved and have to deal with existential crisis. The Gothic atmosphere, the haunting of memories, and many supernatural allusions highlight the projection of Poe's vulnerable psyche and turn the verses into a mirror of his subconscious.

Moreover, this study finds a significant distinction in how the Shadow is projected across Poe's chosen poems. In poems such as "The Raven", "Annabel Lee", and "Ulalume", it is external; through the portrayals of supernatural figures, lost lovers and a journey through a haunting landscape. However, "Alone" and "A Dream Within a Dream" internalise it by revealing an introspective struggle with identity, perception of reality and existential angst. This contrast highlights how Poe's confrontation with his Shadow varies in form, sometimes manifesting as external symbols and sometimes as internal breakdowns. This dual nature not only substantiates the Jungian reading of his work but also concentrates on the psychological complexity within his poetic expressions.

To conclude, this study enhances the understanding of Poe's poetic imagination while contributing to the broader field of psychoanalytic literary criticism. It shows how the theory of

the Shadow archetype can be used to interpret emotional depth and psychological realism in literature. By closely reading Poe's poems through the perspective of Jungian concepts, this study underlines the connection between trauma and artistic creation. Therefore, Poe's poetry not only belongs to the genre of Gothic literature, but it is also a pathway for him to express his repressed self. It also indicates that literature is a safe space to confront repressed emotions and unresolved issues, extending a deeper connection to the universal struggles of the human psyche. Finally, this study recommends exploring the dynamics of the Shadow archetype in the works of other Gothic or Romantic writers, broadening the scope of trauma in literature.

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