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Title

**The Implications of Melancholy in Charlotte
Brontë's *Villette***

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Dedication

*"I BRING you with reverent hands
The book[] of my numberless dreams,*

W. B. Yeats

To my mother, my hero,

To my father, my rock

To Nadine, Rayane, Basmala, and Hiba

This work is dedicated to you

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First and foremost, I must acknowledge how grateful I am for God for drawing such a path for me. The pursuit of knowledge is noble: it enlightens the mind, awakes the reason, and elevates the human being above other creatures.

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Abstract

Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* was published in 1853, and it revolves around the protagonist, Lucy Snowe, who is a melancholic character. Embarking on the journey of reading *Villette*, readers may wonder why Lucy Snowe is loaded with all these complexes, why she tends to behave in ways that put her psychology into question. One plausible hypothesis is the melancholy that she suffers from and which shapes her personality to a great extent. Melancholy is also incomprehensible in Lucy Snowe's case in the novel *Villette*. Therefore, this research aims to study the psychology of Lucy Snowe since it is melancholic, and that is by analysing a set of defence mechanisms, departing from the Freudian psychoanalytic approach. After conducting the analysis and discussing the findings, this research validates the suggested hypotheses: that Lucy Snowe is indeed a melancholic character, and those defence mechanisms are components of melancholy in Lucy Snowe's case, that operate at the level of the unconscious i.e. the deep structure while melancholy is the apparent state that can be noticed through a number of symptoms.

Key words: repression, isolation, sublimation, melancholy, psychoanalysis

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General

Introduction

1. Background of the Study

Prior to the 18th century, poetry, drama, romance, and other genres prevailed the scene. The novel as a literary production or at least as a notion did not yet exist, but traces of it started to emerge with Daniel Defoe publication of *Robinson Crusoe*. Readers and publishers alike were confused about where to locate a seemingly different way of recounting events. It resembled the autobiography but was not exactly what one calls autobiography, it did not fit in the drama or poetry section and was not at all like any romance. This new tendency of narration that simulates real life appealed to the public of the 18th century society- especially the middle class since they are the majority- because it portrayed their stories, where individuals have real names and live in real time and place, talked about their struggles, and depicted with details their feelings, dilemmas, and day-to-day occurrences, as if it were the mirror that reflects them. It is the novel, a purely English invention, modern in birth, in comparison to other genres, yet it is now the most read genre. If *Robinson Crusoe* is claimed to be the first attempt in creating the basic features of the novel, Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* or *Virtue Rewarded* is considered to be the first English novel, more precisely a psychological novel. From that time onwards, the tradition of novel-writing continues, and with that, it has shaped most of the Western canon works. Many novelists came after Defoe and Richardson adding to the novel other aspects and enriching this genre. Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* demonstrates that the novel can and is required to be satirical sometimes to harshly criticise political parties, yet in fictional mould. Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein* proves that science and fiction can be reconciled, and that stories of literature can also take place in laboratories away from the ordinary setting of households. Charles Dickens' works manifest the power that literature holds, its influence in social reformation, and its ability to make changes in society. Examples of

brilliant literary figures are many not within the possibility of this research to list them all, but one should be mentioned in addition to the previous names: it is Charlotte Brontë. In fact, many are the lessons that one can learn from this magnificent author: how to be a woman in the Victorian era, yet never resign to the mundane monotonous life; how to come out as a conqueror after every calamity; how to sublimate the frustration, the unrequited passion, the suffering, and the deprivation into a work of art; how to be resilient and, like Sisyphus, resist and always try over and over again. Charlotte Brontë is an example of how genius is born out of adversity, and how humble places can give birth to great individuals. Brontë's *Villette* demonstrates an eloquence of language that she masters, her thorough knowledge of Greek mythology, the Bible, romantic poetry, and literary works of her contemporaries, and it even, extends to include *The Arabian Nights*.

Being a psychological novel par excellence, *Villette* lends itself, to a great extent, to a psychoanalytic study more than any other approaches of literary criticism. Psychoanalysis being applied to literature is an attempt to understand characters' motives, impulses, behaviours and the like. In this case, it attempts to understand Lucy Snowe's melancholy, where it comes from, and the underlying processes that make melancholy a constant feeling. The way Lucy Snowe leads her life withdrawn, the way she reacts to certain events, her conduct in general, are all put into investigation and are used to reach a conclusion about the melancholic state that she suffers. Lucy Snowe calls the pain that she undergoes a fate, but when such statements move to the psychoanalytic domain, they are refined and devoid from their subjective tone and subject only to empirical investigation. Psychoanalysis puts Lucy Snowe's personality, meaning her psyche, under the microscope and tries to examine the different processes at different levels, the way they are manifested to the exterior, and how they shape her

general psychological state of melancholy. It attempts also to see how defence mechanisms play a role in that. All in all, psychoanalysis and its investigations are conducted for the sake of discovering the source of the problem and thus suggesting or paving the way for a number of solutions. Like Lucy Snowe, what most people call fate, psychoanalysis has another interpretation for. Not to deny fate but to claim that even the deepest mysteries, those of the mind, that seem unfathomable and that cause suffering, can be revealed and cured.

2. Rationale of the Study

Why Charlotte Brontë's *Villette*, in particular, rather than any other work, is a relevant question to ask, especially that this author had other works, most prominently, *Jane Eyre*, which is her well-known work, published in 1847. One of the reasons is that there are abundant studies on *Jane Eyre*, but rarely on *Villette* as if *Jane Eyre* is the only work Charlotte Brontë wrote. In fact, *Villette* is as rich and interesting to study as *Jane Eyre*. This is one reason: to shed the light on *Villette*, as an overlooked piece of literature. Another reason for opting to study melancholy in *Villette* is that the work yields itself to a great extent to a psychoanalytic study, and it is representative of the variables this research aims to investigate. Also, there exists a few studies on melancholy in *Villette*. However, their account is not thorough, and they do not cover how melancholy is implicated or what constitutes it and do not demonstrate the relationship between defence mechanisms and melancholy, as this research aims to do. So, this study may add to the general literature and inspire future research.

3. Research questions

Since this research is purely psychoanalytic where it aims to study and analyse Lucy Snowe's personality and her tendency to be melancholic, it seeks to answer a number of questions, namely:

1-How is melancholy implicated in Charlotte Brontë's *Villette*?

2-To what extent are defence mechanisms a major contributor in creating the melancholic psychological state of the protagonist Lucy Snowe and how?

3-To what extent can the protagonist be considered a melancholic character?

4. Hypotheses

1-Defence mechanisms are concomitant mental processes to melancholy in regard to Lucy Snowe's personality in *Villette*.

2-Melancholy is the general psychological state while at depth, defence mechanisms are the operations at work.

5. Aims of the study

1-This study attempts to uncover the implications of melancholy and its repercussions on the protagonist i.e Lucy Snowe as a melancholic figure.

2-This research investigates the relationship between defence mechanisms and melancholy.

3- It also aims to dissect the psychology of Lucy Snowe's mind (psyche).

6. Methodology

The current research focuses mainly on the investigation of the melancholic nature of *Villette*'s protagonist personality, Lucy Snowe. To achieve this end, three pivotal elements are discussed. First, there is an attempt to define melancholy. Then, this research moves to discuss in details repression, reaction formation, isolation, and sublimation, four defence mechanisms frequently used by the protagonist. This investigation can not be carried out without the presence of a framework that this discussion departs from, refers, and returns to every time, which is psychoanalysis,

more precisely the Freudian scope with its principles and theories, by applying the theoretical concepts previously discussed, namely melancholy and defence mechanisms, in the corpus, which is the novel *Villette*. This study is fully descriptive, and the analysis is conducted by the method "quote then claim". That is to say, quotes are first illustrated then explained not the other way round.

7. Structure of the Study

This research is divided into three chapters, two theoretical, and the third is devoted to the analysis of the novel *Villette*. The first chapter takes a brief look on Charlotte Brontë's life, how she, herself, struggled with melancholy. It moves, then, to discuss in depth melancholy, its definitions, theories, symptoms, and delineates the basic differences between it and other similar concepts that are, in general contexts, used interchangeably. The second chapter introduces the psychoanalytic school established by Freud and explains its basic concepts and tenets of how the psyche works and its mechanisms. Then, mechanisms of defence take a great portion of the discussion where repression, reaction formation, isolation, and sublimation are defined and explained one by one. It also shows the relationship between literature and psychoanalysis, and how psychoanalytic criticism of literature works. The third chapter is the application of aforementioned concepts through the analysis of both melancholy and defence mechanisms and the relationship between them departing from the novel. It analyses each variable separately, and then the two analyses are combined to either validate or reject the hypotheses, suggested earlier.

Chapter One

Melancholy: A Theoretical Background

Chapter One: Melancholy: A Theoretical Background

Introduction

1.1. Charlotte Brontë and Melancholy: An Overview

1.2. Melancholy: Definitions

1.3. Differences between Melancholy, Melancholia, Sadness, Depression,
Mourning

1.4. Melancholy: Symptoms

Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter introduces the author as a melancholic person, uncovering her psychological state and narrating the incidents and reasons behind her tendency towards in-depth psychological novels. It also explores the different views on melancholy through history starting from Aristotle to Freud and works its way to reformulate a definition that is up-to-date and applicable to a literary study. This leads the chapter to lay the differences between many other concepts that tangle with melancholy because of the same associations and connotations they evoke, adding to that the symptoms that characterises a melancholic state of mind, which is necessary for this study to detect the melancholic figure in the upcoming chapters when dealing with the literary material, which is *Villette* in the case of this research.

1.1. Charlotte Brontë and Melancholy: An Overview

Charlotte Brontë shaped her lifetime experience in her last novel, *Villette*, and the protagonist, Lucy Snowe, emerged and is inspired by the author herself, as she underwent irrevocable losses and experienced more of the lows in life than the highs. No wonder then that *Villette* is heavily loaded with gloom and, more precisely melancholy, which intensifies even more as the narrative progresses and continues until the end of the novel. All Brontë's siblings predeceased her as they died one after another, and she became a victim to loneliness, pangs of depression, and melancholy. A "wild sad life" is how Elizabeth Gaskell, an English writer and Brontë's biographer, labelled Brontë's life (qtd. in Gaskell).

Death was a constant companion in the Brontës' household, and Charlotte Brontë witnessed the death of all her family members, one by one, except for her father

who outlived them all. Being motherless at five and losing her two elder sisters, just four years later, had a lasting impact and is deep-seated in the psychology of Brontë as a person and as a writer, as the two are almost inseparable to a great extent. Brontë's melancholic state of mind is evident in her correspondence, and Elizabeth Gaskell -with whom CB exchanged letters and visits- reinforced this point when she claimed that the morbidity and melancholy of CB are traced back to "that early age when she found herself in the position of an elder sister to motherless children" (qtd. in Chapple and Pollard 77). The traumatising experience of loss is also present in her works, such as *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*. The latter is even intenser as CB, by that time, before writing *Villette*, had lost all her family members: her aunt, Maria Branwell, who represented, the mother figure for years after the actual mother's death, and six years later, lost all her siblings, Branwell and Emily in 1848 and Anne a year later, and so the buzzing house of the Brontës who had ambitions to become recognised writers in the field of the literary became an empty house of two, a decrepit clergyman, Patrick the father, and Charlotte, the only surviving child. In one of her letters to Ellen Nussey, a lifelong friend, CB, herself, admitted that "... [she] get[s] melancholy" (Smith 60). With parting comes loneliness, a shadow that loomed over CB new life, after losing her sisters. A prey to solitude she became, accompanied by mental pain, anxiety, bouts of depression, a weariness of the body and the spirits. Melancholy is clearly displayed in her letters to friends. In fact, Brontë's suffering was beyond depiction, of how she spent those nights in the ensuing months of her sister's death (Gaskell). The trauma of losing a mother and two sisters in childhood and a motherly aunt and three siblings in youth left in Brontë constant anxiety about her father's health that was not always in a good state, and that oscillated between deterioration and improvement, and so was her anxiety

increasing and decreasing accordingly. It is understandable that beneath this apparent anxiety lies the dread of losing the last member of the family.

The suffering did not only arise from the series of deaths in the family, though they can be considered a major contributor. Earlier in her life, even before the death of her three siblings, CB experienced unrequited love that influenced her a great deal and is behind the inspiration and creation of fictional characters like Mr Rochester and Mr Paul Emmanuel in *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*. The Brussels experience was influential in Brontë's life, her writings included. CB developed feelings for a married teacher, Monsieur Constantine Heger, whose wife, Madame Zoë Heger, is the headmistress of the Heger Pensionnat, in Brussels, where CB used to study and teach. Attempts to win Mr Heger's heart and affection were faced by a silence that demonstrated rejection and lack of interest, and her numerous letters that begged for communion and correspondence, received little to none in return and ended up in Mr Heger's bin. Coldness and avoidance on his part not only did cause her intolerable suffering, but it also shook her self-esteem to the core and reinforced her idea of herself as not being attractive and sexually appealing to men. A letter sent to Ellen Nussey in January 1844 reveals the great pain of a lovelorn woman who cannot bear the separation from her love interest. However, and eventually, this adoration and obsession with Mr Heger gradually faded into despair, and CB soon became occupied with more distressing events like her father's sight growing weak, her drunkard brother's troubles, and then the illness of both Emily and Anne. Still, it is irrelevant to assume that Brontë completely recovered from this pain, and that was but a temporary whim of the heart. Her 1847 novel *Jane Eyre* serves as a wish fulfilment of what she could not realise, by making Jane and Mr Rochester a wedded couple in the end. In fact, Mr Heger is a remarkable figure in Brontë's life, more of a painful experience that she could not let

go and process easily and is indeed embedded in her unconscious even if she ceased talking and writing to him. In the same letter to Ellen Nussey, she claims that ". . . however long [she] live[s] [she] shall not forget what the parting with [Mr] Heger cost[s] her" (Smith 47).

As any aspiring writer at the beginning of their career, CB had her share of failure. Failure, first, of establishing a school of their own at Haworth to teach students, but their project was a fiasco because no single student enrolled and then the failure of having her first novel, *The Professor*, published. Adding to that that the collection of poems written by her and her two sisters, Emily and Anne, sold two copies only. Meanwhile, *Jane Eyre* was in the writing progress, and when it came to the public, it had a huge success. Good reviews on the novel were received, and so a ray of hope and happiness seemed to peep into this doomed household. However, *Jane Eyre* was an unusual Victorian novel in those times, and as a result, it was a subject to harsh criticism that both enraged and saddened Brontë. Critics even went to say that Emily's *Wuthering Heights* is the production of the same author i.e. Currer Bell (Brontë's male pseudonym) but at an earlier age, doing injustice to the entity and efforts of a young author of a similar genius. It brought disappointment amidst the cheery atmosphere of *Jane Eyre* success and pained CB more after her sisters' death.

A difficult childhood, adulthood marked by loss and rejection, loneliness, dissatisfaction with one's appearance, short-lived happiness and long-term sufferings; moulded Charlotte Brontë and turned her, first, into a wretched woman, and then into a writer who writes about plain heroines with more hardship and deprivation than blessings and fortune in life. If melancholy is a frequent word in *Villette*, and if the latter is a world of gloom on its own, then that is because it comes from a real place that CB knows well. Critics claim that *Villette* is an autobiographical novel, "forged from

such personal and painful material" (Harman), where, in fact, the author does not mix a few of the real events with the fertile imaginary world of fiction; on the opposite, she adds some of the imaginary to a novel that portrays merely real events, i.e. "Lucy Snowe is the mask under cover of which Brontë conceals her identity in order to reveal the unappealing reality" (Carlisle 262). It is stressed, here, that *Villette* is an autobiography to prove that CB experienced melancholy- which is a word used in the novel- on several occasions. Reference to her "depression of spirits" as she calls it is almost mentioned everywhere in her letters to close friends and acquaintances. Charlotte Brontë admits to undergoing a melancholy frame of mind, in one of her letters to Ellen Nussey in December 1836 (Smith 8). This letter is one, among many, that serves to demonstrate that melancholy was not a temporary phase for Brontë but more of a permanent cast of mind due to mightier circumstances and traumatising events, that were mentioned earlier. It is clear then why Brontë could write with details, so accurate about melancholy, what comes with it, and suggest implicitly what might have led to it. Gaskell goes to say that the works of the Brontës are works of great sorrow and anguish, not (necessarily) consciously, but because it is the only thing that they knew well all their lives:

It is well that the thoughtless critics, who spoke of the sad and gloomy views of life presented by the Brontës in their tales, should know how such words were wrung out of them by the living recollection of the long agony they suffered. It is well, too, that they . . . should learn that, not from the imagination . . . but from the hard cruel facts . . . did they write out what they saw . . . It is possible that it would have been better to describe only good and pleasant people, doing only good and pleasant

things (in which case they could hardly have written at any time).

(Gaskell)

Besides melancholy, it is worth mentioning that Brontë also struggled with phases of depression and poor health, which exacerbated her situation. The emphasis lies on melancholy only because it is the focus of this research. After the previous discussions on Brontë's life and the different challenging circumstances, one can assert that she lived a tragic life characterised by triumphs, persistence, and strength, despite all the odds. Ironically enough, in 1853, *Villette* was published, tackling a life journey of a melancholy loner who soon after obtaining happiness in life- or so she thought- the novel ends in a rather tragic way. Little did Brontë know that her life, too, soon after finding happiness would not last long, as she died a year after her marriage in 1855. Charlotte Brontë whose life was but misery and wretchedness without respite, experienced and endured melancholy, a reason, among others, why her novels convey, depict, and evoke a melancholic impression.

1.2. Melancholy: Definitions

Before delving into the study of melancholy, a clear definition of what melancholy is should be decided upon. It is necessary to put into one's notice that melancholy's definition has gone through radical transformations, and in the process, it lost and maintained some connotations that this word may imply in different contexts. It is also important, for the sake of this research, to note that melancholy, even if used interchangeably with melancholia, depression, sadness, and mourning is not synonymous to them.

To start, a recent definition of the word melancholy, according to Lexico, is "a feeling of pensive sadness, typically with no obvious cause" (OUP). However, it has

never been the case all the time to define melancholy as such. For Aristotle, melancholy is attributed to learned men. He, in a rhetorical question, states that "Why is it that all men who have become outstanding in philosophy, statesmanship, poetry or the arts are melancholic" and gives Heracles as an example (Radden 12). While Aristotle links between the suffering and the extraordinary mental abilities of the individual, regarding melancholy as an actual or promising sign of brilliance, another view came to rise which sees melancholy from a purely medical perspective. That is of Galen. The word is of a Greek origin, *melaina chole*, meaning black choler, and back then, it extended the pensive mood or feeling of sadness to include the physical state of the body that was believed to be a determinant of the mental state. Principles of medicine were not complex as they are now, and the diagnosis was simple, based mainly and only on four fluids (humours) of the body: the blood, the phlegm, the yellow bile, the black bile (also black choler). The imbalance of the proportion of the latter is what causes melancholy, or at least that was the widespread belief in the ancient Greek, and it continued until medieval times.

The dramatic change occurred in the Renaissance, where Europe witnessed a thriving movement of art and architecture, a rebirth of concepts and views as a result of translations of the old works of the Greeks and Romans. So, the idea of Aristotle, stating that melancholy is a sign of intelligence, returned to the front, resuscitated by Marsilio Ficino (Radden 87). The view of melancholy as a solely undesirable disease was somewhat discarded to become rather a sign of artistic and intellectual tendencies. Over time, this view was even reinforced and romanticised as the Romantic era emerged, seen as "a disease . . . that lent itself to greater self-determination and self-expression: an ideal disease . . . for the creative type" (Ingram et al. 40). The Romantic hero (and the Byronic as well) is of a reflective nature, an outcast from their society,

who prefers solitary walks in the sublime nature, who ponders and flouts the norms and conventions, who indulges in prolonged contemplation, one who is seen brooding, finding shelter in constant melancholy that, presumingly, gives birth to works of art, where "the man of melancholy in Romantic writing was . . . all feeling, all sensibility. At times exaggerated emphasis fell on feelings: feelings of solitude, darkness, grief, suffering, despair, longing, and elegiac sadness" (Radden 30). These works are but a form of expression and portrayal of a certain thought or feeling that was being reflected on for so long. Melancholy had a positive connotation giving exclusivity to those few with a remarkable genius. It was seen as poetic and pleasurable. On this point, Ingram et al. write that "the eighteenth century would indeed appear to be . . . a period in which poets, writers, physicians and sometimes physicians-poets described . . . the more unexpected and unlikely pleasures and joys associated with the melancholic experience and condition" (86).

Moving to Sigmund Freud, and by doing this, this discussion is led to a turning point, not only in what concerns melancholy, but also in the sense of how this phenomenon is perceived, in the modern era, by an advanced and new perspective, it is the lens of psychoanalysis. Freud, whose ideas are novel and revolutionary, and which enriched the writings on melancholy, neither agrees with the glorification and romanticisation of melancholy, nor does he consider it as a somatic disease. According to him, melancholia (different from melancholy, which will be explained later) is purely a mental disease i.e. psychogenic, that should be subject to medical treatments. In his 1917 essay, *Mourning and Melancholia*, he introduces low self-regard and loss as two prominent features of melancholia and draws a comparison between the latter and mourning as an attempt to clear the understanding and make a sharp contrast in case the two terms are used interchangeably or treated as near-synonyms since both carry

the meaning of sadness. By deriving similarities and differences, one can comprehend that melancholia, unlike mourning, is when the loss is unconscious. To put it in Freud's words:

. . . even if the patient is aware of the loss which has given rise to his melancholia, but only in the sense that he knows whom he has lost but not what he has lost in him. This would suggest that melancholia is in some way related to an object-loss which is withdrawn from consciousness. (245)

That is to say, the real cause behind melancholia remains unknown and unfathomable to the melancholiac, and this, whether Freud is aware of it or not, echoes the same idea of melancholy as causeless in the early writings on melancholy, where it was claimed that "if melancholic fear and sadness are entirely without an identifiable cause (they have causes, of course, but not causes known to their subject . . .), they are not over or about anything in particular" (Radden 38). In the Freudian scope, this is called ego-loss, where again, while the mourner whose world, after a certain loss- which is identifiable- "become[s] poor and empty", "it is the ego itself" when it comes to the melancholiac that becomes poor and empty (Freud 246). In this light, and after tackling loss, yet another prominent feature of melancholia, according to Freud, is to be explained. It is the low self-esteem that the sufferer of melancholia demonstrates shamelessly, and which is regarded as another important feature of this mental disease. To explain, Freud's theory concerning the second feature revolves around lowering one's self-esteem to a great extent by exposing it to harsh self-criticism, whether when being alone or in company. Having no shame, in return, is simply because, as Freud sees it, the criticism towards oneself, at the deep down, is directed towards someone else (248). In addition, he lists other features of melancholia, which are in common with mourning, and they are "dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of

capacity to love, inhibition of all activity, lowering of the self regarding feelings" (Freud 244).

What to be kept in mind is that what then was considered as a new theory with empirical measurements, which rejected myths and previous approaches to melancholy, has become now, but a theory, one among many that preceded it, not at all free from lacunae. Freud himself admits, at the beginning of *Mourning and Melancholia*, that the definition of melancholia is blurred, stating that "it takes on various clinical forms the grouping together of which into a single unity does not seem to be established with certainty" (243), adding to that, the shortage of material, and that the subjects of the clinical experiment were but a few. Moreover, Freud's essay is not immune to criticism since, at some points, it reinforces the Aristotelian theory on the melancholiacs, it reiterates the basic idea of melancholy being causeless, and- somewhat- fails to establish and delineate an independent definition of melancholia in the scientific scope, away from the broadness and thoroughness that this term has been always characterised by. Radden describes Freud's essay as "deeply ambiguous and opaque" (147). However, it is undeniable, despite the shortcomings of the essay, that the school of Freud gave a new breath to the studies on melancholy, by relating it solely to the psyche, and it enhanced the understanding on the conscious, and more particularly the unconscious, and how melancholy can be a reaction towards the loss, be it concrete or abstract.

Having tracked different definitions and theories on melancholy through history, it is important to note that the process of redefining melancholy does not end with the school of Freud. It continues with the neo-Freudian scholars: Julia Kristeva and Melanie Klein, among others, who developed Freud's principles on the study of melancholy. In addition, this chapter did not cover all the theories on melancholy, not

because they are numerous, but because many theories subsequent to each other are nearly the same, and the differences are slight to none. To illustrate, both theories of Galen and Avicenna agree on the biological cause leading to the state of melancholy, which is the imbalance of the proportion of the black bile. This chapter suffices it to the main ones whose shift of perspective is obvious and calling attention. Also, this research did not include post-Freudian theories on melancholy for two reasons. The first is that the term melancholia is no longer existent in the 21st century, especially when dealing with modern psychoanalysis, and it is almost extinct from daily use. Furthermore, the term melancholia gave way to the term clinical depression, and so this research is not concerned with tackling it. The second reason is that this research is conducted purely on psychoanalysis basis, that of Freud; thus, it is irrelevant to discuss post-Freudian theories since they will not be of any use to this research.

As a last note, after having a thorough read on melancholy's theories, though not including them all- for reasons previously mentioned- it is noticed that almost all theories imply or state clearly that melancholy is of a mysterious cause from Aristotle to Freud. Therefore, the definition that this research will be based on is reformulated as the following, melancholy is a state of mind deranged from a loss that is unconscious and displayed in prolonged sadness without a definite cause. By claiming melancholy to be a state of mind, all the somatic associations, symptoms, and plausible causes are rejected. By now, it is clear that the definition that this research chooses is based to a great extent on Freud's theory of the unconscious loss, that is a result of internal work. Still, this research does not follow Freud's approach blindly since the latter is the product of 1917 and faces criticism because of its limitations. Simply put, this definition is narrowed according to the psychoanalysis area, drawing on Freud's principles of the

psyche and his *Mourning and Melancholia* essay, but also general and can be applicable and easily detected in different cases in works of literature despite the era.

1.3. Differences between Melancholy, Melancholia, Sadness, Depression, Mourning

Since melancholy is a word of many facets, encompasses myriads of meanings, and yields itself to various definitions depending on the context, it is a fluid term that has struggled for centuries to settle and reach one definite meaning, and theorists have been puzzled how to draw clear boundaries for this word as its different definitions, the outdated and the modern alike, often blurs with other words, which in general contexts may be employed identically. For this reason, clarifying the difference between melancholy, melancholia, sadness, depression, and mourning is needed for the sake of this research. Making these distinctions, that may go unnoticed in unspecified contexts and everyday conversations, is specifying what this research is about, narrowing its scope. By doing this, it is put into one's mind that what is being discussed is melancholy, discarding all possibilities that may suggest other words which resemble it in meaning. Even though there are some incidents where they are used interchangeably, they may imply and create the same atmosphere, and sometimes can accompany each other; melancholy, melancholia, sadness, depression, and mourning are not synonymous.

First of all, and as noted earlier, melancholy is a broad term that includes several definitions, each seen from a different perspective. However, the modern definition of melancholy, after many attempts and transformations, has simply become coupled with a personality trait, a character of a person that does not need concerns at all or put the sanity or psychological state of the person into question. Melancholy, nowadays, refers to "any feeling from somberly introspective to nostalgic" (Fraser). Furthermore,

melancholy is attributed to the normal person "that may be dispositional or momentary, but it is always within the normal range of emotional responses" (Radden 64), while melancholia is the abnormal state of mind that needs clinical treatment and consultation. In this regard, "anyone may be melancholy, but only the mentally disturbed are described as melancholiacs or as suffering from melancholia" (Radden 64). Hence, melancholia is the clinical term, but gradually after Freud's *Mourning and Melancholia*, The term melancholia came to extinction and is no longer in use. Unlike melancholy, if the word melancholia is used, then it is used in the old-fashioned sense or expected to belong to pre-Freudian or Freudian writings. Over time, the term gave way to clinical depression. Still, there are some exceptions from scholars in the twentieth century that have the tendency to use and treat melancholy and melancholia interchangeably.

Another confusion that may occur is between melancholy and sadness. It is true that sadness can be, often, a companion to melancholy, but that does not mean, in any way, the absolute permission to replace one by another. Melancholy may embrace a set of emotions; still, it is, by itself, a well-defined word (Brady and Haapla 4), even if that is not obvious all the time. Melancholy is characterised by prolonged reflection and deep contemplation and does not manifest itself in tears, yells, or immediate change of temperament as a result of a loss, but it is rather demonstrated in pensiveness and brooding. On the other hand, Brady and Haapla maintain that sadness is marked by being short-termed and immediate in reaction (6). Sadness is a passing cloud. In contrast, melancholy may last longer, as it is referred to earlier as a personality trait of a reflective nature. Unlike melancholy, sadness entails crying, downcast facial expressions, but there is nothing to reflect on for so long. If one is sad, they do not repress, and it is shown immediately in many forms, weeping as an example. In addition, people of melancholy "seek solitude in which to indulge in the thoughts or

memories that are making [them] melancholic" (Brady and Haapla 6). Whereas, it is possible that sad people seek support and consolation. They give vent to their thoughts through different forms of expression: crying and talking, among others.

One of the common misconceptions about melancholy is likening it with depression. However, a person who has a tendency to be melancholic is not the same as one who is depressed. The difference between the two lies in the degree of severity. Different from melancholy, depression is a full abandonment of life activities and tasks. It is more than a feeling of melancholy and comes with acute pain. The depressed does not want or has the ability to pursue their jobs, hobbies, daily activities as they used to do. Nothing like that is observed in melancholy where the person carries and performs their tasks normally even if they tend to be solitary or immersed in thoughts that can be longing, memories, reflections. Although melancholy is of a dual nature that entails both negative and positive aspects, it does not amount to the degree of depression that is "a pessimistic state that involves pain" (Brady and Haapla 3).

After distinguishing melancholy from melancholia, sadness, and depression, another distinction is yet to be made. It is that between melancholia and mourning. Previously, it was remarked that the term melancholia is outdated and is replaced by clinical depression, and so it is obvious that the latter is not melancholy. Yet, one should remember that when Freud opted for the study of melancholia, the term was but the clinical version of melancholy which is broader in meaning. Only years after Freud's work that clinical depression appeared as a substitute and began to take a divergent definition and symptoms, different from both melancholy and melancholia. Freud provides the skeleton for the salient characteristics of melancholia by comparing it with mourning. To discuss these differences, tabel 1, based on Freud's *Mourning and Melancholia*, demonstrates what makes melancholia different from mourning and at the

same time elucidates psychoanalytically what melancholia is, and introduces loss and self-loathing as two major features of melancholy which were never discussed before. Here lies Freud's innovation and contribution in spite of the shortcomings and the limitation of data collection.

Table 1

The differences between melancholia and mourning according to Freud's essay

Mourning and Melancholia in 1917.

Melancholia	Mourning
-It is regarded as a mental disease.	-It is considered as a normal and expected reaction towards loss, which does not require medical intervention.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Criticising, despising, blaming, and belittling oneself. -Loss of interest in usual activities. -Unability to love. -Low spirits. -Disconnection from the exterior environment. 	-Same features of melancholia with the absence of low self-regard and self-loathing.
-It is a reaction towards a loss that cannot be recognised. The loss is unconscious. It is an ego loss.	-It is a reaction towards a loss concerning an object that is known and recognised.
-No definite or obvious cause. It is causeless.	-Causes behind mourning are known.

Freud believes that when a loss occurs, mourning is expected as the normal reaction towards a loss of someone or something valuable. To exemplify, one who loses a dear person to death would mourn for some time because there exists an attachment between the libido towards the lost person. After the loss, this attachment is required to be removed as the person who is the source of this bond is no longer alive. This process takes time to undo the attachment, and the mourner experiences a painful stage of recalling memories, but gradually the attachment of the libido comes to an end. Time is the decisive factor for the mourner to return to their normal state. This is the explanation Freud suggests for not consulting a doctor when being in mourning. It will, eventually and over time, pass. Moreover, the ability to explain the internal work of mourning is the reason why it is considered not pathological, according to Freud (244). This is not the case with melancholia where it is taken to be a mental disease i.e. there is a problem in the unconscious. Following this understanding, and departing from the table above that shows that melancholia and mourning share the same features except for self-loathing and low self-regard which are the outstanding characteristics of melancholia as a reaction to loss, the latter differs in mourning and melancholia. To explain, loss in mourning is understandable and clarified compared with melancholia where the loss is "withdrawn from consciousness" (Freud 245). The person is aware that there is a loss, but they cannot fathom where this pain comes from or what was exactly lost within them to feel melancholic. For this reason, melancholia is without an apparent cause while mourning is. In this context, what was said about melancholia in regard to the point of the unconscious loss and the unclear cause is applicable as well to melancholy. On a different note, two scholars, Emily Brady and Arto Haapala, note that melancholy as an aesthetic emotion characterised mainly by prolonged reflection (and not melancholia) can be a post-effect to mourning,

"when the desperation of a loss has calmed down and is mixed with pleasurable memories, then we have an instance of melancholy" (12).

1.4. Melancholy: Symptoms

Examining *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, which is one of the first attempts to document and study melancholy thoroughly including all what has been said about it in the Renaissance and even before, Burton lists a various set of symptoms, different from each other when moving from an era to another or from a theorist to another shaping what a certain movement in time had to say and how it viewed melancholy. In this light, one is ended up with a set of symptoms, just the same case with definitions of melancholy through history. Since this research has already reformulated a definition, that from psychoanalysis principles and work accordingly with the recent definition of melancholy being more of a personality trait of a reflective nature, not as a mental disease, a set of symptoms are derived from this definition. Namely, a pensive mood that encapsulates nostalgia, dwelling on memories, yearning and longing for something lost. Again, it is stressed that the loss is unconscious: there is something missing within the person that cannot be uncovered, and this is one of the major characteristics that most theories agree upon in a way or another. It is that melancholy is without an obvious cause. To stay within the psychoanalysis realm, Freud also reinforces this idea and scientifically validates it. In addition, reflective and solitary nature are characteristics to be counted when studying a melancholic figure.

Conclusion

Being able to reach the one definition of melancholy and tell the difference between it and other similar, yet different, words, enable this research to move forward to the second axis which is the psychoanalytic approach that will provide an understanding of defence mechanisms and how they operate. Reaching the end of this

chapter means that one axis of this research is already accomplished which is melancholy, its definition, theory, and symptoms, all of which will be employed later in the psychoanalytic context to analyse Lucy Snowe's frame of mind.

Chapter Two

Psychoanalysis and Defence

Mechanisms: A Theoretical

Background

Chapter Two: Psychoanalysis and Defence Mechanisms: A Theoretical

Background

Introduction

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Conclusion

Introduction

In the poem, *The Brain- is wider than the sky*, Emily Dickinson describes the brain as wider than the sky and deeper than the sea. Dickinson is not wrong in ascribing such attributes to the brain, or more precisely the mind. In psychoanalysis, it is called the psyche. The latter has been for centuries a dark side of the human being, an enigma, Carl Jung considers it as a great danger that must be studied, but even with many studies on the psyche and the tremendous attempts from psychoanalysts to clear the ambiguities, part of the psyche remains obscure, out of reach just like or probably more than the wider sky and the deeper sea, to reiterate the idea of Dickinson. Despite all, the empirical findings and the research made in the psychoanalytic field could at least create a clear picture of the psyche and its mechanisms and processes. This chapter does not attempt to delve into psychoanalytic theories, which are many, but it aims to provide a general look on this framework, theorised by Freud, and to explain its basic concepts and principles. In addition, it discusses in-depth a set of mental functions called defence mechanisms. Then, this research works its way to explain the relationship between psychoanalysis and literature and assures how one needs the other when the human being's conduct, motives, struggles, compulsion, desires, urges, dreams, are the common denominator.

1.1. Psychoanalysis: A Brief Introduction

The twentieth century witnessed the birth of a revolutionary set of ideas that turned the perception of the human psyche upside down, putting itself in the eye of the storm, and here one man must be credited for the establishment of this school: Sigmund Freud. The truth is that Freud may not be the progenitor of all the psychoanalysis notions. The unconscious, for example, as an idea existed before Freud, as Rosemarie Sponner Sand, in *The Unconscious without Freud*, argues that Gottfried Wilhelm

Leibniz preceded Freud in formulating the unconscious as a concept (xi). Yet, Freud is recognised as the father of psychoanalysis and is credited for developing a whole system (of ideas) with its own principles consistent with each other, and he constantly revised and edited his own essays, adjusting ideas, adding footnotes and new findings, and claiming limitations when necessary of his new-established school. As for consistency, that is another matter put into a long history of dispute and criticism, and which is, again, not the concern of this research. Upon its emergence and gradual development, psychoanalysis could exceed beyond its own boundaries of neuroses and therapy to become a thorough discipline that can account for many phenomena in the social sciences, politics, anthropology, religion, the arts, and many more. It has justified the human conduct and relations like it has never done before and introduced new concepts regarding the psyche. In other words, psychoanalysis has shaped the understanding of human beings on themselves and has served answers to the most questionable behaviours, frames of mind, personality tendencies, and even intellectual and creative drives, and so it has become the shelter for many disciplines to explain what is not within their confines, and here, one quotes Ernest Gellner who describes psychoanalysis as "the dominant idiom for the discussion of the human personality and of human relations" (5). Holland briefly divides the development of psychoanalysis into three main phases, "each successive phase claims to explain more phenomena than the previous one" (6). The first stage is represented by the first essays that Freud published concerning Psychoanalysis notions introducing concepts, such as the unconscious and the Oedipus complex, among others. Later revisions and research broadened his model leading Freud to enrich the previous concepts with more details of how the mental processes operate like the relationship between the id, ego, and superego. Finally, the third stage is marked by rather different orientations in psychoanalysis, with the rise of

psychoanalysis of Jacques Lacan, Erik Erikson, Heinz Kohut, Otto Kernberg, and feminist psychoanalysis. The psychoanalysis that Freud founded may differ from the nowadays psychoanalysis or rather psychoanalyses due to the appearance of various schools. This research, however, applies and employs only the concepts and principles first theorised by Freud.

1.2. Basic Concepts of Psychoanalysis

The id is the primitive part of the mental structure existent since birth, and it "contains the mental representations of the instinctual drives" (Auchincloss and Samberg 105). In other words, the id represents the urgent impulse, that cannot be delayed or compromised, to the most basic needs, nourishment and sexual drives as examples. The id seeks only pleasure and satisfaction of biological needs without any consideration of the external world, owing to the fact that it operates unaware of the exterior environment: its conventions, boundaries, requirements, and codes. Thus, the id can be summed up in three characteristics, which are "primitive, unorganised, and emotional" (Storr 60). This is what one notices in infants and children in the oral and anal stage, where the ego and the superego are still not developed to control these irrational drives. Freud describes it as:

the dark, inaccessible part of our personality . . . [he] call[s] it a chaos, a cauldron full of seething excitations . . . It is filled with energy reaching it from the instincts, but it has no organization, produces no collective will, but only a striving to bring about the satisfaction of instinctive needs subject to the observance of the pleasure principle. (qtd. in Storr 61)

On this basis, the id works according to the pleasure principle and uses the primary process. As to what are these two introduced terms, the first is the urgent and

dire need for the fulfilment of desires, while ignoring the warnings or the consequences, to guarantee the satisfaction of the id. As for the primary process, it is the primitive irrational thought "governed by wish-fulfilment and the pleasure principle" (Storr 102). Simply, a definition of the id is "the structure of the mind most closely associated with the endogenous biologic needs of the human organism, represented mentally as sexual and aggressive drive wishes" (Auchincloss and Samberg 105).

The ego is the part of the mental structure in charge of maintaining a balance between the id urgent drives and the external world ideals. It operates according to reason, negotiating and compromising in order to guarantee mental health as well as an acceptable individual's conduct. The ego can be seen as the mediator between two conflicting forces: the primitive needs that require immediate fulfilment and the supervision of the superego which represents the real world with its expectations, values, and codes. According to Freud, "the ego is the part of the mind representing consciousness" (qtd. in Storr 61). That is why it is able to take control of two extreme forces, the internal and external.

The superego is the third division of the mental apparatus which forms a kind of surveillance on the ego since the latter is the "executive agency of the mind" (Auchincloss and Samberg 69). The superego serves as a guide that censors, punishes, and controls to adjust the individual conduct and keep it always in check according to a set of morals and ideals. Storr believes that the superego is "originally derived from parental prohibitions and criticism" (63), which are in the first place derived from the conventions, traditions, morals, standards of a given society. Children, when developing the superego, starts to repress or sublimate their drives towards more proper pursuits and conducts. If they fail to do so, this would result in feelings of guilt and shame (Auchincloss and Samberg 253).

The unconscious is the faculty of the mind where thoughts and feelings out of one's awareness are stored or rather repressed. This concept is the core of psychoanalysis studies, considering that is the storage of what is oblivious to the conscious but manifests itself in many forms and contributes- sometimes to a great extent- to one's experience and attitude.

Life drive or life instinct is those innate drives that seek to maintain the survival of the living creatures through procreation, nutrition, avoidance of danger, and the like.

Death drive or death instinct is the "innate biological urge in all living creatures" (Auchincloss and Samberg 50) to return to the point of start, which is before existence. Since death is the eventual fate, Freud's theory claims that all living creatures seek the pre-life stage which is devoid of energy, organism, and dynamism i.e a lifeless state. Death instinct theory is provided as an argument for the tendency of self-destruction.

Besides, Freud established five psychosexual stages that summarise the development of sensual-sexual experience: the oral, the anal, the phallic, the latent, the genital. First, the oral stage is the stage where the only source of pleasure is nourishment or more specifically nourishment that is represented in the infant's act of sucking, tasting, and swallowing; thus, the mouth is where the infant achieves satisfaction. Second, there is the anal stage where the focus is on controlling the needs of the body, such as toilet training. Here, the child sense of gratification arises when they meet their parents' expectations and orders. Third, when children become aware of their genitals that differentiate them from the other sex (either male or female) and experience what Freud called the Oedipus complex, they are in the phallic stage. Next, once children come to the realisation that one source of pleasure and sensuality is in their genitals, they move to a stage where their sexual drives are latent; therefore, this stage is called

the latent stage, which is a kind of preparation for the child (adult to-be) in terms of social and moral conduct, self-control, investment of energy on skills and learning, to mention but a few. Last, the genital stage is where the adolescent reaches puberty and where the sexual drives, previously latent, become active.

1.3. Defence Mechanisms

Previously, the ego was defined as the hypothetical part of the mind structure responsible for finding a solution between two conflicting forces: the inner drives that do not bear delay and the external world with its demands that inhibit and prohibit. The ego maintains this balance that aims to protect the self through a set of mental functions that are present in the unconscious, not clearly apparent to oneself. These mental functions are called defence mechanisms postulated by Sigmund Freud and later more developed by his daughter, Anna Freud. The term defence mechanism before reaching its final shape, the way it is recognised today, in the clinical and psychoanalytic domain, went through many refinements by Sigmund Freud. Anna Freud discusses these chronological modifications in *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defence*. First, the word defence was employed to "describe the ego's struggle against painful and unendurable ideas or affects" (A. Freud 42). Then, this phenomenon was conceptualised as repression while defence mechanisms, as a term, was not in use. Repression was employed to mean all the ego functions serving to inhibit the effect of danger and guilt by executing a set of mechanisms. However, and since Freud is the founder of psychoanalysis and its principles, his theories were not devoid of lacunae, which is the reason behind his recurrent revisions and restless establishment and re-establishment, defining and re-defining of concepts and tenets of his school. Freud, with the publication of *Inhibitions, Symptoms, and Anxiety* returned to use the term defence mechanisms as an umbrella term encompassing all those mechanisms of defence, in

which repression is one of many that serves the same function with a different method. Moreover, the main role that these mechanisms play is to "prevent other ego functions from being disrupted or disorganised by excessive negative affect, such as anxiety or guilt" (Cramer 3). In other words, their purpose is the protection of mental health from distress, anxiety, and other issues that may hinder the process of other mental functions and may result in the collapse of the individual, leading to bigger psychological and mental health issues. It also depends on the success of their operation. As Finchel evaluates the unsuccessful defence mechanisms as those that lead to disorder of the performance of the mental functions and also to the "suppress[ion] and block[ing] [the] discharge" of the unwanted drives (qtd. in Cramer 13), which are the purpose of defence mechanisms being in action. On the other hand, successful defence mechanisms are the ones in which the unwanted pain, worries, or fear (as examples among many) about a particular subject, event, or a person disappear or cease to have the same effect on the person. Another point to clarify is whether these mechanisms are a normal reaction that serves as a way of protection or a sign of illness that flashes a warning, and this has been the question of many debates where the response was demonstrated in two different stands: the first approving the idea of pathology, and the other conceptualising defence mechanisms as a means that enable the progress of the ego and its functions. Cramer's *Understanding Defense Mechanisms* provides a comprehensive account of the two stands and introduces the third: that everything comes at a price, affirming the duality of mechanisms of defence. They can be as much harmful as useful, depending on factors like the overuse of them that hints at the existence of a psychological problem, the irrelevant age of using a certain defence mechanism, or when "they tend to distort reality perception, and to interfere with other ego functions" (Cramer 527).

1.3.1. Types of Defence Mechanisms

Out of wonder, curiosity, or for the sake of pursuing a scientific inquiry, a question may arise of why individuals act this way rather than another, why they respond to events in a rather unexpected way, or why they react in a different manner in situations that compel them to react otherwise. Part of the answer is related to a set of mental functions called defence mechanisms. They may not be apparent or easily observed, since they are unconscious, and since they also work in harmony with other mental functions. Defence mechanisms are reputed to be a sign of pathology, but the truth, here, is incomplete. It is the excessive use of these mechanisms that may be considered a pathology. Otherwise, it is a normal and crucial thing to have defences against the two conflicting inner forces. In fact, all defence mechanisms, with their differences in operation and role, are mainly used to prevent a collapse, anxiety, dysfunctioning, and to allow the individual to live a balanced life not drawn to any extreme: not indulgent in the instinctual drives and not a slave to the superego demands. There are up to 30 defence mechanisms, ten are listed by Anna Freud in *The Ego and The Mechanisms of Defence*, which are "regression, repression, reaction formation, isolation, undoing, projection, introjection, turning against the self and reversal" and adds sublimation as the tenth (44). The current study is concerned only with repression, reaction formation, isolation, and sublimation: how they are manifested in a way that contributes into the making of Lucy Snowe, the melancholic character she is in *Villette*. The four aforementioned are neither psychotic defences nor are they immature defences, based on Vaillant's classification of mechanisms of defence into psychotic, immature, neurotic, and mature. They are rather placed in the last two categories: isolation, repression, and reaction formation in the neurotic defences and sublimation is considered to be a mature defence mechanism. the simplification of what is meant by

a neurotic defence, even though that it denotes mental issue, is that this mental function- used to get rid of unwanted feelings and to adapt with the real world- is not harmful (but can be) and is widely used by adults; still, it is the overuse of neurotic set of defence mechanisms that can lead or indicate the presence of a serious problem. Therefore, neurotic defences as long as they are used moderately to cope with difficult situations and to preserve one's sanity, but not too often or always, especially talking about adults, there is nothing to worry about. Mature defences, on the other side, is the safe harbour that adults land at. Simply because, there is more positivity, if not all, in these set of mental functions and how they turn negative or strong drives into a socially acceptable and rewarded behaviours. The example that is provided in this research is sublimation. Hence, one is allowed to say that this investigation does not revolve around studying a character that suffers a particular mental illness, but rather it seeks to dissect her personality, in general, within the framework of psychoanalysis.

1.3.2. Repression

Traces of early ideas on repression starts to formulate based on resistance. Resistance originated repression thanks to one of Freud's patient's resistance to talk about past memories that happen to be painful i.e. their refusal to retrieve them and make them conscious. They resisted the fact of having to remember, having to bring to the surface what has been for so long buried, meaning repressed. To repress is to withhold from awareness and consciousness what can not be handled, borne, or tolerated; what is devastating, painful, or simply out of the capacity of one to sustain for so long. Following this understanding, repression operates by "preventing the span of consciousness from being breached or preventing some intolerable psychological material from entering consciousness" (Erdelyi 502). To put it differently, repression "refers to the exclusion of contents from conscious representation" (Hentschel et al. 47)

or to "reduc[ing] the accessibility to consciousness of some target material" (Erdelyi 502). A careful examination of the psychoanalytic framework, its principles, concepts, and how they operate, would usher one into the conclusion that the role of repression is central, and it is at the core of this system on which psychoanalysis is grounded, according to Freud's belief, and he is not the only one. An evolutionist point of view asserts that "the design of the mind requires repression, even for dealing with everyday matters" and "that the inability to repress is a serious liability" (Nesse 262). No wonder then- and this explains- why Freud first attempts to conceptualise this mental operation led him to generalise the term repression for all those defence mechanisms that the ego uses. Only later, the term defence mechanism reigned over these processes, and repression became a single defence mechanism, among others, with its distinct operation and functions. To think of it, the unconscious is by itself the accumulation of repressed materials, where the id drives are sometimes faced by repression from the ego, and many other examples. It is clear how repression is present almost everywhere in psychoanalysis or to be more precise, it operates almost everywhere in the human psyche. Repression does not exclude it only to painful memories as it is the common view about repression being related to instances of a traumatic childhood, sexual abuse in adolescence, or any of the unpleasant shocking instances and events that may occur to the individual compelling them to repress. Here, the role of repression is to protect oneself although the side effects may cause pathological cases, where repression fully or partially fail to conceal from awareness what is traumatising, or when repression is used exaggeratedly in degree and frequency leading, inevitably, to mental illness. However, returning to the earlier point of this discussion, repression, in addition to what has been said, also entails the inhibition of instinctual drives, such as sexual urges, and not only past memories of trauma. In this respect, "repression occurs when a wish is

believed to lead to both satisfaction and frustration" (Boag 76). The latter description is more accurate in the way that repression is not only concerned with forgetting frustrating memories, but it also entails stopping oneself from executing or pursuing their instinctual wishes, which, in particular situations, are considered inappropriate, immoral, a taboo or may lead to self-destruction. Another view yet to be presented, which slightly differs from previous views on the role of repression, but again, it echoes the same basic idea of coping and adapting with the real world, which is the primary role of all defence mechanisms. Since repression is an unconscious process, Trivers and Alexander suggest that repression "allows people to deceive themselves about their own true motives, and thus better deceive others . . . Deception is a required strategy in all relationships, and is . . . best pursued without even knowing it so that others are given no clues" (Nesse 273). Again, this view, even if different, it supports the idea of all defence mechanisms function, repression in this case, as being a source of protection, and a way of coping and adapting, and therefore, staying sane and mentally healthy.

1.3.3. Reaction Formation

When one develops feelings of love towards a particular person (a man towards a woman or vice versa), and when this love, under given circumstances, is not allowed, be it that the love object is unattainable, shows no interest or rejects him/her, or simply is in a relationship with another person, this individual may explicitly or implicitly express hatred towards their love object and act the opposite way of what one in love may do, such as ignoring their love object's presence, criticising them, or declaring their hate towards them, to other people with recourse to feeble excuses. A different example can be a student who absolutely does not bear or have any cordial feelings towards their teacher, whatever the reasons may be, will demonstrate quite the opposite feelings when

being in their presence by laughing at their jokes, being extra polite, applauding at their speech, attending their classes regularly, and all the instances that show no minimum of disdain towards the teacher. These two examples are provided to enrich the discussion and clear the understanding of a widely used defence mechanism by the ego to protect one's self-esteem and to cope with the external world with its pressure, requirements, and expectations. What both the lover and the student did is called reaction formation, classified among the neurotic set of defences, not because they are definitely pathological, but for the reason that the repetitive, frequent, and excessive recourse to this mechanism may lead to a psychological problem that calls for the intervention of clinical treatment or therapy. To define it, reaction formation, also called compromise formation, inversion, or substitute formation is "a neurotic level defense, replaces an unwanted thought or emotion with the diametrically opposed thought or feeling" (Minges et al. 4310), for the sake of adaption, being socially acceptable, out of fear or feelings of threat or danger, or other possibilities. In addition, this type of defence does not completely diminish the impulse or feeling. Instead, it transforms it into quite the contrary as a way of coping and preserving oneself from intense concerns and internal turbulence. In introducing and discussing the concept of defence, it was mentioned that defence mechanisms are unconscious blocked form awareness unless there is a distant observation or one is exposed to long self-reflection or sought a therapist. Being unconscious and an ego function, as all defence mechanisms are, it is argued that reaction formation, when it comes to the way it functions, resembles or shares similarity with two other defences which are acting out and altruism (Minges et al. 4311). The difference, nevertheless, lies in the degree of intensity, method, and categorisation. Starting with the last point which is Valliant's classification of defence mechanisms, previously tackled where it was mentioned that there four categories that

place defences into psychotic, immature, neurotic, and mature. In this light, and in comparison to acting out being categorised as an immature defence and to altruism being placed among the mature defences, reaction formation is positioned in the middle being in the neurotic category. That is due to the fact that reaction formation is more appropriate and selective in reaction and response, but it does not amount to altruism since the latter is regarded as "one of the healthiest and most mature adaptive strategies" marked " by an absence of longings for sexual satisfaction" (Auchincloss and Samberg 13).

1.3.4. Isolation

Isolation indicates separation, exclusion, remoteness, aloofness, alienation. In the realm of psychoanalysis, isolation no longer means spatial distance. Instead, it is the metaphorical meaning with which this discipline is concerned, considering that isolation is a defence mechanism, a mental function in the psyche, used by the ego and is responsible for the exclusion of emotions, remoteness of feelings from an event or memory abundant with pain, nostalgia, regret, and the like, and whose purpose is "to diminish the consequence an affect will have on consciousness" (Petraglia et al. 8). A patient who is asked to recall a memory of loss, or divorce and former marital issues that caused them heartbreak, would attempt to resist against it by narrating those events stripping them from their emotional tone, objectively distancing themselves from that experience as if they are just a storyteller of somebody's else story or a mere observer without any interest in that story. A man who witnesses the death of his (dear) father may not at all exhibit feelings of gloom and sadness, but acts rather neutrally during the funeral, as if his feelings were frozen. Indeed, his feelings were isolated, kept at bay, in the unconscious. A person watching a film in the cinema, may not shed a tear or at least sympathise with a scene that provokes emotions to a great degree. Unlike other people

around them, they would watch with an objective and composed manner distancing themselves from what is happening in front of them refusing to allow an emotional response, or for these feelings to access to their conscious. This is because the abundant or full emotional involvement with that scene may cause one distress and overthinking, and may remind them of the similar occasions that they have been through, which may be an emotional or psychological burden. While the defence mechanism is active, they may give themselves excuses like it is just a film, or that this is life anyway, and everyone has a share of bitter and sweet, and many excuses that allow the unconscious isolation to keep operating. Departing from the examples above, three cases or types depending on the degree of isolation or isolation of affect that "ranges from ordinary to extensive" can be concluded (Auchincloss and Samberg 124). The first "includes the discreet isolation of feelings concerned to certain ideas" (Auchincloss and Samberg 124), which corresponds to the first example. The second entails "the discreet isolation of certain feelings themselves" (Auchincloss and Samberg 124), and that was demonstrated in the second example. Finally, with the third example, isolation can also be a general state, more of a character trait that tend to withhold emotions in general (Auchincloss and Samberg 124). The third example leads this discussion to mention that isolation can "be seen as the habitual basic tendency to exclude one's affects" (Hentschel et al. 58). In addition, another clear illustration is when certain individuals are identified as cold and rigid. When doing so, one has to remember that is perhaps one's strategy to protect themselves by "lessening or keeping at bay the emotional power" (Auchincloss and Samberg 123) that ideas, thoughts, memories, experiences, instances, scenes, may bring to the surface of the conscious.

1.3.5. Sublimation

Unlike reaction formation, which is the reversal of feelings or attitude, and unlike repression and isolation which entail withholding and distancing from the conscious, a different way to cope is to sublimate. In the article, *Sublimate Rather than Scream*, Thorp starts the discussion by returning to the origin of the word sublimation, which is of a Latin origin *sublimare* meaning "to raise to a higher status" (433). This serves as a reasonable justification of why according to Vaillant, sublimation is placed among the mature defence mechanisms. Sublimation is the transformation of the instinctual drives, mainly but not only, the sexual drives, into something better, nobler that serves both the individual and society. What is a defence mechanism is (strangely) also a source of creation and art. Still, it is not a rigid rule to witness the birth of a genius, an artist, a writer, a musician, and the like solely by virtue of sublimation. It concerns, according to Freud, the gifted people. The idea of creation and art, here, may extend to mean not only the deflection of desires into a different performance, action, or creation, but it is in those works that one finds the reflection, application, and projection of the desires, sublimated, looking at many paintings, writings, and pieces of music, some of which are considered erotic or sensual. Others may portray what the individual sublimated, for example, found and observed in literature, and a perfect example for this research is *Villette*'s author herself, Charlotte Brontë, where "the actual content of the forbidden feeling would find its expression in an altered, sometimes disguised form" (Cohen and Kim 5275). However, as mentioned earlier, to sublimate is not necessarily to create something great, but it is within the realm of possibility. Sublimation can be seen in simpler forms of daily life, like sports, teaching, seeking and immersing in educating oneself, charity, to mention but a few. The conflict between the superego ideals and the id urgent demands is recognised in causing a collapse and anxiety. That is why, sublimation is a successful adaptive defence, in the way it

"establish[es] a constructive type of mastery of the conflict" (Hentschel et al. 291). Reaching the final defence mechanism, this research should address an important point that may have been missed while discussing the aforementioned ones, which is that since defence mechanisms aim to maintain the balance of mental health and the human conduct according to the socially acceptable conventions, their role is to help human to thrive not to destruct themselves. Departing from this point, any excessive use of any defence mechanism, even if it is a mature one like sublimation, may inevitably, sooner or later, lead to an imbalance, a mental issue, an eventual destruction of oneself. In other words, "if the Ego subtracts too much libido and in doing so is allied with the death instinct, a dangerous drive imbalance may ensue" (Civitarese 4). One can imagine that a heavy reliance on sublimation may turn a human being with their instinctual needs, into machines and slaves to societal requirements, which is a task, near the impossible to achieve to its fullness or sustain with perfection. A defence mechanism is used by the ego to create a balance not to satisfy a party and abandon the other. The ego is the mediator between two forces, both of them are necessary for the human race to thrive. The id and the superego should be seen as complementary not as separate entities, in which the ego interferences by finding a in-between solution. One form of representing this solution is defence mechanisms.

As a last note, defence mechanisms may operate together and sometimes at the same time, with different degrees of dominance from an individual to another, and depending on the circumstantial situations. Also, the above mentioned defences are not the only ones. They are the only four which are going to be discussed in regard to the novel, *Villette*, in chapter three.

1.4. The Intersection of Psychoanalysis and Literature

With the emergence of literary criticism theories in the 20th century, there were voices that opposed this tendency to study and presumably restrict works of literature, which are forms of creativity, to a rigid set of interpretations that sometimes are but the critic's own invention, and that also, in some cases, proved a failure, faced limitations or missed the primary goal of the literary work. This being said, one should also look at the other end of the scale, where T. S. Eliot asserts that "criticism is as inevitable as breathing" (36). Following this statement, it may be regarded as certain that criticism and interpretation are present, even if not acknowledged, in the reading process, and that those theories of criticism are founded to guide the reading and enlighten it. That is to say, theories of criticism are the tool with which the reading is carried and the interpretations are constructed. As for the risk that the critic may run when attempting to approach a work of literature, for example, "assert[ing] himself at the expense of the work he is discussing" (Edel and L.152); it is necessary that the critic should be qualified for this job and well-equipped with the tools that enable them not to stray far, pursuing their own ambitions, whims, and imagination when conducting the analysis, avoiding "arrogance, pretentiousness, condescension" (Edel and L. 152). Even with the existence of fallacies, on the part of the critic, and the presence of limitations of literary theories of criticism, these theories continue to shape the modern reading for many literary productions, the Western canon especially, for instance, *Hamlet*, *Frankenstein*, *The Great Gatsby*, and many others. *Hamlet*, in particular, was subject to a revolutionary controversial theory application, which is psychoanalysis. Here, it should be clarified that Freud uses *Hamlet*, a work of literature, to support his arguments, not the other way round as it is familiar today with the practices of psychoanalytic study on works of literature. Hence, the relationship between literature and psychoanalysis "in Barry Charbot's view . . . [is] reciprocally connected" (Herman

and Vervaeck 591) in the way they, inform, add to, and obtain from each other. While psychoanalysis finds literature a fertile ground for the application, manifestation, and the exemplification of its principles (Zyl 1)- *Hamlet* as a famous example for the Oedipus complex- literature, on the other side, also turns to and makes use of the psychoanalytic approach to have an understanding of characters, to reveal the hidden, the unsaid, and the repressed, to mention but a few. Therefore, these two disciplines, both with their complexity, are at some point interdependent. Both psychoanalysis and literature attempt to unpack the individual's inner self to provide an understanding of the human psyche, in general, that sometimes may represent the author, the reader(s) or both. It is true that some works of literature yield themselves to a psychoanalytic study more than others, but in all cases, psychoanalysis can be applicable to them all since literature is a human product that reflects (not necessarily) their fears, ambitions, desires, inner thoughts, in the way they choose what to say and what not to say. Simply, psychoanalysis is "an investigation of character" (Phillips xi). The study of character can be that of the author, reader, or characters of the literary work. On this basis, the third point is what this research is dedicated to doing, to dissect the melancholic personality of Lucy Snowe through a set of defence mechanisms, which is the subject of the next chapter.

1.4.1. Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism

Being manifold by nature, psychoanalysis may be found present in many fields each according to its parameters. Freud himself applied psychoanalysis in literature, and painting, and the application of psychoanalysis nowadays encompasses a wider range of theories on how to analyse a piece of literature, after it was only the child of the clinical and medical domain with a primary focus on therapy. Since this research is conducted within the literary realm, psychoanalytic literary criticism approaches texts

of literature from four different dimensions: the author, the reader, the text, and the character. To explain, works of literature are secret graveyards of their authors, and thus they reveal much about the writer even if the authors themselves are not aware of it, or they do not intend to. The job of the analyst is to decode and disinter the unconscious and reveal how the text in hand reflects the author's own secret desires, guilts, psychological complexes and fixations, and all that is not explicitly declared. After all, "a text is a mirror of the unconscious mind of the writer" (Ogden 6). Another type of psychoanalytic criticism is that directed towards the reader, and the investigation of the emotional response of the reader towards a particular text rather than another, how and why they identify, interpret and empathise with it. Apart from the author and the reader, there is the text, "where the theory is used to analyze the role of language and symbolism in the work" (Hossain 43). Holland claims that "psychoanalysis does not deal with texts but with persons" (8). The person can be the author, the reader, or the fourth dimension, that is the interest of this research, which is the psychoanalytic analysis of character(s) in the literary work. In addition, there is a new tendency suggested by Thoams Odgen and Benjamin Ogden to analyse literature psychoanalytically without using psychoanalytic conceptions and previous frameworks (for further reading check *The Analyst's Ear and the Critic's Eye*). Looking at the different ways of how literary analysis is conducted, it can be said that all of them attempt to elucidate the understanding of the human mind, which is complex, and at certain times, ambiguous. Simply put, psychoanalysis "can demonstrate that a work superficially baffling and even confused is in truth a profound study of certain aspects of human character" (Daiches 355).

Conclusion

After tackling the school of psychoanalysis, in brief, exploring its tenets, broadening the understanding of defence mechanism and its different types that the ego employs, namely, repression, reaction formation, isolation, and sublimation; the second axis of this research is completed. For the third chapter to be initiated, an understanding and consideration of all what has been discussed are necessary to conduct the psychoanalytic analysis of the novel, especially defence mechanisms, which are the main focus of this chapter.

Chapter Three

Analysis of Lucy Snowe's

Melancholy: A Defence

Mechanisms Perspective

Chapter Three: Analysis of Lucy Snowe's Melancholy: A Defence Mechanisms

Perspective

Introduction

1.1. Analysis of Melancholy in Villette

1.2. Analysis of Lucy Snowe's Defence Mechanisms

1.2.1. Repression

1.2.2. Reaction Formation

1.2.3. Isolation

1.2.4. Sublimation

1.3. Analysis of Melancholy and Defence Mechanisms

Conclusion

Introduction

A psychoanalytic study is a journey of investigation into the mind to justify the human conduct in general and "to increase [one]'s knowledge of [themselves] and others" (qtd. in Storr 141). In this light, this research puts the theoretical ideas, previously discussed, to the test to see whether what is argued for concurs with the findings. First, this chapter begins by proving that the protagonist struggles with melancholy by illustrating textual evidence from the novel and explaining them. Then, mechanisms of defence are analysed in Lucy Snowe's behaviours and speech: what she chooses to say, what she does not, how she says it, and even how this is apparent in her attitude, reveal abundant information about the defences that are being used. Last, when the two analyses are carried separately, a third part is introduced to combine both analyses together in order to arrive at a certain result. The analysis works by first quoting then explaining not the other way round.

1.1. Analysis of Melancholy in *Villette*

There are some instances in the novel where the word melancholy is mentioned, in addition to different hints and indications to it. As for its symptoms, they are everywhere in *Villette*, especially talking about Lucy Snowe's personality.

Starting from the incident where Ginevra Fanshaw broke Dr John's heart, the evening of Madame Beck's party, when he suspected that she loves Alfred de Hamal, and she will choose the latter over him. On that evening, Lucy says, "the Doctor and I, having paced down the walk, were now returning; the reflex from the window again lit his face: he smiled, but his eye was melancholy" (Brontë 221). Examining this quote, its context, the nature of Dr John's personality, and what happens later in the novel, it is realised that the melancholy Lucy attributes to Dr John is hers, regarding that she

identifies with his situation as she herself is in the same one. She loves Dr John, but he breaks her heart, without his knowledge or notice, and she feels melancholy. The melancholy is hers and she reflects it on Dr John as a way of seeking intimacy, even in an illusory way. In fact, everyone in the novel ends up having a happy ending except for Lucy. If there is somebody with utter misery, then it is Lucy Snowe, the melancholic figure. In addition, attributing melancholy to Dr John is irrelevant as he, himself, addresses miss Snowe saying, "I do not give way to melancholy" and then confirming to her, "Yes: I have seen you subdued by that feeling" (Brontë 321). Even Dr John is aware that she suffers melancholy, and that she has to "cultivate happiness" (Brontë 321). Yet, later in the novel, the protagonist admits that there are particular places she prefers and "always sought by instinct in melancholy moods" (Brontë 367).

Again, in another incident, not different from the previous one, where Lucy Snowe describes the King at the Concert as being melancholy, regardless of the fact that she does not know anything about him. "I had never read, never been told anything of his nature or his habits . . . Ere long, however, if I did not *know*, at least I *felt*, the meaning of those characters written without hand. There sat a silent sufferer—a nervous, melancholy man" (Brontë 283). One can understand that her ability to identify melancholy or at least assume it from first glimpses is the strongest proof that she lives with it most.

Now, having proved that Lucy Snowe suffers melancholy by quoting and explaining from the novel, this research moves to demonstrate its symptoms, with which the novel is abundant, and for this reason, three categories are formulated. Each encompassing a group of quotes that represent one or at least similar symptoms. On this basis, category (a) is for solitude (that is most of the time if not all voluntary), category (b) is for pensiveness, feelings of nostalgia, imagination, immersion in thoughts and the

like; and category (c) is for the unconscious loss and the causeless melancholy. All three categories with their quotes will be explained in details.

Before starting the analysis, attention should be drawn to two important remarks. Melancholy, here, with its symptoms, is studied as a personality trait and not as a mental illness. In addition, these symptoms should be present all together with frequency to call it melancholy. Just because one has the tendency to take solitary walks does not necessarily mean that they are melancholic creatures. Also, special attention should be paid to the element of longing towards something not specifically defined and to the unconscious loss.

(a)

(1) "On summer mornings I used to rise early, to enjoy them alone; on summer evenings, to linger solitary" (Brontë 172).

(2) "But at sunset or the hour of salut, when the externes were gone home, and the boarders quiet at their studies; pleasant was it then to stray down the peaceful alleys" (Brontë 173).

(3) "'One moment longer,' whispered solitude and the summer moon, "stay with us: all is truly quiet now; for another quarter of an hour your presence will not be missed" (Brontë 173).

(4) ". . . and leaning out, looked forth upon the city beyond the garden, and listened to band- music from the park or the palace-square, thinking meantime my own thoughts, living my own life, in my own still, shadow world" (Brontë 184).

(5) "I might have had companions, and I chose solitude" (Brontë 193).

(6) "I took refuge in the garden. The whole day did I wander or sit there alone, finding . . . a sort of companionship in my own thoughts . . . I exchanged but two sentences that day with any living being: not that I felt solitary; I was glad to be quiet" (Brontë 197).

(7) "Being dressed at least a couple of hours before anybody else, I felt a pleasure in betaking myself--not to the garden, where servants were busy . . . but to the schoolrooms, now empty, quiet, cool" (Brontë 200).

To find refuge in solitude and seek isolation is a habit of Lucy Snowe that matches who she is as a person: withdrawn, reserve, and quiet. On several occasions, and departing from the quotes above, it is noticed that Lucy prefers solitude than social gatherings. However, that does not signify her wanting to alienate and live lonely. On the opposite, her solitary nature stems from the fact that she does not have a company, and company, here, means one who understands her. There is something missing within Lucy, she herself is not aware of, and she does not specify despite the attempts to (it is an unconscious loss) that is why she suffers melancholy. These solitary walks are a chance to reflect on many things, to sit with her own thoughts, to listen to her own voice that she cannot express loudly to others, and to long and yearn for something that is perhaps transcendent and unattainable.

(b)

(1) "Besides, I seemed to hold two lives--the life of thought, and that of reality; and, provided the former was nourished with a sufficiency of the strange necromantic joys of fancy" (Brontë 142).

(2) "Oh, my childhood! I had feelings: passive as I lived, little as I spoke, cold as I looked, when I thought of past days, I could feel" (Brontë 175).

(3) "With a pensive sort of content, I sat down to my desk and my German, while the pupils settled to their evening lessons; and the other teachers took up their needlework" (Brontë 183).

(4) "While wandering in solitude, I would sometimes picture the present probable position of others, my acquaintance" (Brontë 227).

(5) "when this stirring time was past, and the silent descent of afternoon hushed housemaid steps on the stairs and in the chambers, I then passed into a dreamy mood, not unpleasant" (Brontë 251).

(6) "That night--instead of crying myself asleep--I went down to dreamland by a pathway bordered with pleasant thoughts" (Brontë 257).

(7) "After breakfast my custom was to withdraw to the first classe, and sit and read, or think (oftenest the latter) there alone" (Brontë 305).

Accompanied by solitude or the need for solitude, pensiveness or prolonged reflections is another characteristic of melancholic personalities. Lucy lives in her own mind i.e. her own world more than she lives in real life since she is most of the time, not a major participant in the events but merely an observer, a listener, but not a very good communicator. The reader knows that Miss Snow spends a great deal of time on reflecting but rarely learns what she thinks about or what occupies her mind all the time. Lucy seems to have many things to say but never has the chance or courage to do so. Her thoughts remain within the boundaries of her world, sometimes empowered by fancy and imagination, sometimes shrunk by fears and overthinking, and other times they are nostalgic feelings towards past days that, for her, are better days than the current ones, adding to that the longing, the yearning, the craving of not one thing but many.

(1) "On bringing me my tea next morning Gorton urged me to call in a doctor. I would not: I thought no doctor could cure me" (Brontë 229).

(2) "My heart almost died within me; miserable longings strained its chords" (Brontë 225).

The principal characteristic of melancholy is the unconscious loss. The protagonist is right in assuming that no doctor can cure her, solely for the reason that a doctor would not know what to cure since he cannot know where the problem lies. Both the reader and Lucy Snowe know that she has many reasons to grieve for and be miserable about; still, one cannot understand what is lost and missing within her. The unconscious loss justifies the constant struggle and pain, the longing and the yearning, and the need to communicate them with herself in solitude.

1.2. Analysis of Lucy Snowe's Defence Mechanisms

1.2.1. Repression

Repression in *Villette* mainly revolves around the character of Lucy Snowe, her struggle to take full command of her feelings that have no room. She desperately holds feelings of love for Dr John. These feelings constantly and over time are repressed.

In chapter XXI (Reaction), there are up to three pages in length about the conflict of love confession towards Dr John: whether to avow or not to avow is Lucy Snowe's constant conflict. Lucy aches and becomes a vulnerable prey to two powerful forces, each demanding validation and execution, neither consents to an in-between solution. It is the wishes of the heart and Reason (Brontë deliberately capitalises Reason in *Villette*) that are at a never-ending war, in which Lucy Snowe is the only victim:

"But if I feel, may I never express?"

'Never!' declared Reason.

I groaned under her bitter sternness. Never--never--oh, hard word! This hag, this Reason, would not let me look up, or smile, or hope: she could not rest unless I were altogether crushed, cowed, broken-in, and broken-down . . . Reason might be right; yet no wonder we are glad at times to defy her, to rush from under her rod and give a truant hour to Imagination--her soft, bright foe, our sweet Help, our divine Hope. We shall and must break bounds at intervals, despite the terrible revenge that awaits our return. Reason is vindictive as a devil: for me she was always envenomed as a step-mother. If I have obeyed her it has chiefly been with the obedience of fear, not of love. Long ago I should have died of her ill-usage her stint, her chill, her barren board, her icy bed, her savage, ceaseless blows; but for that kinder Power who holds my secret and sworn allegiance. (Brontë 299-300)

Freud, looking at the quote above, would remind one by the famous conflict between the id and the superego. The former, in Lucy Snowe's case, demands mutual love and desire fulfilment, to love Dr John and to be loved by him in return is the ultimate goal, achieved by confessing and expressing, a faculty which Lucy Snowe lacks and is not a master of, and so the exchange of letters for her is a golden opportunity, where she can use written words to hint, to implicitly express, hiding behind her honest words, or perhaps to take the courage and straightforwardly express it all. Passion and desires awake, in her, the need for action, the need to speak. They are empowered by imagination, and they promise pleasure, relief, and happiness long-awaited. The latter is the mighty Reason that seems to hold the power of authority and surveillance. The one that tortures, threatens, and lowers her self-esteem, making her

courage quiver, her words silenced, and her wishes and whims repressed. Reason provides Miss Snowe with rationality and expected consequences: there is the fear of rejection, fear of the reaction of Dr John himself, and what he might think of Lucy Snowe, the reaction of Madame Beck, Mrs Bretton, M. Paul Emanuel, Miss Ginevra Fanshawe, and everybody else at the Pensionnat. Reason reminds her of the traditions and conventions of how come a (Victorian) woman of her age and position (a teacher) is overtly open about her feelings towards a man, initiating the first step.

The next day, after a turbulent night that witnessed a raging war between the heart and reason, "at dawn" Lucy declares, "Reason relieved the guard" (Brontë 301), and she decides to listen to the whispers of her reason:

My mind, calmer and stronger now than last night, made for itself some imperious rules, prohibiting under deadly penalties all weak retrospect of happiness past; commanding a patient journeying through the wilderness of the present, enjoining a reliance on faith-- a watching of the cloud and pillar which subdue while they guide, and awe while they illumine--hushing the impulse to fond idolatry, checking the longing out-look for a far-off promised land whose rivers are, perhaps, never to be, reached save in dying dreams, whose sweet pastures are to be viewed but from the desolate and sepulchral summit of a Nebo. (Brontë 301)

Determined, Lucy now adjusts her plan, and her plan is to remain, Miss Snowe, that everyone knows and cherishes, reserve, withdrawn, and solitary. To resign to faith, to resist her feelings, to show no affection towards Dr John, pretending to be nonchalant about his former and current lovers, to treat him with cordiality but no more. However, behind her composed manner lies a burning flame that is consuming her to the core,

waiting for a glimpse of notice and interest from Dr John. Over time, this burning flame turns into a cold memory, something of the young past. Feelings end up being repressed in her unconscious, and she, herself, years later helps Paulina and blesses her marriage with Dr John, confirming that Paulina is the right girl that should be wedded to him.

Earlier in the novel, in chapter XIV (The Fête), there is a clear hint to Lucy Snowe's repressed feelings that emerge, suddenly, without previous warning, in an altered form, which is anger:

Is it possible that fine generous gentleman--handsome as a vision--offers you his honourable hand and gallant heart, and promises to protect your flimsy person and feckless mind through the storms and struggles of life--and you hang back--you scorn, you sting, you torture him! Have you power to do this? Who gave you that power? Where is it? Does it lie all in your beauty-- your pink and white complexion, and your yellow hair? Does this bind his soul at your feet, and bend his neck under your yoke? Does this purchase for you his affection, his tenderness, his thoughts, his hopes, his interest, his noble, cordial love--and will you not have it? Do you scorn it? (Brontë 217)

This is an excerpt from a conversation between Ginevra Fanshaw and Lucy Snow, in the evening of Madame Beck's party, following the performance of the vaudeville. This is not the first time that Ginevra and Lucy discuss such matters. Ginevra has the habit of narrating, to Miss Snowe, the stories of her lovers, of those men who chase her affection, and also has the habit of telling the truth regarding her manipulation of them, how she cares about their money and looks before their honesty and morals. Ginevra has been always the kind of confident young girl that is certain

that her beauty will enable her to reach many gentlemen's hearts and also their pockets. She has been always full of vanity, arrogance and has been vocal and honest about them, in the presence of Lucy. The latter has been the listener that never cares much about her companion's stories, lovers, or triumphs in getting money and jewels from those men. Lucy has treated her younger counterpart, never in admiration, but in a cold manner. She scolds her sometimes, other times, she sarcastically rebukes her, and she does not spare her a minute of her thought. Even if she serves as a loyal listener to Ginevra, she does not approve of her qualities, does not envy them, she finds nothing admirable in her character, and she comfortably and coldly states them to her: that the poor Lucy Snowe, despite having little in life, does not at all wish to be miss Fanshaw even for a day, claiming that she would give "not a bad sixpence" to be Ginevra (Brontë 214). However, this time, there is a little change, not in Ginevra manners or way of talking for they have been always provoking, and they have never arisen Lucy's temper. This time, upon realising that Isidore, who miss Fanshaw enjoys torturing and manipulating, is Dr John, Lucy unexpectedly storms on Ginevra's face. This unexpected rage, unjustified anger, for miss Fanshaw, is indeed the expression of heartbreak and concealed love for Dr John on the part of Lucy. Repression, here, is an unsuccessful defence mechanism since Lucy Snowe broke out in angry series of interrogations. It is also worth mentioning that repression comes in altered forms, anger, in this case, is an example of what Lucy Snowe is repressing. Behind this anger, lies love that is inhibited.

In the same passage, when Lucy confronts Ginevra saying, "you are only dissembling: you are not in earnest: you love him; you long for him; but you trifle with his heart to make him more surely yours?" (Brontë 217). In fact, it is herself that she is confronting, she is the one dissembling, the one not in earnest, for Ginevra is honest about her feelings. It is her that loves and longs for Dr John, and it is her that is trifling

not with his heart but with hers. Yet, the way the speech is altered, according to Freud, is one manifestation of repressed materials, longing and affection being the case here.

After the analysis of how repression is represented, one can arrive at the conclusion that repression of feelings in Lucy Snowe's case is not so much successful as it is expected from a defence mechanism to operate in general. It is observed, through the analysis, that Lucy Snowe breaks out in anger, and that she struggles with anxiety and overthinking, two things repression is supposed to prevent when talking about the success of defence mechanisms. Still, repression manifests itself in so many forms in this novel and does not exclude it to the inhibition of love. There are many repressed memories in Lucy Snowe's psyche that readers are not aware of, since she is the only narrator of her own tale, and since she selects what to say and what to conceal. The truth is that there is little to know about Snowe's ties, family, origin. She seems to be a loner in the world, or at least this is how she portrays herself. One way in which the repressed memories manifest themselves in *Villette* is the unfathomable fear or the nervous excitement, Lucy feels towards and in social gatherings.

1.2.2. Reaction Formation

Madame Beck is the headmistress of the pensionnat, and she is also the eye that watches everything. As for Lucy Snowe, the simple woman and poor teacher, there is nothing that calls for suspicion or urges the need to spy on her; still, she is not immune to the test of surveillance. While miss Lucy tries her best to speak objectively of Madame Beck, her description of her proves otherwise:

(1) ". . . to attempt to touch her heart was the surest way to rouse her antipathy, and to make of her a secret foe. It proved to her that she had no heart to be touched: it reminded her where she was impotent and dead" (Brontë 139).

(2) ". . . no private sorrow touched her: no force or mass of suffering concentrated in one heart had power to pierce hers" (Brontë 139).

(3) ". . . devoid of sympathy" (Brontë 139).

(4) "Madame Beck was a most consistent character; forbearing with all the world, and tender to no part of it. Her own children drew her into no deviation from the even tenor of her stoic calm" (Brontë 158).

(5) "'Surveillance,' 'espionage,'--these were her watchwords" (Brontë 137).

(6) ". . . she tried me by new tests. She listened at the nursery door when I was shut in with the children; she followed me at a cautious distance when I walked out with them" (Brontë 141).

(7) "(she always heard every noise)" (Brontë 160).

(8) "Madame's shoes of silence brought her continually to my back, as quick, as noiseless and unexpected, as some wandering zephyr" (Brontë 150).

(9) "I did not care twopence for her mistrust" (Brontë 186).

(10) "Had she creased one solitary article, I own I should have felt much greater difficulty in forgiving her" (Brontë 186).

The quotes above are excerpts from the novel where Lucy Snowe moves to talk about and describe Madame Beck. As previously mentioned, Lucy attempts to make her depiction of the headmistress devoid of any subjective tone that indicates her annoyance or disapproval of her character. The main Madame Beck's qualities one can conclude from the above quotes, is that she is a cold-hearted woman who rules her school by spying on everyone and everything. Yet, Lucy Snowe, everytime she describes Madame Beck as such, she returns to assure that "after all, Madame's system

was not bad", that she "was a very great and a very capable woman", that "while devoid of sympathy, she had a sufficiency of rational benevolence" (Brontë 138-39). This is not ambivalence or moodiness on the part of Miss Snowe. It can not be, especially towards someone who is "most consistent character" like Madame Beck (Brontë 158). It is reaction formation. Lucy Snowe does not like or have cordial feelings towards Madame Beck, the one who scrutinises her and her belongings oftentimes, the one that seeks to put her to different tests in order to know what Lucy Snowe is not even involved in. Lucy Snowe does not trust her employer, and at the same time does not "care twopence for her mistrust" (Brontë 186), but she, in real life, never shows her these feelings. Instead, she is Lucy Snowe, the reserve and withdrawn, she obeys the rules, she accomplishes her duties, she never complains or confronts Madame's Beck, exposing her plots and counterplots. In addition, and without Lucy Snowe having to admit it, part of this dislike towards the headmistress is related to the fact that Madame Beck was attracted to Dr John, who is the love interest of Lucy, and while Madame Beck has power, money, position, and courage to persuade Dr John's heart, Lucy has nothing but her silence, solitary nature, and empty pockets. Moreover, the reversal of feelings here is advantageous to Miss Snowe, as she is under the mercy of her employer, and has no other shelter but that in the Rue Fossette. "If I died away from- home, I was going to say, but I had no home" (Brontë 113), Lucy admits, and so the (sad) truth is that she has no home elsewhere but at the pensionnat.

Besides, the day in which Madame Beck's party took place, Lucy Snowe accepted to help M. Emanuel and take part in the vaudeville, and play the role of a man Lucy describes as "a butterfly, a talker, a traitor" (Brontë 202), who fights with another lover called Ours, both seeking to win a young girl's heart (played by Ginevra).

"I know not what possessed me either; but somehow, my longing was to eclipse the "Ours," i.e., Dr. John" (Brontë 209). The vaudeville being performed, Lucy Snowe had a strange and a strong wish -she herself does not know her source or reason- (the unconscious) to win the fight, to defeat the Ours who for both Ginevra and Lucy represent Dr John. The desire and longing to defeat and overshadow Dr John in the vaudeville is only a reaction formation: the reversal of feelings of longing to unite with him not the other way round. The truth is that Lucy loves Dr John, and would not in any way or in any situation seek to put him to shame. Acting the opposite whether in the vaudeville or in real life is but a proof.

1.2.3. Isolation

The protagonist being a looker-on life, as she calls herself, keeps a distance when recounting the events of the story. First, there is an emotional distance between her as a witness of those events- as she is not only a narrator but also a participant in these events- and the people and what happens to them from loss, disappointments, to pitiful incidents. Second, there is somewhat a stripping of emotional tone when narrating them again to the reader. At the beginning of the novel, in chapter III (The Playmates), there is this scene of the departure of Mr Home leaving his daughter, Paulina, with Mrs Bretton where Graham and Lucy are residents of the same house:

"Her father sobbed . . . When the street-door closed, she dropped on her knees at a chair with a cry--'Papa!' . . . Mrs. Bretton, being a mother, shed a tear or two. Graham . . . lifted up his eyes and gazed at her. I, Lucy Snowe, was calm" (Brontë 86).

In this scene, Paulina is about to part from her father for a period of time. Paulina, being motherless, has only her father in this world, and he has her only as his sole companion. They both rely on each other for support, companionship, and solace.

Paulina is in agony, her father weeps, Mrs Bretton has a teary eyes, Graham is shaken by the scene. Everyone reacts with sympathy and empathy except Lucy Snowe: there is nothing moved in her. She remains quiet observing as she always does. The narrator by describing herself, before that scene, as calm means the exterior quietness as well as the feelings that were not moved, the stillness of the heart. The reader might think of Lucy Snowe as stiff and insensitive, but this is called isolation, a defence unconsciously used to protect oneself. Lucy Snowe avoids the intervention of emotions as much as possible to prevent the floods of memories, where she identifies as being without family ties, and the avalanche of ugly realities that remind her that she is a miserable creature, perhaps worse than Paulina.

In addition, there is a passage in the novel, almost impossible to overlook when analysing isolation. This passage is a conversation between Ginevra Fanshaw and Lucy Snowe in chapter XIV (The Fête), where isolation is represented in how Lucy relies heavily on withdrawing certain emotions from her conscious:

I suppose you are nobody's daughter, since you took care of little children when you first came to Villette: you have no relations; you can't call yourself young at twenty-three; you have no attractive accomplishments-- no beauty. As to admirers, you hardly know what they are; you can't even talk on the subject: you sit dumb when the other teachers quote their conquests. I believe you never were in love, and never will be: you don't know the feeling, and so much the better, for though you might have your own heart broken, no living heart will you ever break. Isn't it all true? (Brontë 214)

Here, Ginevra addresses Lucy saying, "I would not be you for a kingdom" (Brontë 214) outlining the huge difference between them: there is the happy Ginevra, and then there is the miserable Lucy, two young girls with two disparate worlds. However, what is not anticipated after such daring, yet true statements, is the reaction of Lucy Snowe claiming that what she has just heard is "true as gospel, and shrewd besides" (Brontë 214), praising Ginevra for her honesty. In fact, Lucy's reaction shows how accustomed she is to the truth, reconciled with herself, yet, the way Ginevra puts it is hurtful, and any reader with common sense would agree on that. Lucy Snowe is aware that she does not enjoy transcendent beauty, that she is lonely in the world, poor and miserable, and based on that she thinks she does not deserve much in life. When Ginevra said what she said, it was not something, strange, shocking, or new for Lucy knows it all well, and it does not affect her despite the harshness of the statement. Miss Snowe unconsciously separates feelings from certain ideas and thoughts, one of them is what she is or what she thinks herself is.

1.2.4. Sublimation

Lucy Snowe sublimates the anger, the agony, the intense passion, the longing, the fear all into useful daily life activities. The two following quotes demonstrate how, despite all she is going through, finds pleasure in good deeds:

My time was now well and profitably filled up. What with teaching others and studying closely myself, I had hardly a spare moment. It was pleasant. I felt I was getting, on; not lying the stagnant prey of mould and rust, but polishing my faculties and whetting them to a keen edge with constant use. (Brontë 147)

. . . by slow degrees I became a frequenter of this strait and narrow path. I made myself gardener of some tintless flowers that grew between its closely-ranked shrubs; I cleared away the relics of past autumns, choking up a rustic seat at the far end. Borrowing of Gorton, the cuisinière, a pail of water and a scrubbing- brush, I made this seat clean. (Brontë 174)

Lucy Snowe sublimates her longings and desires by taking walks in nature, by gardening, seeking empty classes to read so often, and to educate herself. Moreover, she teaches students, and help everyone else around her. This help sometimes extends to self-sacrifice, if one remembers the incident where she decided to rescue M. Paul Emanuel's vaudeville, despite the shortage of time, her fear of public exposure, and the foreign language (French), and also if one remembers the incident in the novel where she rescued one of Madame's Beck classes by replacing an absent teacher despite her nervous excitement. Adding to that, she accepted to help Dr John in protecting Ginevra when he asked her to despite her love for him, and she also later in the novel encouraged Paulina's love for Dr John. She, despite the strains of life that chain her back, resists them or at least tries to by sublimating.

It is left to say that sublimation is, in the end, a defence mechanism like the rest of defences employed to escape anxiety and to cope with society. Still, the overuse of a particular defence is a threat to the life instinct, where sacrificing one's needs and always sublimating them leads towards the death instinct. Lucy may not reach (yet) that level of danger, but one can imagine that the sublimation of every compelling feeling, instead of giving vent to or fulfilling them is a heavy burden that can affect one's psychology.

1.3. Analysis of Melancholy and Defence Mechanisms

Arriving at the last stage of analysis, it remains to define the relationship between melancholy and defence mechanisms. Simply, melancholy (its symptoms) is at the surface: what is visible to and detectable by perception while defence mechanisms are the underlying structure. In other words, melancholy is the conscious part that Lucy Snowe and everyone around her is aware of, whereas defences are unconscious mechanisms. Furthermore, melancholy is the general psychological state of the protagonist. At depth, it encompasses the accumulation of defence mechanisms, namely: repression, reaction formation, isolation, sublimation.

Inspired by and analogous to the iceberg of the conscious and unconscious, fig. 1. represents the melancholy iceberg constituting two layers. The one above the water which is observable and noticeable, and the second is under the water, hidden and not easily noticed (sometimes not noticed at all). The first layer corresponds to melancholy, as Lucy Snowe and Dr John both admit that she struggles with it, in addition to the frequency of the symptoms which makes melancholy easily recognised. The second layer corresponds to defence mechanisms that operate at the part that is out of one's awareness. Lucy Snowe is not aware that she represses, reverses her feelings, isolates, and sublimates them. It is the job and efforts of psychoanalytic criticism to gain insights by analysing the said in order to reveal the unsaid, the repressed, the reversed, and the like.

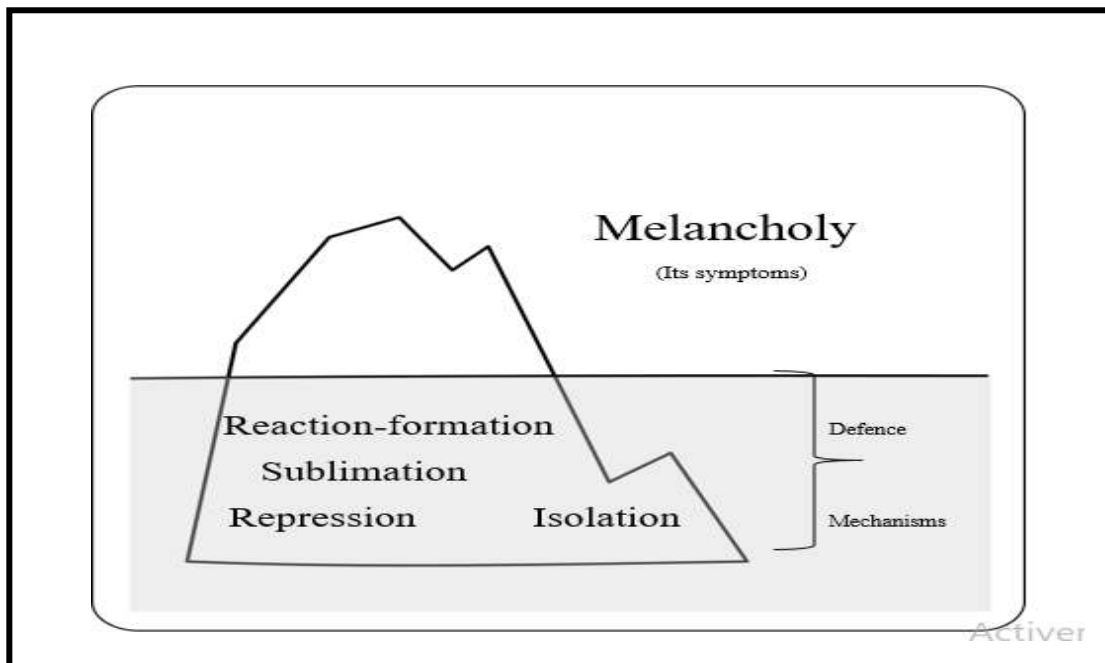


Figure 1. Iceberg demonstrates the upper and lower layers of melancholy.

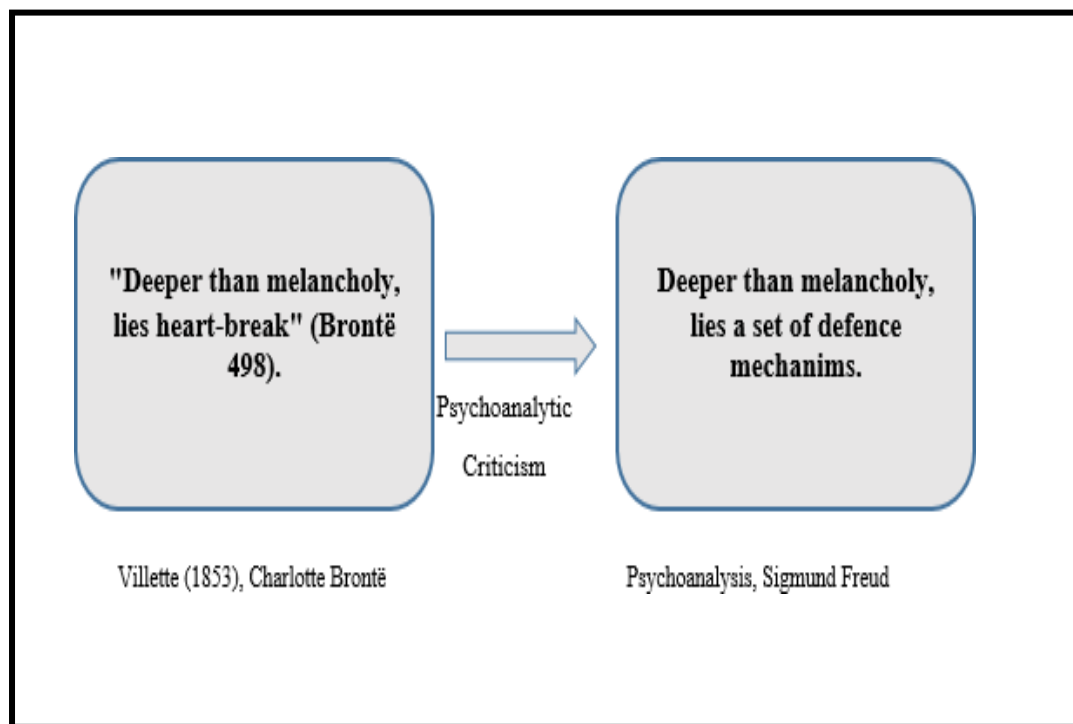


Figure 2. Diagram shows the psychoanalytic interpretation of Lucy Snowe's statement.

In the novel, *Villette*, there is a statement that calls attention, and which serves as key to prove once again, the hypothesis of this research. In chapter XXXVI (Sunshine), Lucy Snowe says, "Deeper than melancholy, lies heart-break" (Brontë 498). Literature is the world of metaphor and symbols, but moving to psychoanalysis notions and concepts change. Yet, the core idea remains the same. Psychoanalytic

criticism would look at Lucy Snowe's literary statement and give it the interpretation relevant for the psychoanalytic framework and based on its principles to become: deeper than melancholy, lies a set of defence mechanisms, since in psychoanalysis, it is the psyche not the heart that is the centre that determines one's feelings and behaviours.

Conclusion

This chapter analyses melancholy departing from a work of fiction, which serves as a rich material where psychoanalysis tools are put to use. In addition, it argues for the fact that there exists a relationship between melancholy and defence mechanisms after putting defences into study in *Villette*. Everything considered, it is safe to say that Lucy Snowe is, indeed, a melancholic character. The melancholy that she suffers is composed of a set of mental processes that operate at the level of the unconscious, which are mechanisms of defence.

General Conclusion

Charlotte Brontë's most recognised work is *Jane Eyre*. It is one of the classics in English literature. Yet, one venturing into the world of Charlotte Brontë as a writer and as a person would realise that *Villette* is yet another masterpiece that deserves more attention and acclaim. It is an exemplar of the psychological novel, about the protagonist, Lucy Snowe, who is alone in the world, lost it all, and, in fact, has little to nothing to lose. Between the concrete loss and the unconscious loss, this research intervenes to provide explanations, interpretations and dissects one of the most complex and enigmatic organisations, which is the mind, guided by the principles of psychoanalysis. The latter provides the research with the tools necessary to dive into the psyche of Lucy Snowe and derive conclusions about her mental state that seems to be easy prey to mental powers that she cannot take control of since she is not aware where it all begins and comes from, and consequently, she falls a victim to melancholy that shapes her personality to a great extent in the novel. When this research attempts to investigate the theoretical background of melancholy, it seems that it would fall into a predicament simply because melancholy is a word of myriad definitions, conceptions, and is a chameleon word that changes depending on the context. People perceived the term melancholy differently in each era, and even in the same era there exists slight to major differences between how this phenomenon is viewed, where scholars, poets, physicians, philosophers, all had a say on it. It is a word of no specific discipline, and its meaning is fluid and boundaries are blurred. Even with these challenges that may seem to face the research, it was necessary to take a look at all approaches, all definitions, and all theories on melancholy to be able to choose one suitable for this research and at the same time one that can be modulated when entering the psychoanalytic realm, one that corresponds to Freud's tenets, but at the same time, one that can be practical, so melancholy can be traced when conducting the analysis. Thus,

this research ends up formulating a general definition based on the recent perception on melancholy, and how it is defined in modern times, blending it with psychoanalysis flavour where Freud explains melancholy according to the principles of the psyche. If there is one thing to learn from psychoanalysis, it is to recognise the fact that things are not always what they seem, and even if this statement is a cliché, its significance can find a way in psychoanalysis, where human behaviours that seem simple are more complex than one may think, that behind every individual's gestures, humour, attitudes, tendencies, lie layers of unconscious piles of repressed memories, feelings, trauma, that Lucy Snowe, reverses, sublimates, isolates, and represses not willingly, but it is the psyche mechanisms that are at work to prevent major mental issues. It is all in the unconscious- the black hole that little is known about- that the real secrets lie inactive and which may come as volcano's unexpected flames when something triggers them, just as it happened with Lucy when Ginevra triggered her repressed feelings, the reader witnesses a fit of fiery anger never in million times, would be expected to come from a person as quiet as Lucy Snowe. Defences are one essential variable of this research. They are to melancholy as the unconscious is to the conscious, and this analogy is not to be taken literally. It is just used to clarify the understanding of the structure of both variables. To sum up, melancholy is conscious, apparent to perception through a set of symptoms. Defence mechanisms are not, but they are concomitant to melancholy, and not its cause, as melancholy that is argued for in this research is causeless (unconscious loss). It is worth mentioning that Freudian psychoanalysis, in comparison to modern psychoanalysis, is outmoded and harshly criticised. Still, it is present and used nowadays because it is the generator of psychoanalytic core ideas. Freud can be wrong in some points- obviously, he cannot be right all along- but for this research, his model

is the most suitable one as its principles work accordingly with the general outline and variables provided in this study.

Lucy Snowe, even if she is a fictional character born out of the author's imagination (and actually a good deal of real events), can in real life be one's acquaintance, neighbour, teacher, or a friend. Lucy Snowe is not at all a strange character or alien that readers are thrilled to learn about for the first time. Lucy Snowe, in fact, can be even oneself sometimes or maybe all the time. Therefore, literature is not a foreign land, and its stories are not different from those of human beings. Literature is a reminder of human's nature moulded in fiction, and this reinforces the idea that as much as psychoanalysis provides critics with the right tools to be equipped with when reading, literature also provides a rich material for psychoanalysis to study and analyse, and they both cross each other's path when they attempt to understand the human conduct. As a concluding remark, reading and studying literature does not only broadens one's knowledge about a certain era, or a certain context, but it takes one far beyond their expectation. It teaches them about the other, they dive in worlds of philosophy, science, and the like, they roam the world and understand that the other is not so much different or strange, that humans, regardless of different boundaries, that compel their differences, are the same when it comes to the struggles, the desires, the longings, the fears, to mention but a few. These are universal.

This research has been a journey of discovery, learning, and producing. Like any research, it is not devoid of lacunae and certainly not immune to criticism. However, the ideas, analyses, and interpretations, produced and developed, are worth stopping at and examining. They can be a seed of future research.

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ملخص

نشرت فيليب عام 1853 وهي رواية للكاتبة الإنجليزية شارلوت برونتي، تدور أحداثها حول البطلة الرئيسية لوسي سنو التي هي شخصية ملنخولية. عند قراءة فيليب يتساءل القراء عن سبب كون لوسي سنو شخصية تملأها العقد النفسية وعن تصرفاتها التي تجعل سيكولوجيتها محور الاستفهام. ترجح واحدة من النظريات الملنخوليا التي تعاني منها البطلة والتي تحدد شخصيتها بدرجة كبيرة سببا لتصرفاتها. الملنخوليا هي أيضا محور الاستفهام في فيليب. ولهذا يهدف هذا البحث الى دراسة سيكولوجية لوسي سنو باعتبارها شخصية ملنخولية. تعتمد هذه الدراسة على تحليل مجموعة من آليات الدفاع النفسي انطلاقا من علم التحليل النفسي الفرويدي. بعد إجراء التحليل ومناقشة النتائج يتوصل هذا البحث الى إثبات صحة الفرضيات المطروحة والتي تتمثل في أن لوسي سنو هي بالفعل شخصية ملنخولية وأن آليات الدفاع النفسي هي مكون للمنخوليا في حالة لوسي سنو، حيث تقوم بوظائفها على مستوى اللاوعي أي الجزء الغير مرئي بينما الملنخوليا هي الحالة النفسية المرئية التي يمكن ملاحظتها عن طريق مجموعة من الأعراض.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الكبت، عزل العاطفة، التسامي، ملنخوليا، التحليل النفسي