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ABDERRAHMANE MIRA UNIVERSITY OF BEJAIA  
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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH



**A Psychoanalytic Study of Trauma in  
Relation to Guilt in Dennis Lehane's *Shutter  
Island***

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the Requirement for an M.A. Degree in English Literature and Civilization

**Submitted by**

**Ms. Katia Aissou**

**Supervised by**

**Mrs. Dakhmouche**

**Members of the Jury**

**Chair: Ms. Slimi Sabrina**

**Examiner: Ms. Benkhodja Abida**

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## **Abstract**

The present paper undertakes the study of the main character in Dennis Lehane's novel *Shutter Island* (2003). In the light of the psychoanalytic literary theory, this work analyzes the mental instability of Andrew Laeddis alias Edward/Teddy Daniels after being the victim of a traumatic event. The aim of this research is to investigate the nature of the relationship between trauma and the feeling of guilt that the protagonist has experienced and their impact on his psyche. It also examines the effects of his psychological trauma on his self and the defense mechanisms that he has developed to confront the loss of his wife and children. The analysis points out to the way the main character responds to this mental disease and the role that his remorse plays in his treatment process. Through the use of psychoanalysis as a theory of literature, this dissertation also reveals the significant place that psychological trauma holds at an individual level and its incorporation into contemporary literary works. Moreover, it allows to explore the different varieties of trauma and guilt and their meaning in the psychological and the literary fields.

**Key Words :** *Shutter Island*, psychoanalysis, trauma, guilt.

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this humble work to my dear family and friends who stood by me and supported me through all the circumstances.

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## **General Introduction**

Psychology has been a subject of discussion for several years, struggling to be considered as a scientific discipline and to enter the medical realm, the study of the mind and behavior was regarded as being too abstract to be considered as a science, fortunately, it has succeeded to gain its place in the medical arena. Trauma, a mental damage that happens after a distressing event, has always been a highly debated subject for its ambiguity. Besides, the mental effects that it engenders are numerous and considerably alter a person's life. As the study of the human mind was beginning to gain importance, the study of trauma slowly started to be reconsidered, and psychoanalysis, which is a set of theories and a sub-field of psychology, was amongst the first moves towards the pursuit of the comprehension of this mental illness.

Freud and his followers alongside with trauma theorists such as Cathy Caruth and many others initiated the concept of trauma as a psychoanalytic subject before leading to its analysis in literary works and psychoanalytic literary criticism which is regarded as a necessary method for the analysis of any psychological literary material.

The introduction of psychological themes in literature is considered as a turning point in both the literary and the psychological fields, and mental illnesses such as trauma have been represented in novels and other forms of literary works.

According to Sadiya Abubakar in "Art as Narrative : Recounting Trauma through Literature", the first literary works to deal with trauma are the Bible and the Quran. Following her perspective, the origins of trauma go back to the Biblical and Quranic story of Adam and Eve, indeed, she asserts that their banishment from paradise led them to develop trauma (120).



On another register, In *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*, Cathy Caruth discusses trauma and its impact on literature and society by exploring it through History, and argues that this mental illness is characterized by the patient's conceptualization of a narrative of the traumatic experience, meaning that the patient interprets the traumatic event and it is this interpretation that is remembered rather than the actual event (3,7).

Negin Heidarizadeh in his article "The Significant Role of Trauma in Literature and Psychoanalysis" analyzes Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Cat's Eye*, and suggests that trauma can be the result of distressing events during childhood or adulthood, and that each person responds to it differently (789,791).

Moreover, Christa Schönfelder in her book *Wounds and Words: Childhood and Family Trauma in Romantic and Postmodern Fiction* tackles the subject of identification and claims that the reader automatically develops empathy towards the traumatized characters (29). A certain form of bond between the reader and the characters is created, traumatized patients in literature reflect reality in a peculiar way since they adopt a seemingly real personality to whom a person might relate to and towards whom they might develop sympathy.

Margaret Mcallister and Donna Lee Brien in their article " Haunted : Exploring Representations of Mental Health through the Lens of the Gothic" put the light on *Shutter Island* and assert that the setting of the movie and the Gothic eerie atmosphere translates the mental turmoil that characterizes the protagonist (85).

Furthermore, in his article "Failures of the 'Moral Defence' in the Films Shutter Island, Inception and Memento: Narcissism or Schizoid Personality Disorder?" " Graham Clarke also discusses the movie adaptation of *Shutter Island* and argues that the protagonist adopts an ideal image of himself in order to cope with his mental instability (207).

Most of the researchers have studied trauma and its effects but few have dealt with *Shutter Island* and those who have analyzed it tend to consider the movie adaptation and neglect the novel, my research is significant in a way that it focuses on the novel as a primary source, although both are particularly similar and the movie remains faithful to it, it is important to give the book the recognition it deserves. Not only is it necessary to preserve literature in a time that mostly prevails technological culture and that reaches out for facility and instantaneity rather than reflection, but it is also a way to study the original material, indeed, on an artistic level, it is imperative to give the archetype literary work acknowledgement, for it implies the author's ideas and opinions about a certain subject.

Besides, understanding the novel and analyzing it allows to appreciate it even more and to have a deeper perception of it as well as developing an acute critical sense. In addition, *Shutter Island* specifically needs analysis for the psychoanalytic notions that are related to it and which may at first be unknown to many people who are not particularly familiar with psychology. Hence, this study simplifies them and accords a much clearer explanation of these abstract concepts.

Although the theme of trauma originally appeared a long time ago, and several literary critics have dealt with it, it is still in use today, and contemporary authors like Dennis Lehane introduced this mental illness in their works. Dennis Lehane is an American author who wrote the New York Times bestsellers *Mystic River*, and *Gone, Baby, Gone*. He is known for dealing with heavy subjects mainly child abuse and violence that he denounces. *Shutter Island* is a psychological and Gothic novel that he has written after being outraged by the Patriot Act which followed the 9/11 attacks that he considers as a violation of the civil rights. This novel portrays the psychological state of mind of the protagonist, Edward Daniels, a U.S. Marshal who, accompanied by his partner Chuck Aule, goes to Shutter Island to investigate on the disappearance of Rachel Solando, a patient from the Ashecliffe Hospital for the

criminally insane. In this book, Lehane exposes the concept of trauma and the psychological struggles that the protagonist faces throughout the chapters. These phenomena are presented in a meticulous way, letting the readers to discover and try to understand the real dilemma behind the story. The novel was also adapted into a movie in 2010 and was directed by Martin Scorsese starring Leonardo Di Caprio.

This research attempts to link Teddy's trauma to his guilt and to explain the nature of this relationship by demonstrating the ways in which the protagonist was affected by his mental instability, and notably exploring the concepts of repression, denial, and double personality. To analyze this novel, this dissertation makes use of the psychoanalytic theory of literature since it mainly highlights the psychological factors that characterize an individual and takes into consideration the impact of a mental disease on the psyche. In this case, a psychoanalytic study is conducted to analyze the main character's psyche through his dreams.

This work is divided into three chapters. The first chapter is an introduction to the historical context of the novel alongside with the biography of the author and the themes that revolve around the plot, in addition to the presentation of the novel as being Gothic by the exposition of the different symbolisms and what they refer to, and the psychological elements that the novel contains.

The second chapter explores the theory of psychoanalysis and its origins from Freud, Adler, and Jung to proceed with its introduction into literature as a theory and the nature of the relationship between the two domains. Besides, it demonstrates the validity for using this particular theory of literature for the analysis of the protagonist.

Finally, the third chapter presents an analysis of the protagonist and it examines his defense mechanisms and the consequences of his mental turmoil. It also explores the notion of trauma and guilt by dealing with his dreams in addition to the relatedness of the two concepts.

## Chapter I

### A General Overview of Dennis Lehane's *Shutter Island*

#### Introduction

Dennis Lehane is an influential contemporary American writer of Irish origins whose most works are labeled as bestsellers. He deals with serious and dark subjects such as violence on children, and has an inclination towards Gothic, detective stories, noir, and mystery novels. This chapter offers a general overview of one of his notorious novels: *Shutter Island*. It includes the historical context of the novel, a short biography of Dennis Lehane, followed by the plot summary, the presentation of the novel and what makes its belonging to the Gothic genre as well as its abundance in psychological elements, to finally conclude with the themes that dominate the narrative.

#### 1. The Historical Context of the Novel

*Shutter Island* takes place in 1954 during the McCarthy era, also known as the Second Red Scare, the first one having previously occurred after World War I. This epoch that lasted four years, marked the American history on multiple levels whether politically or socially. It was named after a Wisconsin senator, Joseph McCarthy, who in 1950 held unsustainable accusations in the press on infiltrated communists in the US government and society, and described it as some sort of global conspiracy. From then on, a climate of suspicion and paranoia started to proliferate, it was not principally McCarthy who spread it but he was the one who planted the seeds of fear. Thenceforward, the “red fear” gradually gained everyone’s attention, and the loyalty of many Americans was contested. When confronted to the press, McCarthy refused to give names, and after claiming that there were two hundred infiltrated communists in the State Department and the federal offices at first hand, he suddenly began to reduce the number of suspects when asked about it. McCarthyism developed into some kind

of “witch hunt”, and events like the Korean War and the arrest of the Rosenbergs who were found to be Russian spies encouraged this movement even more. During his speech on the Senate floor, he accused the Truman administration of having communists in their charge in the State Department and pointed out to the president as being controlled by them, thus, he invited both the Democrats and the Republicans to unite and join him in his crusade (McNamara).

McCarthy had many followers, and his movement gained supporters, in fact, he was considered as a patriot who was ready to take down the communist threat and his political power considerably increased. According to Polsby, there are multiple reasons why they regarded him as a leading figure, first, a study revealed that he was admired for his courage and his ability to be particularly rough, raw, and devoted to his cause (252). Second, Adorno suggested that he was a dreaded authoritarian figure besides being protected by his position in the Senate (qtd. in Polsby 253).

However, not everyone agreed with his policies, McCarthy faced opposition from some senators, notably Margaret Chase Smith of Maine who was the only woman in the Senate at that time. She gave a speech on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1950 in which she indirectly made allusion to McCarthy by denouncing his movement and describing it as a political exploitation of fear as well as an oppression on people’s freedoms, and this was perceived as a real act of bravery mainly since McCarthy became a figure that inspired terror. Smith stresses the importance of freedom of speech and the necessity to restore the country’s political stability that she claims was corrupted by McCarthy’s propaganda (8). She encourages a forward-looking approach instead by getting past the Russian/American animosity and considering the previous mistakes that had been made. Besides, she mentions America’s sacralization of the value of freedom and the necessity to go back to the traditional precepts (9).

On the same matter, Ellen Schrecker argues that fear and repression are the principal factors that caused the degradation of the US policy, and makes the parallel between McCarthyism and the Patriot Act that followed the 9/11 attacks. She believes that it was a form of political repression and a violation of the civil rights that started with the United States' safety protocol, but that quickly interfered in the individual liberties (1042). The accused had no right to defend themselves and the identity of the accuser was preserved. Besides, witnesses had to denounce any suspected communist, and illegal home infiltrations and surveillance were applied with no restraint whatsoever (1044).

Storrs assumes that although Joseph McCarthy had opponents, he still had power amongst the American society and politicians. In fact, he started attacking the army by claiming that they were harboring communists, and this was what drained his movement down. Edward Murrow demonstrated in his broadcast the half-truths and the methods that McCarthy used in order to demolish someone's reputation, but the senator continued his chase until he incriminated Joseph Welch, a Boston attorney, to have a communist lawyer in his firm. The latter replied to this offense and precipitated McCarthy's censure in the late 1954.

Even though The McCarthy era had only lasted four years, it had great repercussions that counted hundreds of arrests and thousands of lost careers, as well as investigations at the governmental level and the diversion of its resources (Storrs).

The McCarthy era left its mark on the American history and it is the nation's attachment to its conformity that enforced it, indeed, as we have demonstrated earlier, freedom of speech was strongly limited and rejected, and any disapproval towards the McCarthyists' policies was considered to be treason. This compliance to the political standards left no place for debates or discussions which normally constitute the basis of a democratic nation, and the

least we can say is that this era was characterized not only by the fear of communists but also by that of divergence, mainly of opinions and questionability (Brown 182).

## **2. The Biography of the Author**

Author of the bestseller *Mystic River*, *Gone, Baby, Gone*, and *Shutter Island*, Dennis Lehane was strongly influenced by the classical Gothic literature of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, and figures like Edgar Allan Poe who initiated Gothicism in America, as well as the Brontë sisters and Mary Shelley greatly impacted his literary career.

Lehane had been a writer from his early childhood, in fact, he recounted in an interview with Staci Layne Wilson that he had been to school for it and when entering adulthood, he was continuously chasing his dream and had to do random jobs here and there in order to support his writing. He had even worked as a counselor with mentally handicapped abused children; the latter led him to depression and almost pushed him to stop writing. For better or worse, this particular experience left such a mark on him that many of his books imply serious and dark subjects such as violence on children, and his interest in mental illnesses grew even more. Dennis Lehane mentioned in an interview with Larry King that he had also worked as a journalist, but he quickly realized that he was not interested in facts, but rather in fiction, he is an author who needs to fall in love with what he is writing (08:55 –09:00).

Lehane also has an inclination towards detective stories, his first novel *A Drink Before the War* was a detective story that was published in 1994 in which Kenzie and Gennaro are two private investigators, and as the feedbacks were positive, Lehane made a series out of it. In an interview with Larry King, Dennis Lehane spoke about *Shutter Island* and presented it as his Gothic novel (18:27).

He asserted in another interview with Chris Lydon that the story was set in the McCarthy era, most notably known as the Red Scare, in fact, he felt outraged by the Patriot Act released in 2001 by President Bush following 9/11, and considered it as a threat and a violation of civil rights and privacy. He claimed, “If they can start changing what we say, then they will ultimately be able to change how we think, that is the hideousness of Stalinism, and McCarthyism to me is a type of Stalinism”. That was the reason why he felt the urge to write this novel and to set it during this era, and he wanted it to be about the “price of repression” on any level possible; he chose the mind, and this was what gave birth to Andrew Laeddis’s repression and deterioration of his self in *Shutter Island* (Lehane 2:23 – 2:53) .

Besides being categorized as bestsellers, Dennis Lehane’s books were often adapted in the seventh art, and directors such as Martin Scorsese worked in the adaptation of *Shutter Island* in 2010 in which Dennis Lehane worked as a producer, the movie starred Leonardo Di Caprio, and the latter had known a great success in the Hollywood industry. In addition, Clint Eastwood had adapted Lehane’s *Mystic River* on screen in 2003, and Ben Affleck had the honor to be the director of *Gone, Baby, Gone* in 2007.

In an interview with The New York Times, Dennis Lehane claimed, “Those films are the result of three directors with strong, clear visions and three screenwriters who knew how to translate the literary to the visual. None were slaves to the source material, thank God, but at the same time they respected it and they asked my input on preserving and sometimes decoding it”. When asked by Larry King about the ending of *Shutter Island*, Dennis Lehane announced that he would never explain what happened (22:30). And that might be in fact better for everyone to leave the mystery intact, for that what literature is about after all: the freedom to guess and interpret.



Most of Dennis Lehane's novels are set in Boston, a city he has a particular attachment to since he was born in Dorchester and grew up there. As a teacher of creative writing, Lehane addresses aspiring authors in The New York Times interview by saying, "Don't think of yourselves as writers, think of yourselves as storytellers". His style being itself mostly based on the plot rather than the literary form, makes of Lehane an author who chooses to prioritize and to foreground the narrative and the message rather than the whole "shape" of it.

### **3. Plot Summary**

*Shutter Island* begins in 1954 in Boston, Massachusetts. It follows the story of a Marshall and an ex-veteran of the Second World War Edward/Teddy Daniels that had liberated a Nazi concentration camp, and his new partner Chuck Aule. The two agents head towards a reclusive island to investigate the disappearance of a certain Rachel Solando, a woman who was incarcerated in the Ashecliffe Hospital for the criminally insane for having drowned her children. Once in Rachel's cell, Teddy discovers a code that he succeeds to solve, and assumes that there are sixty seven patients instead of sixty six in the hospital, and that the latter can only be Andrew Laeddis, the murderer of his deceased wife Dolores Chanal two years before.

Teddy is thus determined to find him and to take revenge. During his stay, he finds himself suffering from repeated dreams of his wife and weird nightmares, and also has multiple hallucinations. As time passes by, Teddy starts to suspect the doctors of conducting governmental illegal activities using psychotropic drugs for scientific reasons, and making human experimentations, notably transorbital lobotomy on the prisoners as it was the case during the Second World War in the concentration camps. Hence, he believes that the doctors are drugging him with hallucinogen cigarettes and that they brought him and his partner there and impeded them to leave. Dr.Cawley calls for Teddy and informs him that Rachel Solando

was found, Teddy and Chuck go to see her and the latter took Teddy for her husband. Even though the case was officially done, Teddy felt the need to unveil their illicit activities and to find the murderer of his wife. Both Teddy and his partner go to investigate Ward C, and when arriving there, they are separated and it is at this moment that Teddy meets George Noyce, a prisoner who tells him that he needs to go to the lighthouse to find Andrew Laeddis.

On his way there, he finds a cave and climbs to it, he meets a woman inside who asserts that she is the real Rachel Solando, and that she used to be a psychiatrist in the Ashecliffe Hospital, and when she found out about their experiments, they incarcerated her as a patient, besides, she tells him about paranoia, lobotomy and defense mechanisms like denial, and warned him about the psychotropic drugs. Teddy leaves the cave and goes back to the hospital, he looks for his partner from whom he was separated, and when asking about him, he is told that he has no partner. Panic takes over him and he escapes, he knew that something was wrong, something must have happened to Chuck, and it could only be lobotomy, hence, he heads towards the lighthouse. He faces his fear of the ocean and swims in order to avoid the orderlies that were after him.

Once finally there, he finds himself in Dr. Cawley's office, the latter does not seem surprised to see him and reveals the truth about Teddy's presence in Shutter Island. He explains to him that he was actually a patient in this hospital, and that his real name was Andrew Laeddis. He was imprisoned for having murdered his wife Dolores Chanal who drowned their three children. Edward Daniels and Rachel Solando are anagrams for Andrew Laeddis and Dolores Chanal that he created to cope with his mental illness. Andrew rejects this thought and refuses to believe him, he tries to shoot Dr. Cawley with a gun that turns out to be a toy. Chuck comes in and tells him the truth about his identity; his real name was not Chuck Aule but Dr. Sheehan, his psychiatrist.

The Ashecliffe personnel had in fact staged Andrew's fantasy in hopes that he finally accepts the reality of what he did and heals from his trauma, but his denial and repression kept him from letting go of his fantasy. Dr. Sheehan informs him that he needs to accept the truth, or else he would be sent to lobotomy treatment. Andrew finally realizes and admits having killed his wife, however, the next morning, he regresses and restarts his fantasy. The ending of the story is open, and the mystery remains unsolved on whether he really regressed or he pretended to be "Edward/Teddy" again in order to be willingly lobotomized because he would rather die than having to live with that guilt and that burden on his conscience.

#### **4. Gothic Symbolism and Psychological Elements in *Shutter Island***

*Shutter Island* is considered as a Gothic novel mainly for its abundance in Gothic elements of literature. Indeed, Dennis Lehane's writing style took its roots from classical Gothic writers such as Edgar Allan Poe who revolutionized this genre, and what characterizes *Shutter Island* is the omnipresence of Gothic elements throughout the plot, such as the use of symbols and most notably water which, in the literary field has a Gothic connotation.

Seda Arikan confirms that water in literature denotes what Sigmund Freud defines as the dichotomy of *Eros* and *Thanatos*, *Eros* signifies life while *Thanatos* relates to death and all the aspects of chaos. In this respect, Freud related symbolism to the interpretation of dreams and the unconscious. Hence, in psychoanalysis, water has a direct relationship with the unconscious mind of an individual, and just like water, it can be serene, or disturbed (208).

Robert Drewe introduced the appellation *hydrous psyches* to refer to those writers who make multiple allusions to water in their works and who make use of it to symbolize the psychological condition of their characters, one of them is Virginia Woolf who, in her book titled *To the Lighthouse* exposes the sea surrounding the island as a mirror reflecting her characters' psyche and unconscious mind (qtd. in Arikan 209). If we connect it to *Shutter*

*Island*, we deduce that Dennis Lehane is a *hydrous psyche* who introduced his readers with the same setting of an island and water that is so typical of Gothic literature, and that refers to the unconscious of Andrew Laeddis. Under a psychoanalytic light, water in *Shutter Island* is what images turmoil in Andrew's mind, and it is Freud's *Thanatos*, meaning that it denotes his morbid fear and takes him back to his traumatic past events that comprise the loss of his children and the murder of his wife.

In fact, the symbol of water is so strong in this novel that it was used by the author in every important moment of Teddy's life. It was water that took his father's life as mentioned in the first chapter, and it was also through water that his children died, and in chapter twenty, Teddy had to confront his fear of the ocean and swim to reach the lighthouse. Hence, water in *Shutter Island* was not used randomly by the author and its omnipresence adds a Gothic resonance to the plot.

Another Gothic element that comes into play is the theme of death and decay as *Shutter Island*'s plot entails around death as well as the destruction of the self, besides, in a Gothic narrative which includes mental instability, the protagonist usually faces his internal torments before the eventuality of getting his *human-ness* back or not (McAllister and Brien 86). The theme of mental health has always been part of Gothic literature, and a classical example would be Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher* in which Rochester suffers from hypochondria, or even Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* in which madness is represented by Bertha Mason. As readers of *Shutter Island*, we notice that Teddy's mental state gets worse as the story goes on, and this is a typical example of the regression of his mind and the deterioration of his self. With the surge of hallucinations and repeated dreams caused by his trauma, Teddy is in constant struggle and finds himself tied to his inhuman deeds.

In addition to symbolism, *Shutter Island* is a book that exposes the readers to psychological elements that are infused with Gothicism, such as the issue of mental health that is displayed through a gloomy atmosphere and an undeniable feeling of isolation, indeed, the Ashecliffe hospital and even the Island itself is completely secluded from the urban life and society. As it is demonstrated in the first chapter, the island is typically a Gothic setting and it is eleven miles from land which makes the readers experience the isolation into which the protagonist is thrown, and mostly since there is no possibility to reach the external world, for Teddy was unable to use the telephone in Dr Cawley's office. In doing so, the author expresses the mental entrapment that is characteristic to traumatic patients and Ashecliffe in this case not only represents a hospital, but also a prison whose location enhances its reclusive power. Leane puts forward insecurity and insanity through the eerie atmosphere that characterizes the hospital, the lighthouse, ward C, and the graveyard. Therefore, the Gothic setting foreshadows the mental state of the patients and is a reflection of Teddy's mind and trauma (McAllister and Brien 85).

Furthermore, Teddy develops a double personality, this mental effect mostly touches people with post-traumatic stress disorder as it is the case with the protagonist, it implies creating an alter-ego or many personalities in order to cope with a traumatic event. In *Shutter Island*, Andrew Laeddis creates Edward Daniels alias Teddy, the latter is a US Marshall and an ex-veteran of the Second World War, he is smart, lucid, and follows certain morals, on the other hand, Andrew Laeddis is the man who killed his wife, a murderer and a man who lost his humanity, hence, it is easier for Andrew to incarnate a man like Edward Daniels than facing his true self.

## 5. Themes of the Novel

### 5.1. Violence in *Shutter Island*

Violence is a particularly recurring theme in the American literature which originally appeared in the English Elizabethan drama as well as in the English Gothic romance and Flaubertian realism (Davis 29). Many scholars and literary critics spoke about the role it plays alongside with its importance that goes beyond the literary context, for instance, Joseph Carroll claims that this theme allows to understand human nature, and by introducing it in a literary work, authors display the intimate and hidden motives of people. Besides, violence in fiction is all about perspectives, and as the narrative follows the stance of the author, it invites the reader to adopt his point of view, but Carroll assures that regarding its sole significance, violence has no fixed meaning and its definition depends on the circumstances, indeed, each brutal situation is different from another and can be interpreted in various ways depending on the causes and the context (33, 36).

To illustrate how violence was commonly used as a literary theme, Carroll provided the example of Shakespeare's *King Lear* which revolves around family violence and suicide. Another notorious example is *Little Red Riding Hood* by the Grimms, even though it is a fairytale and is originally destined for children, it depicts violent scenes such as the passage involving the wolf. Bruno Bettelheim, a Freudian theorist, argues that fairytales are full of psycho-symbolic meanings and that it is what impacts the emotional development of a person ( qtd. in Carroll 38). On the same light, Carroll pointed out that violence is part of human nature, and that literature allows acknowledging our individual experience and others' (49).

In chapter twenty-one, Teddy was diagnosed as “a man of violence”, and this was in fact apparent when Dr. Cawley showed Laeddis's intake to Teddy, and in the comment section was written down: “Patient is highly intelligent and highly delusional, known proclivity for

violence...” (Lehane) . The reason why the reader gets attached and develops empathy for this character despite his brutal side is because we read the novel not only from the protagonist’s perspective, but mostly from the point of view of Dennis Lehane. The context is hence important in this situation, and the power of the author thus resides in his ability to make the readers interpret the story through his eyes, indeed, he places Teddy more as a victim of his mind rather than a murderer, besides, introducing violence in this novel allows to depict the origins of violence in human nature and allows to have a better understanding of it. Moreover, it pushes the readers to identify to the character and his experience and to relate it to their own. As a matter of fact, violence as a theme constitutes a crucial element in literature in a way that it affects not only the characters but even the readers.

Although writers have introduced the theme of violence in fictional narratives, fiction has always mirrored reality either historically or individually, hence, violence in literature allows people not only to comprehend human nature and its most intricate drives, but it also echoes specific historical conditions. In *Shutter Island*, the story happens in a world still affected by the consequences of war and violence, and is run by paranoia and its attributes. Thus, Dennis Lehane used his novel not only as a portrayal of internal conflicts related to the self, but also as a pure reflection of what the external conflicts looked like and their impact on the society.

## **5.2. Grief and Guilt in *Shutter Island***

Before dealing with grief as a literary theme, we need to define what it is: Grief is a reaction and a painful experience lived by one or many people following the death of a person or several individuals, it is a process that requires time and patience. It has been around for quite a long time, in fact, it goes back to the Bible, poetry mainly Homer’s *Illyad and Odyssey*, Shakespeare’s plays, alongside with fictional narratives (Archer 34).

In *Shutter Island*, Andrew's grief generates hallucinations about his wife and his children, these manifestations take him back to his loss and his trauma. The theme of grief in *Shutter Island* is not only restricted to Andrew but extends to Dr. Cawley who had lost the love of his life in Paris during the war, and Rachel Solando who suffers from the loss of her children and her husband. Therefore, grief in *Shutter Island* is diverse and touches many characters, and each one of them reacts differently, for Teddy, it appears as hallucinations while for Dr. Cawley it does not, in fact, the grieving process depends on the meaning we accord to the loss and at what intensity a person is affected by it (Rodriguez and Irons-Georges 342) .

Hence, *Shutter Island* shows how each person deals with grief in a different manner, and how each character responds, and Dennis Lehane reinforces this vision in order to dissociate Teddy's condition from the others'. Furthermore, the prevalence of guilt in the literary field is as important as that of grief, in fact, grief can sometimes be accompanied by the feeling of guilt and the latter impedes the grieving process, for the person feels culpable for the death of the departed. Moreover, the feeling of guilt appears in people who have the impression that they should have done more, or done something differently and more carefully (Rodriguez and Irons-Georges 343,344). ). In *Shutter Island*, Teddy feels responsible for what happened to his children, he thought that he could have prevented that if only he had helped his wife to get cured instead of doing nothing, besides he murdered her, hence, his grieving process was disrupted and got even more complicated with his guilt.

Originally, guilt appeared in classical works, mainly in Shakespeare's plays like *Macbeth* in which he and his wife kill King Duncan to achieve a prophecy. Consequently, he is tormented by his guilt just like the protagonist in *Shutter Island*. Macbeth suffers from hallucinations of the ghost of Banquo and loses track of reality and madness got over him and



his wife, just like Teddy suffers from the hallucinations of his wife and his children and is a victim of his own fantasy (Crossen).

To put it briefly, grief and guilt are two themes that were introduced in early literature and that continue to hold their position in the literary arena, besides, both of them are related and act on each other.

## **Conclusion**

*Shutter Island* is a literary work that mirrors the McCarthy era it was set in, and depicts the same atmosphere of suspicion and instability. Dennis Lehane when writing this novel chose to base his themes on the deterioration of the mind and the self, but he also wanted the readers to understand the hidden message behind it and his motives. *Shutter Island* is not only the story of Andrew Laeddis, but it is also a reflection of the deterioration of society that History had witnessed in the past and that still does today, and it seems like the story repeats itself, just like Teddy's repetitive dreams. This novel offers a peculiar perspective of the self, of History, and pushes the readers to raise questions and to develop their critical thinking. In the next chapter, an introduction of psychoanalysis and the psychoanalytic literary theory will be given to understand the necessity of its use in the analysis of the protagonist.

## **Chapter II**

### **Introducing the Psychoanalytic Theory of Literature**

#### **Introduction**

Among many theories of literary criticism, psychoanalysis is considered as a diverse and an essential approach to analyze literary works. This chapter provides a brief history of psychoanalysis and its development from a therapy to a theory of literary criticism, and focuses on the nature of the relationship between psychoanalysis and literature, and how they act on each other. Furthermore, it examines some psychoanalytic features in *Shutter Island* and what makes of it a relevant novel to be analyzed using the literary theory of psychoanalysis.

#### **1. The Origins of Psychoanalysis**

The nature of the self and what constitutes it has always been a question that was raised in the minds of humanity. In the Antiquity, Greek philosophers like Socrates, and Plato had tried to explain the origins of the human mind and consciousness, and what is defined today as “psyche” was in the Antiquity referred to as “the soul”, Burnet claimed that this concept takes its roots from a combination of religion and tradition, indeed, he referred to Homer who assumed that, “the soul’s presence in the body means life, its absence death” (qtd. in Solmsen 355). Today, the meaning of the mind and consciousness has a totally different resonance, especially with the emergence of psychoanalysis in the 1890’s. It was introduced by the Austrian neurologist and psychiatrist Sigmund Freud who dedicated most of his life to this approach to psychology. He is the first to coin the term “psychoanalysis” and states that, “psychoanalysis is the name of a procedure for investigating mental processes which are almost inaccessible in any other way, of a method for the treatment of neurotic disorders and of a collection of psychological information obtained along those lines, which is gradually

being accumulated into a new scientific discipline” (qtd. in De Mijolla et al. 1362). Even though Freud does not consider himself as the founding father of psychoanalysis and claims that he is just Josef Breuer’s student, his work with him on hysteria is what paved the way to the creation of psychoanalysis (Freud 181).

In fact, Freud was granted the title of the initiator of this approach to psychology because he was the one who developed it into a set of theories that studied the unconscious mind and its functioning, and Lothane presented it as being a form of treatment, a theory, and an “investigative tool” (qtd. in Kenny 1). Freud had made of psychoanalysis a diverse and a multidirectional field of study that gave rise to psychoanalysts such as Alfred Adler and Carl Jung. The latter were Freud’s students and who developed their own theories, namely: Adler’s “individual psychology”, and Jung’s “analytical psychology”.

In his first lecture, Freud retells his experience with Dr. Breuer and his patients. His first one was twenty-one years old and was suffering from a physical paralysis alternating between the right side of her body and her left side. She also presented disturbance in her vision, nausea after eating alongside with the inability to drink. In addition, her speech abilities degraded to the point where she could no longer speak nor understand her mother tongue (182).

Breuer and Freud assumed that this was the result of a disease related to the brain and it was surprising to see that such a young girl who seemed to have healthy vital organs had all these symptoms, they began to consider her emotional stability and the girl presented indeed troubles at that level, thus, they concluded that this was related to hysteria, and this illness was beyond the power of most doctors who had no choice but to let it cure itself by itself. Breuer was no different in that sense, but during a session with her, he noticed that she would sometimes speak to herself and generate words that came from her thoughts, he then started to

use hypnosis on her and the girl would feel better after expressing herself on her sick father with whom she stood until death, and even retrieved the English language. Hypnosis acted as a cleanser of the soul, and this technique revealed itself to be effective, and was attributed the name of “the talking cure” (Freud 184).

To illustrate even more, Freud recounts the experience of this same young girl who was unable to drink water even though she felt thirsty, the talking cure was then established and the hypnotized girl spoke about her English governess and her disdain towards her. She mentioned the governess’s dog that drunk from a glass of water, and this was the event that triggered Freud’s interest. After telling her about that moment, she began drinking water and her symptoms disappeared. In addition to that, the girl manifested hallucinations due to a dream that she had made when watching over her sick father, in fact, she had seen snakes approaching the bed and could not move her right arm which seemed to be paralyzed, and after that dream, she was having hallucinations, and could not move her right arm ever since. Freud and Breuer concluded that all her symptoms were the effects of her experiences that strongly affected her at the emotional level, and they coined them as “psychic traumata” or what we mean today by psychological trauma (185).

Sigmund Freud used psychoanalysis with his patients following the same approach as Dr. Breuer, and the therapeutic approach consisted in bringing their unconscious into consciousness, finding the hidden and the repressed and empowering the ego to create balance. The patient would confess to him and in return, he would analyze his defense mechanisms and the interaction between his unconscious and his conscious. As he was interested in neurosis, he came to realize that neurosis was related to dreams, so he wrote a book that he entitled *The Interpretation of Dreams* in which most of the sources of analysis come from literature, his own dreams, and the case studies of his patients.

According to it, dreams are a way for the id to express itself and to fulfill its inner wishes, as they can only be influenced by what someone does during the day, but Freud was interested in the comprehension of these mental manifestations during sleep and their psychic meaning, and he discovered that people tend to feel more at ease to express themselves through dreams than during the day. Indeed, he noticed that his patients were repressing their wishes as well as their thoughts during consciousness and allowed them to come out in their dreams (Parsons 94).

The father of psychoanalysis believed in the hidden and repression and considered it as “the prototype of the unconscious”, in other words, what mentally generates the unconscious (qtd. in Kenny 2). And repression was particularly displayed in *The Interpretation of Dreams* through the patients’ dreams. This book has revolutionized psychoanalysis and also discusses the notion of “the Oedipus complex”, the latter originates from the Greek mythology of Oedipus, a Greek hero whose fate was to marry his mother and to kill his father. Freud developed this concept and based it on the child’s sexual development and his attraction to the opposite-sex parent, meaning that a girl is attracted to her father and a boy to his mother alongside with a feeling of envy towards the parent from the same sex.

Amongst Freud’s most important contribution in psychoanalysis is the structure of personality. He divided the mind into three parts: The unconscious, which is the most hidden part of the mind, the preconscious, which is the part of the mind that is not present in consciousness but is able to be recalled since it is not repressed, and the conscious which represents awareness. Moreover, he developed them into three structures: The id, the ego, and the superego. The id is part of the unconscious and comprises all the inner animalistic-driven desires and impulses of whatever nature; whether sexual, aggressive or shameful, in addition to the selfish needs that a person develops from childhood.

Regarding the nature of the id, Freud believed in “the pleasure principle” which is a notion that basically consisted in avoiding pain and seeking pleasure. Therefore, the id strives for wish fulfillment, and it is able to express itself through dreams especially when repression takes place. The ego is what a person thinks of as an “I” or a “Me”, it is based on reality principles. The superego on the other hand is what a person considers as the ideal self, or ego-ideal which originates from the child’s identification with the parents. It encompasses all the norms of society, the ethics, the values, and the morals.

Following this structure, a psychoanalyst is able to make the mental profile of the patient and to analyze it. If an individual tends to follow his sexual impulses for instance and commits sexual abuse, his superego might punish his ego by inflicting him guilt. On the same level, if an individual represses too much of his desires and does not fulfill them; the ego may be subjected to anxiety. Hence, the ego is the decision-maker of the three parts of the self; it is the mediator between the intransigent superego and the infantile id (Heller 89-92).

But Freud was not the only psychoanalyst to impose his ideas and expand his theories. His students, Carl Gustav Jung and Alfred Adler, have in their turn developed their own schools. Alfred Adler’s individual psychology focuses as its name suggests on the individual, and it is particularly used in the fields of education, psychotherapy, and self-development (Adler xi). And not only does it take into consideration the individual in his entirety, but also the society and especially a person’s belonging to a certain society and group of people, and how we interact with each other. Adler calls this concept “social interest” and depicts the way each one of us contributes to the other. Another principle that Adlerian psychology is based upon is purpose. For the adepts of this psychology, each individual has to find a goal in his life for they are our *raison d’être* and what fuels us to move on, to build a life, and to live, and contrary to Freud who’s concerned with the past, Adler places his attention on the future (Adler xii-xiii).

Amongst Adler's most significant contributions are the inferiority and the superiority complex. We human beings have always felt inferior to the forces of nature, we protect ourselves from earthquakes and tsunamis, as we protect ourselves from rain, and this sensation also happens at the individual level. Adler suggests that we develop this feeling of deficiency from childhood. Indeed, children compare themselves to their parents and notice their inabilities, and that's how they start to feel useless, but Adler argues that it does not last and vanishes when a person grows up. However, it is not the case of everyone, as a matter of fact, some people still have a low self-esteem until adulthood, and in order to cope with that, they pretend to feel superior and conceal their vulnerability to the world. Hence, the superiority complex is the result of the inferiority complex (Adler xiv).

Correspondingly, Carl Jung has developed what he called "analytical psychology which is based on his own philosophy that considers that each person needs to attain what he calls "individuation", a state of harmony between the different parts of the psyche in which the individual comes into contact with himself and understands his ego (Daniels 2).

Carl Gustav Jung was highly invested in the study of the unconscious and divided it into: personal unconscious, and collective unconscious. The personal unconscious does not reside in the awareness of an individual but manifests itself in one's behavior. It gathers a person's unintentional thoughts and feelings, as well as what a person might have forgotten or repressed. The collective unconscious on the other hand is linked to ancestral heredity and shows what makes of the human being instinctual by nature. Regarding the way the unconscious expresses itself, the manifestation of dreams translates the hidden ideas and intentions of a person (Daniels 3, 4).

Jung's contribution to psychoanalysis also includes what he labeled as "complexes". And his notions on that matter differ from Freud's Oedipus complex and Adler's inferiority and

superiority complex. In fact, Daniels refers to them as being “stuck-together” feelings and thoughts that the unconscious is unable to handle and which can result in the development of neurosis (9). And as further achievements, Daniels mentions the works of Carl Gustav Jung on “archetypes”, he claims that they are part of the collective unconscious and compose the common presumptions and perceptions that people have in their unconscious regarding themes like wisdom, innocence, or nature. Jung illustrates these concepts by referring to wisdom as the image of the old man or woman, to innocence by referring to children, and to nature by mentioning fire, the oceans, and the mountains (5).

As a matter of fact, Jung’s analytical psychology and Adler’s individual psychology played important roles in the development of psychoanalysis as a theory and brought many changes in the field as how to proceed in it in order to solve the mysteries that revolve around the functioning of the human mind and the self, and even though the schools took different paths and their theories varied from one another, the core of the studies stayed the same: the unconscious. The latter impacts the conscious and each school had its approach to the subject. Hence, psychoanalysis is a multifaceted method that went from the teachings of Freud and his theories, to the psychology of Adler and Jung. And its evolution in the psychological field did not prevent it to be introduced in other areas such as literature.

Regarding the principal aim of psychoanalysis, Loewald considers that Freud had not introduced it only for the treatment of the unconscious and the self, but mostly to create a movement and to integrate his ideologies in civilization and anthropology, and to have an impact on the society’s perception of the relationship between reason and instinct. (qtd. in Berger 103) .



## 2. Psychoanalysis and Literature

Psychoanalysis and literature are two domains that seem to be totally distinct, the first one being originally therapeutic as we have seen earlier, and the second being considered as an art that developed from an oral tradition to a more transcribed version, yet, both of them are irremediably linked, and to clarify the nature of this relationship, one has to consider how both act on each other. At first, psychoanalysis was given more importance, and Freudians only used literature as a means to explain some psychoanalytic notions. However, a paradigm shift occurred and traditional literary critics gave literature its value back; psychoanalysis accordingly became a tool to analyze literary characters. This installed a power relationship between the two opposing domains, and equilibrium could hardly be achieved due to the imbalance existing between them, but Jacques Lacan managed to position them on a parallel level and associated them by means of language (Zyl 1,2). In fact, what actually binds literature and psychoanalysis is the use of language.

The relationship hence shifted from one being of dominance to one being complementary, Shoshana Felman refers to it as a relation of “interiority” which signifies that both literature and psychoanalysis are implicated in each other. Psychoanalysis “speaks of itself” using literature’s language while literature uses psychoanalytic terms and notions, thus, each one of them brings something to the other, or at least has something to offer (9). This being said, we cannot deny that literature and psychoanalysis share a common ground, one of a linguistic origin. Besides, literature being open to interpretation has allowed its analysis at the psychoanalytic level, and Freud was in fact the first to analyze literary texts under a psychoanalytic perspective. The study was not conclusive, but it certainly paved the way to further developments in the field, and his followers mostly studied the unconscious of the

author through the text and what the writings translate of the author's psyche (Bellemin-Noël and Bermingham 103).

Jean Bellemin-Noël and Bermingham introduced the "textanalysis", a term that designates the psychoanalysis of a text. It is an approach to literary works under a psychoanalytic light which consists in "listening" to what the text has to say for itself regardless of the author. This method focuses on what the text "whispers" to the ear of the reader and inflates to his unconscious (104). It is mainly about analyzing the underlying structure of a text, just like a psychoanalyst analyzes the underlying structure of his patients' psyche. They state, "One hears that which is written" (108). This sums up Bellemin-Noël's and Bermingham's idea of "listening" to a text, of course, they do not refer to biological factors, but rather to the unconscious speech behind the text, and what it does not tell you but makes you unconsciously grasp. Therefore, Freudians link the text to its author's psyche, and Bellemin-Noël and Bermingham link it to its own unconscious and its transference to the readers.

And it is not just the text that transmits its unconscious onto the reader, indeed, the characters also play a role in a way that every reader has a different feedback to a story and the characters provoke unconscious projections that depend on the life experience of the reader and give even more realism to the narrative (Beattie 616).

In the case of *Shutter Island*, some readers may identify to Teddy Daniels and the other characters, either because they have known war and its ravages, or because they have themselves been subject to mental illness, or any other personal reason that could take them back to their life experience, the characters unconsciously speak to the reader, and at the end of the novel, when discovering the truth about Teddy Daniels, one might even question his own sanity and mental health. And literature being wide in interpretation, it leaves the readers

to make assumptions, to think about the possibilities, besides, *Shutter Island* invites to develop critical thinking especially since it is open-ended.

As a matter of fact, people have always identified to literature at a personal level, and readers easily relate to characters since these latter act on their unconscious and their experience, this is mainly the reason why some people in order to cope with mental illnesses such as depression, or any other trouble that they may encounter in their life, seek shelter in a novel that “speaks” to them in every sense of the word. This pursuit of the understanding of the self is what once again makes of literature and psychoanalysis two sides of the same coin, even though in appearance they may seem to have nothing in common.

### **3. Psychoanalysis as a Theory of Literature**

Although literary criticism has become a profession in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it had emerged way before in the Antiquity. However, the modern meaning that we attribute to it has appeared in the 1950's with Russian literary critics whose scientific studies focused on the form of language without considering the psychological, socio-historical, and cultural contexts. Warren and Wellek claim that Russian formalists' separation of the form and the content of a literary work hindered the analysis of the latter, and contrary to them, they view the form and the content as complementary entities. They affirm that the emphasis should be placed on the literary work itself, and consider that the content requires elements of form and vice versa. They illustrated their position by arguing that the events constitute the content of the narrative while the adjustment of the plot makes the form. Without this typical structure, the literary work would have no artistic value (140).

And although Peter Brooks claims that what makes psychoanalysis appealing as a theory of literature is its attachment to psychological and anthropological discourse, he asserts that

poetics and formalism are essential in psychoanalytic literary criticism, and that there has to be a convergence between rhetoric and reference (337). In other words, a psychoanalytic literary critic needs to take into consideration both the form and the discourse being communicated in the literary work.

But the psychoanalytic study of literature goes even beyond, indeed, Wellek and Warren discuss “the psychology of literature” and define it as, “the psychological study of the writer, as type and as individual, or the study of the creative process, or the study of the psychological types and laws present within works of literature, or finally the effects of literature upon its readers” (75). To put it differently, psychoanalytic literary criticism may include : the study of the author’s psyche or his writing techniques and style, an in-depth analysis of the characters, or the impact of the literary text on the readers.

To illustrate the notion of the analysis of the author, it is important to mention that it goes back to the analysis of any artist, in fact, Freud had analyzed Leonardo Da Vinci’s picture of the “Madonna and Child with St. Anne”, and his analysis became the first model for psychoanalytic biography. Later on, he analyzed literary works such as Wilhelm Jensen’s *Gradiva* (Habib 579). Regarding the introduction of psychoanalysis in literary criticism, Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* is amongst the most analyzed works of literature, and literary critics followed the psychoanalytic notions mainly Freud’s Oedipus complex, or his structure of personality to interpret it. Freud had analyzed almost all Shakespeare’s works, and among them *Hamlet* that he viewed as a literary work in which the Oedipus complex played an important role and betrayed Shakespeare’s personality. To state it differently, he argues that contrary to Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* in which the incest act was expressed, the latter was in a state of repression in *Hamlet*, and from that conclusion, Freud managed to draw a portrait of Shakespeare’s personality and explained his aversion towards sexuality (Holland, “*Freud on Shakespeare*” 165).

Another example of the analysis of the author is presented in the analysis of *The Raven* by Edgar Allan Poe. The author dealt with “the horror of the soul” but asserted that it wasn’t his. Critics however assure that Poe was obsessed with the themes of madness, torture, and death, and literary historians said about him that he was subjected to neurosis and psychosis, hence, literary criticism allows to understand the author’s personality and his environment (Russel 290).

Besides, the creative writing process is important in a way that it displays the author’s method of writing and his creativity, and about that matter, Wallas claims that creativity has four major steps: preparation, which consists in data-collection and gathering information, incubation in which one contemplates and lets the mind flow while expanding the ideas, illumination which is the stage in which the connection between ideas are made, and finally, verification is the stage when the ideas are polished and redefined. In a nutshell, Wallas’s concept was acceptable but in fact, these steps were far from constituting a rule, and the current psychological studies demonstrate that the process depends mostly on the nature of the ideas and the author (qtd in. Russel 290).

Another element which needs to be taken into consideration is the analysis of characters of literature. The critic’s role is to apply the psychoanalytic dogmas on a character in the narrative, and this permits to understand the author’s psyche, and what makes of him who he is. Furthermore, the analysis of the reader- response can also be part of psychoanalytic literary criticism; it focuses on the readers’ feedbacks to the narrative and what it says about them and their vision of life. Norman Holland discusses that matter and views that the reader-response analysis depends on what the reader understands of a particular word at a personal level, and the interpretation of a literary work differs from one person to another (“*The Mind and the Book*” 17).

As a matter of fact, for a critic to conduct an analysis of any literary work, he needs to choose the subjects to analyze, either the personality of the author, the characters, the readers, or the text itself. In order to do that, he must follow the principles of the psychoanalytic literary theory which derive from psychoanalysis as an approach to psychology, and among these factors: The predominance of the unconscious over the conscious and its effects on either the characters, the author, or the reader, the prevalence of repression, the conflict between super-ego and id, and the presence of the defense mechanisms, in addition to the Oedipal complex if the plot is auspicious to it.

Psychoanalysis has been subjected to several transformations from its first introduction into literature until present day, and on that matter, Holland comments on the future of the literary theory of psychoanalysis and its present, and assumes that it should be based on what cognitive science has come up to with brain research and to try to mix between the traditional psychoanalytic precepts and the new discoveries about memory, perception, learning, and above all, language (*"The Mind and the Book"* 16).

#### **4. Psychoanalysis in *Shutter Island***

As we have seen earlier, psychoanalysis made its way into literary criticism, and it is its richness and diversity that contributed into its long-term utilization in the field of literature. Concerning the novel, what makes of *Shutter Island* an appropriate material for the literary psychoanalytic criticism is its status as a psychological novel which according to Athena Vrettos is a novel whose central elements are the feelings, the thoughts, as well as the desires and the memories of the characters, furthermore, it refers to the novels that deal with complex characters (qtd in. Logan et al. 633). *Shutter Island* focuses on the character of Teddy and his thoughts about what was happening in the island and his suspicion of the Ashecliffe doctors of conducting illicit activities and drugging him with hallucinogen cigarettes. In addition, it

puts forward his hallucinations and his dreams and what he thought about them alongside with his feelings of insecurity and constant fear. The novel includes several elements that revolve around psychoanalysis and Dennis Lehane in presenting his literary work has put the emphasis on psychological issues, mainly trauma disorders that are the result of Teddy Daniels' repression of the death of his children and the murder of his wife. As a matter of fact, *Shutter Island* comprises concepts like repression, dissociative identity disorder or more commonly called "split personality disorder", and the manifestation of dreams.

If we adopt a Freudian perspective, we deduce that it was the repressed feelings and emotions triggered by the traumatic event that led Andrew Laeddis to walk through what he has been through, and he created Edward/Teddy Daniels as a double personality using anagrams of his name, moreover, dreams came to haunt him and were present throughout the chapters. In chapter twelve, Teddy had his worst dream, the content includes Rachel Solando drowning her kids in a lake, she told Teddy that she would be his Dolores and he would be Jim, her husband, and in the same dream, he saw a wet little girl that took him for her dad, and they both headed to the graveyard where there was a tomb in which was transcribed "Edward Daniels". This vision for instance can be explained using Freud's concepts of repression, in fact, Teddy's repression of the traumatic event caused him to dream about it as if the mind was facing it again, as Freud had demonstrated in his theory of "the return of the repressed".

Teddy associated Rachel Solando to Dolores because he unconsciously knew that she was the same person, and concerning the little girl, he dreamt of his daughter who was wet due to the drowning and the reason why he saw her was his guilt towards what happened. Furthermore, the symbol of the tomb in which the name he attributed to himself was inscribed referred to his unconscious remorse and desire to die.

Accordingly, a psychoanalytic analysis of *Shutter Island* is possible as the novel combines all the necessary elements that constitute a psychological novel, and gathers several psychoanalytic notions.

## **Conclusion**

The theory of psychoanalysis developed from originally being a clinical method to a multifaceted theory, from Freud and Breuer, to Alder and Jung, this approach has revolutionized the field of psychology and even extends to other fields of study like literature. And a novel like *Shutter Island* is an appropriate literary work to be analyzed using the psychoanalytic theory of literature due to its abundance in psychological notions. In the coming chapter, a psychoanalytic study will be given to be able to understand how Andrew Laeddis/Edward Daniels was affected by his trauma and guilt towards what happened to his family.



## **Chapter III**

### **The Psychoanalytic Study of Teddy Daniels' Trauma and Guilt**

#### **Introduction**

Although it had first appeared in the field of medicine, the theory of psychoanalysis entered the realm of literature and influenced it in various ways to the point where literary critics explored its concepts and applied them on literary works. Psychoanalytic literary criticism has managed to give another perspective and has provided a better understanding of literary works through the characters and the authors' personality alongside with a deep vision of the readers' and the texts' unconscious. *Shutter Island* is a Gothic and psychological novel that explores the intricacy of Andrew Laeddis/ Teddy Daniels' thoughts and behavior that result from his traumatic experience. This chapter presents a psychoanalytic study of the protagonist and the way he was affected by his trauma and guilt, starting from the description of his personality and the defense mechanisms that he developed to a more detailed analysis of the effects of his traumatic experience and the feeling of guilt.

#### **1. The Defense Mechanisms of Andrew Laeddis/Teddy Daniels**

In the novel, the author describes the protagonist's personality and his behavior throughout the plot. Indeed, his traumatic experience pushed him to develop coping mechanisms, or most commonly called "defense mechanisms". Freud introduced this concept to explain how the ego reacts and deals with overwhelming feelings and thoughts, or particular events mainly of a traumatic origin. Many psychoanalysts struggled to really identify them but Freud's classification includes: repression, which is one of his most central subjects, denial, projection, and sublimation. Our principal concern is towards denial and repression, these symptoms are mostly displayed in *Shutter Island* in which Dennis Lehane

describes the character of Teddy through these notions and invites the readers to familiarize with them. The complexity of his personality as well as the focus on his behavior is what rings the bell to most readers and psychoanalytic critics. Andrew/ Edward's experience with the death of his wife and his children is the principal cause of his mental affliction, and the author displays the defense mechanisms that the protagonist develops throughout the chapters.

### **1.1. Denial**

Denial designates the rejection of reality and the conception of a fantasy alongside with the inability to distinguish between the two. Moreover, it is considered as a defense mechanism developed by the ego in order to cope with an unbearable event (Trunell and Holt 770). Hence, denial is a form of resistance towards reality that puts forward fantasy and the incapacity of confronting the facts. On the same stance, Prot stresses the importance of fantasy and suggests that the latter is closely tied to hallucinations, dreams, and delusion (2).

Furthermore, according to Janoff-Bullman, a person who is subjected to a traumatic experience may develop denial as a response to it, and tries to integrate a more positive vision of himself and the world. He argues that a traumatized person starts first by denying the traumatic event as a whole then it gradually leaves place to the person's construction of his self (qtd. in Baumeister et al. 1110).

The author describes Edward/Teddy Daniels throughout the chapters and gives the readers small hints and allusions to his mental instability. In the fifth chapter, Dennis Lehane introduces the readers with the violent side of Teddy Daniels through his interaction with Dr. Naehring, Dr. Cawley's colleague, who acknowledges the fact that Teddy has developed defense mechanisms, and who bases his observations on Teddy's denial of his violent side. Besides, Teddy rejects reality and prefers to invent a story of his own rather than facing the truth and accepting the facts.

In chapter twenty one, Cawley reveals to Teddy that he has been a patient in Ashecliffe for two years, and that they have staged his fantasy in order to help him through his trauma treatment, but Teddy refuses to believe him and still denies the truth even though Cawley shows him all the evidences.

In fact, his denial exercises so much power over him that he is unable to make the distinction between what is true and what is not, he is confused between reality and fantasy, and both of these combined with his constant suspicion of the Ashecliffe personnel's activities reinforce his loss of reality and add even more difficulty to the process of his treatment.

If we apply Janoff-Bullman's position towards denial to *Shutter Island*, we notice that Andrew's denial led him to create another version of himself, that of a US Marshal who seems to follow his morals and values and to remain faithful to them, as shown in chapter twenty when he is determined to save his partner no matter what and how, and to get Chuck out of that lighthouse whether dead or alive. In this chivalresque mission, the marshal's devotion, bravery and faithfulness are displayed and Teddy has an auditory hallucination of his wife telling him not to go there, but he still follows his values.

In another register, studies have shown that denial and memory are closely related, indeed, when a person denies seeing or experiencing something he tends to have more difficulty to recall the details and even forgets having denied anything (Otgaar et al. 521).

Teddy did not forget that he had a deceased wife named Dolores but his denial led him to develop amnesia and to forget about the details of her death and even forget about his children. Moreover, he did not realize that he was in a state of denial. Following this thread, denial can be linked to the process of grief as well, and Kubler-Ross points out that the latter is the first stage of grief and acts as a transition between the shock provoked by the loss of a dear one and the adjustment. It is a coping mechanism that provides protection for a short

period of time before acceptance (qtd. in Davidhizar and Giger 44) But Teddy's denial was too strong to accept the loss of his family, and this is in fact what worsened his condition and impeded his grief process.

## **1.2. Repression and Trauma**

### **1.2.1. Repression**

Teddy's trauma conducted him to manifest coping mechanisms as a means of protection, and denial is not the only factor that helped him to do so, indeed, repression plays a dominant role in Teddy's mind throughout the chapters. The author enhances the idea of repression which is reinforced with Teddy's amnesia, and to explain this concept, Freud states that, "the essence of repression lies simply in turning something away, and keeping it at a distance, from the conscious" (qtd. in Boag 74) and that trauma implies memories that are intentionally pushed away in the unconscious. He calls this phenomenon "motivated forgetting" (75). In other words, repression signifies intentionally pushing away the unwanted into the unconscious sphere of the self.

However, Anna Freud makes it clear that not all repressions are intentional and that some of them may be unconscious. Besides, we have to make a distinction between repression and suppression. Sigmund Freud used these terms interchangeably, but Anna Freud insisted on the difference between the two and assumed that the process of repression was unconscious while suppression was conscious (qtd. in Erdelyi 500). Therefore, Teddy was in a state of repression and "forgot" his traumatic experience, although it is stored in his unconscious and comes back in all the ways possible to haunt him as we see in the novel through hallucinations and dreams. And speaking of amnesia, Ebbinghaus argues that even though some memories or thoughts and feelings may be repressed, that does not mean that they completely disappear, he insists that the forgetfulness is not permanent and that it can even be retrieved if the individual

engages in an effort for that purpose (qtd. in Erdelyi 502). Hence, the traumatic experience is not completely gone, and that is why Teddy managed to remember what truly happened to his kids and his wife in chapter twenty one although with difficulty.

Repression has always been the central subject of Freudian psychoanalysis, and when implemented into literature, it adds even more complexity to the characters. Teddy's complex personality enhances the author's standpoint on that matter since his first aim was to write about the price of repression as we have mentioned in his biography, and he made the novel revolve around this psychoanalytic theme just like Freud made his works revolve around repression. Peter Madison argues that repression and defense are one single entity, in other words, repression is a defense mechanism that protects the ego from anxiety and distress and acts as a shield to unpleasant and unwanted feelings, thoughts, and memories. Moreover, the theory of the ego, the id and the superego are based on Freud's concept of repression as well as his theory about dreams and their interpretation (7). And on that matter, Dennis Lehane knew how to transpose the psychoanalytic notions of Freud onto the literariness of the plot by including dreams and the apparent struggle that affects Teddy's mind.

### **1.2.2. Trauma**

The term "trauma" takes its origins from ancient Greek, and Sadiya Abubakar believes that the notion itself goes back to the Biblical and Quranic story of Adam and Eve, indeed, she suggests that their banishment from paradise led them to develop trauma (120). In the late nineteenth century, its meaning was far from being religious or psychological, in fact, it was considered in medicine as being the result of a brutal wound due to a physical incident, and was developed into a more psychological meaning afterwards. It shifted from being a central element of medicine to a psychoanalytic subject with Sigmund Freud. The pioneer of psychoanalysis considered trauma as ultimately being the result of an event that transcends

the defense mechanisms of an individual and disturbs his psyche's equilibrium, besides, when a person suffers from a traumatic event, the memories are repressed but do not necessarily vanish, instead, they are stored in the unconscious and do not cease to reappear through dreams and in whatever way possible. Freud calls this phenomenon "the return of the repressed" (Hornstein 206), and it is this concept that constitutes the core of the relationship between repression and trauma.

Bohler discusses the issue of the return of the repressed and defines trauma as a mental disintegration that implies haunting memories which provoke a constant renewal of the events, indeed, he assures that when confronted to it, the patient relives the event once again as if it were the first time (qtd. in Denis 1274).

Cathy Caruth joins Freud in his conceptualization of trauma and adds that it has a narrative and that what a person recalls of the traumatic experience is not the event itself but the interpretation of it. Each person experiences trauma in a certain way and when putting it into words, it is not what really happened that is remembered but mostly how the patient felt that it happened, thus what is taken into consideration here is the patient's version of the traumatic event (3,7).

In the sixth chapter of the novel, Teddy experiences the Freudian concept of the return of the repressed through his dreams, and one of them in particular translates the repressed memory of his wife and his incapacity to let her go:

"He wraps his arms around her from behind, buries his face in the side of her neck. "I'm not going to leave. I love you. I love you so much". Her belly springs a leak and the liquid flows through his hands. "I'm bones in a box, Teddy."

"No."

"I am. You have to wake up." (Lehane ch. 6 )

This dream demonstrates the extent of Teddy's attachment to the thought of his wife, in fact, his unconscious brings back the memory of the traumatic event and her murder since the liquid that leaks from her belly represents her blood. His repression of what he did and his ineptitude in accepting it forces his memories to manifest through dreams. The fact that Dolores tells him that she is all bones and that he needs to wake up is a metaphor for her death and this vision is viewed as a kind of warning from his unconscious which tells him that he needs to let go of her, to stop repressing the memories, and to acknowledge his trauma instead.

On the same stance, Sverre and Philos view that the traumatized patient often has memories of the traumatic event but whenever they resurge into consciousness, they differ from reality, i.e. they are not faithful to what really happened and are falsified (24). In the case of Teddy, his trauma does not prevent him from remembering his wife and the fact that she died, but his memories are incommensurably modified and far from the actual version of the event. As shown in this passage with Chuck from the first chapter:

“There was a fire in our apartment building. I was working. Four people died. She was one of them. The smoke got her, Chuck, not the fire. So she didn't die in pain. Fear? Maybe. But not pain. That's important. (Lehane ch. 1)

As attested above, Teddy recalls the death of his wife but his memory of it is mistaken, indeed, he informs Chuck that she died due to the smoke of a fire but he does not mention anything about a murder of any kind, and even thinks that she did not suffer before passing away. It is until quite a time that he mentions Andrew Laeddis whom he thinks is responsible for the fire and decides in the thirteenth chapter to find him and avenge her. Therefore, memory and trauma are closely tied and the least we can say is that memory is not unfaultable, especially when being subjected to such an emotionally-loaded experience.

Trauma does not have one proper definition, but is regarded by many people as being a mental illness in which the ego is incapable of keeping its balance and in which it cannot cope with the brutality of the traumatic event and the memories that come with it (Sverre and Philos 19). But psychic trauma is not one of a kind; indeed, it is viewed differently according to its characteristics and has three forms that Akhtar points out as: “shock trauma”, “strain trauma,” and “cumulative trauma “(229).

Contrary to “shock trauma” which is caused by one specific event, Ernst Kris coined the term “strain trauma” that refers to that kind of psychic trauma which is the result of a multitude of traumas and the long-lasting effects of anxiety. From the same standpoint, Masud Khan introduced the “accumulative trauma “ which equally to Kris’s “strain trauma” is an accumulation of traumas and frustration that on a small scale seem to be harmless but when joined together form a severe kind of trauma (qtd. in MaCLean 72). These types of psychic traumas transcend what is known as “the protective shield” of the mind. This concept was first introduced by Sigmund Freud in 1955 and is based on the fact that our mind is constituted of two layers: an internal one which requires protection, and a barrier that acts as a “shield” that counters the external stimuli which can be perceived as a threat to the psyche’s harmony (Martin 478).

This can be applied to *Shutter Island* when considering Teddy’s shock trauma and his stimulus barrier, indeed, the death of his wife and children caused his protective shield to be shattered. Thus, the external stimuli were able to destroy this psychic protection and to access the internal layers of his mind. Teddy’s psyche was henceforth much more vulnerable and became receptive to all the external stimuli whether good or bad. The traumatized main character of *Shutter Island* plays the role of a passive receptacle of emotions, feelings, thoughts, and memories that he can neither control nor understand. His memory causes him default and his repression conducts to mentally afflicting effects.



This traditional view of mental protection was further developed by Henry Krystal who takes into consideration the psychic trauma of the adult or as he calls it: “The catastrophic trauma”. He also mentions Stern’s “catatonoid reaction” which is a situation in which a person is forced to surrender for his inability to do anything about it. Krystal argues that it is this state of mind that triggers the self-destructive aspect of the psychic trauma (135).

This same self-destructiveness is portrayed in *Shutter Island* in the protagonist’s incapacity to control or change anything and his surrender is what unleashed his “death instinct”, which contrary to the survival instinct aimed at the destruction and the deterioration of his mind. He knew that there was nothing he could do and that it was too late, so he had to surrender to that “catastrophic” event and this is what led him to develop trauma.

Heidarizadeh asserts that trauma varies from one person to another and the same event can be traumatic to some while completely bearable to others (789), and regarding Teddy’s situation, it is difficult not to be affected by what happened, but his coping mechanisms and the intensity of his trauma is proper to himself, and the same experience would have probably been lived and dealt with differently by another person.

In its introduction into literature, Christa Schönfelder argues that trauma triggers the readers’ ability to identify and empathize with the characters, as well as it allows the development of their critical thinking (29). Indeed, when reading *Shutter Island*, one can easily develop some kind of empathy and relate to Teddy’s experience, especially if the reader himself has been through such a mental disease. In addition, after reading the novel, questions and theories may rise up in his mind, and this pushes him to engage in a process of reflection towards all the themes that are presented in the literary work.

It is incontestable that trauma is a complex subject matter in psychoanalysis, and as Levine points out, this is due to its multiple associations, first with Freud’s concept of

hysteria, then its confusion with neurosis, as well as its assimilation to external or internal origins versus drive, furthermore, he assumes that trauma's importance and its effects are variable and subjective, meaning that they differ from one person to another and that each individual lives them in his own way (215,216).

More generally, trauma has always been an important subject in psychoanalysis, and even though its meaning varied from one psychoanalyst to another, Dennis Lehane was able to understand its core and to incorporate it in *Shutter Island*. Teddy's psychic trauma is accurate and remains faithful to the psychoanalytic concept and the different perspectives and connotations of it.

## **2. The Double Personality of Andrew Laeddis/ Teddy Daniels**

Dennis Lehane in his pursuit of the depiction of mental instability introduces the concept of double personality in *Shutter Island* through the protagonist by presenting his other self. This psychoanalytic notion seems in fact to be easily understandable at first hand, yet many psychoanalysts diverge on the meaning that it holds. Rachel Blass explores these different perspectives and views the meaning of split personality as being diverse, besides, she affirms that Freud associates the split of personality with trauma. To put it differently, when an individual is confronted to a traumatic situation, he develops a "double consciousness", a part of the ego that is dissociated and dislocated and hid in the unconscious with the possibility to reach it and bring it back to consciousness. In fact, he makes the parallel between dissociation and repression and explains that dissociation comes through repression, hence, the split of consciousness when related to dissociation is not regarded as a defense mechanism but rather as a state of mind and what is in fact dissociated is a part of the ego that is still attainable (5).

Furthermore, splitting of personality can also be defined as "disavowal", a state of denial of reality that pushes the individual to reject the facts even though they cannot be ignored, the

case here is a bit different from that of dissociation since the individual does not repress his traumatic experience but rather chooses not to accept a certain truth, the focus here is not on trauma but on reality (7). In addition to dissociation and disavowal, Blass exposes Klein's regard on the matter which is the splitting of the mind itself, the latter suggests that when a split of personality takes place, it is not just a traumatic experience that is repressed or a certain reality that is denied but it is the very core of the ego that is split, and it is pushed by what she calls "destructive impulses", a death instinct that leads the mind to its own destruction (11, 13). Consequently, Blass demonstrates not only how the splitting of personality resonates differently according to the psychoanalysts, but also that although they are distinct, each definition leads to another and the overall forms a continuous pattern, starting from Freud's concept of dissociation to Klein's splitting of the mind.

In our analysis of Teddy we can deduce one thing: His split of personality did not have one, but two stages. Indeed, the first stage refers to Freud's concept of dissociation in Teddy's confrontation to the traumatic experience and his unconscious repression of it. To explain more, a part of his ego is thrown into the unconscious during his repression but it was able to be retrieved when he remembered who he was and what he did. The second stage on the other hand represents Freud's notion of disavowal that is portrayed through the protagonist's denial of the truth as this passage from chapter twenty-one demonstrates:

... "Here. You've been here for two years. A patient of this institution."

Teddy could hear the tide coming in now, angry, hurling itself against the base of the bluff. He clasped his hands together to quiet the tremors and tried to ignore the pulsing behind his eye, growing hotter and more insistent.

"I'm a U.S. marshal," Teddy said.

“Were a U.S. marshal,” Cawley said.

“Am,” Teddy said. “I am a federal marshal with the United States government. I left Boston on Monday morning, September the twenty-second, 1954.” (Lehane ch. 21)

As shown above, Teddy refuses to abandon the idea that he is still a U.S marshal even when Dr. Cawley shows him his file, and this translates the denial of his actual self as a patient from the Ashecliffe Hospital. Chapter twenty three also suggests the same idea when Dr. Sheehan, his psychiatrist, tells him that they staged his fantasy. Therefore, Teddy’s double personality is related to his disavowal.

To even explore the split-personality syndrome that characterizes Teddy, we have seen earlier that it is the direct result of his dissociation, fantasy, and denial, but Andrew Nyongesa claims that split personality also involves the co-existence of multiple identities that differ from one another and that generate several symptoms, among them: The prevalence of hallucinations, the person’s subjection to insomnia, and paranoia (166).

If we analyze the protagonist of *Shutter Island*, we notice that he has developed another persona of himself. In fact, he presents symptoms of hallucinations mainly about his wife. Teddy has a visual hallucination in chapter fourteen in which “Teddy could see Rachel wild-haired and shrieking, as she ran through the room with a cleaver” (Lehane). Furthermore, he has a sleep disorder and is affected by insomnia and frequent headaches as shown in chapter fourteen where he feels dizzy and tired from the nightmares and the lack of sleep. Besides, he is regarded as paranoid and delusional for suspecting the Ashecliffe Hospital personnel of drugging him in order to see how his brain reacts in chapter nine.

Mary Ellen Snodgrass introduces the term “doppelgänger”, a German word that means “double-goer” or “double-walker” which is an alter-ego that the character creates for himself.

Teddy suffers from split-personality due to his incapacity to cope with what happened to him and what he had to do, hence he created a double personality or as suggested by Snodgrass, a doppelgänger who is more of an honorable man or an opposing figure to the actual self (83).

Regarding literature, doppelgängers were quite common in German fantasy, notably with E.T.A. Hoffman's *Die Elixir*, a Gothic horror thriller novel as well as the Gothic short story *Die Doppelgänger*. In America, authors such as Henry James revolutionized the doppelgänger motif by creating an alter-ego to his character Spencer Brydon in *The Jolly Corner*, the latter manifests as a ghost that Brydon tracks down before feeling that he was the one tracked down (84).

If we compare this story to *Shutter Island*, we find that there are similarities in the tracking process; indeed, Teddy was chasing the person whom he thought had murdered his wife, and who turned out to be himself. Therefore, there seems to be a deep connection between a person and his doppelgänger. When Brydon confronts his alter-ego, he realizes his scary aspect as it is the case with Teddy who regards Andrew Laeddis as a monster, and who when facing the truth finds himself unable to cope with it. Conclusively, we cannot help but notice that the relationship between Andrew Laeddis and his alter-ego is of an opposing nature, the latter wants to kill him for the murder of his wife, and in a sense, we understand how unconsciously by killing his alter-ego he would kill this part of himself that he rejects and that he wants to push away by all means. By murdering his doppelgänger, he would no longer feel that pain and would get rid of that evil side of him that afflicts his mind. He is in fact willing to purge himself from all the atrocities that happened and from his failure at being a good husband and father.

As a matter of fact, the protagonist created a double, and his denial led him to believe that he was still a US Marshal and an ex-veteran of the Second World War who liberated a

concentration camp in Dachau. It is indeed easier to incarnate a person who's regarded as a hero rather than a criminal, and this is the reason why the main character held to the belief that he was still that same person who's acting out of justice and moral principles.

This raises a question about the real meaning of identity and what shapes the personality of an individual. Kernberg argues that the personality comprises both conscious and unconscious behaviors, thoughts, feelings, as well as habits, and personal and social experiences and it is greatly influenced by internal and environmental factors that create either balance in the person's psyche or disturbance. As a matter of fact, personality is all about a relational exchange between the self and others, and these "object relations" encompass representations of ourselves and how we perceive our relationship with others (145,147).

Going back to the protagonist, it is essential to question his perception of himself to really understand his identity, and the least we can say is that his double personality paves the way to the concept of "ideal ego", a concept first introduced by Freud who designates it as a part of the superego that is responsible for our standards of good behaviors. To put it differently, it is the ideal image that we construct of ourselves or an ideal self that we strive to be. This internalized idealization provides a feeling of safety and facilitates relationships with others (Kernberg 153). The protagonist's incapacity to accept his actual self is due to his idealized view of himself as being "a good man", and this narcissistic view is the reason why he cannot let go of his fantasy (Clarke 207). His attachment to his ideal ego is what impedes him to embrace his reality and to engage in the stage of acceptance.

Acting on the object relations theory, Clarke assumes that Teddy's internalized libidinalized bad object is Dolores. She is indeed viewed as a bad object, for she is associated to the traumatic experience and the drowning of their kids, but his emotional attachment makes her a libidinal object. His alter-ego on the other hand is perceived as an internalized anti-libidinal

bad object, an opposing force that he desperately fights against and that he firmly repudiates (206).

Convincingly, Teddy's perception of himself and of his reality has hugely impacted his psyche and has pushed him to develop a double persona whom he relentlessly chases. *Shutter Island* does not only depict the mental struggle of the protagonist with his trauma but it also displays his frontal combat that opposes two parts of himself.

### **3. Teddy Daniels' Trauma and Guilt in *Shutter Island***

The notion of trauma in the novel is closely related to the psychoanalytic concept of guilt, and in order to analyze this relationship, we need to understand the meaning of the term first. Literally, guilt refers to a feeling of self-reproach for a misdeed that was committed by a person towards another, and it is generally followed by an attempt at fixing things up. However, when it implies death, the confession and the apology are not possible, and this is what amplifies that feeling and that causes it to become pathological (Lee, Scragg, and Turner 456). To put it simply, if an individual is not able to ask for forgiveness because the person towards whom he inflicted pain had died, the feeling of guilt remains and is even intensified to the extent where it becomes associated to a mental disease.

The death of his children and of Dolores worsened Teddy's guilt and this is what conducted to its relatedness with his trauma, as a matter of fact, his treatment process became hindered because of this threatening combination. Hence, trauma and guilt are irremediably related, but to be able to really grasp the nature of this relationship, we need to comprehend the functioning of the mind and how it deals with guilt. One might think that it is a simple concept, and it is so common in the popular culture that people tend to view it as obvious, but the truth says otherwise, indeed, the structures of the mind introduced by Freud play a significant role in the process of this feeling and its relatedness to trauma.

As suggested by Westerink , when the ego is confronted to a menace that comes from the id and that might threaten its stability, it protects itself by adopting a form of withdrawal. And for Freud, an individual's submission to his desires and his id is what creates the sense of guilt. The latter permits to understand the functioning of the id and the superego, in fact, the feeling of guilt is a constant interchange between the id and the superego, it resides in the unconscious id and can either be acknowledged by the ego or repressed, and the superego in this case plays the role of the moralizer that inflicts the ego with pain (201,203).

Teddy's condition demonstrates this constant exchange between the id and the superego, indeed, when faced with the traumatic event, his ego repressed the feeling of guilt into the unconscious, and his superego alongside with his repression acted upon his ego.

James Allen Knight has dealt with conscience and guilt and considers the latter to be real, neurotic, or existential. Real guilt is the feeling one gets after making a mistake and accepts it, neurotic guilt on the other hand lies in the unconscious and is harder to deal with, and as for existential guilt, it is a deep feeling of dissatisfaction towards our life and relationships and can be turned into neurotic guilt if a person represses it. (qtd. in Piro 111 ). Teddy clearly suffers from a neurotic guilt since he is unable to accept his misdeed and his ego does not acknowledge it, the latter remains in the unconscious part of his mind and is repressed, and as we have seen with Freud's notion of the return of the repressed, all what is kept inside and hidden expresses itself through dreams as it is the case in this passage from the twelfth chapter that involves a little girl:

"I'm dead too."

"I know. I'm sorry about that."

"You didn't stop her." (Lehane ch. 12)



As a matter of fact, his guilt is expressed through his traumatic dreams, and if we analyze this passage, we understand that the girl that Teddy dreams about is actually his daughter, and the latter is blaming him for failing in playing the role of the father and for not saving her from her mother.

To further explain the functioning of the sense of guilt, Gunar Karlsson and Lennart Sjöberg assert that there is: “a moment of negligence” and a “moment of guilt”. The moment of negligence appears just before the action that leads a person to feel guilty, and the moment of guilt is characterized by the person not being able to understand why he or she had done such an act. The moment of negligence pushes the person to feel as if it is the right thing to do while the moment of guilt is when one realizes the wrongness of that deed. But these two moments are not completely separated and are in fact linked by a transitional phase: “The act of reconstruction” (339). Teddy found himself in a harsh condition where he had to shoot his wife. Indeed, she was the one who asked him to free her from her insanity as mentioned in the twenty-fourth chapter.

If we consider Karlsson’s and Sjöberg’s concept of the feeling of guilt, we can assume that Teddy’s “moment of negligence” happens when he chooses to shoot her since in that particular moment, he was thinking that he was doing the right thing while “the moment of guilt” occurs when he realizes that she is gone and that his whole family passed away because of his lack of attention towards his wife’s health and his children.

The notion of guilt has different types that differ from one another, and in order to understand what type of guilt Teddy suffers from, we need to introduce them. Freud believed that guilt could be sexual or aggressive; he related his theory of the Oedipus complex to the feeling of remorse and called it the “oedipal guilt”. It is based on the belief that in an

individual follows his impulses and tries to fulfill his inner wishes, he will ultimately feel guilty and according to him, this is what causes neurosis (Erreich 134).

In addition, Modell introduced the “separation guilt” which contrarily to the oedipal guilt does not take into account the sexual or aggressive impulses but is raised by the people’s belief of harming their parents or loved ones for their separation from them, or their differences, one feels guilty because he thinks that he does not have the right to an independent life and that achieving the latter would cause them harm (qtd. in Erreich 138).

In *Shutter Island*, the type of guilt that affects Teddy is the “survivor guilt”, indeed, George Noyce informs him in the fifteenth chapter that Dr. Cawley is specialized in survivor guilt. This notion was brought up by Sigmund Freud during his self-analysis after the death of his father, and in his letter to Fliess he defines it as “the self-reproach that appears regularly among the survivors” (qtd. in Hartman 7).

This concept mainly spread after the Second World War when the survivors of the Holocaust lost members of their families in the concentration camps or due to several other reasons such as murder or suicide. Hartman argues that this form of guilt is different from a regular self-reproach; in fact, it is most of the times linked to a traumatic event as it was the case during the Nazi occupation and is unique to every person (7).

Niederland states that the real issue is the survival itself since the survivor engages in a process of identification with the deceased ones and he blames himself for their death, besides, he considers his survival as some kind of betrayal towards them (qtd. in Hartman 7). And what is important to mention is that the survivor’s decisions taken during the traumatic event contribute in his feeling of guilt (8).

In addition, Friedman argues that survival guilt stems from the failure of a person to help a loved one and defines it as guilt of “omission”, the latter appears in literary works such as *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams (531, 532).

In *Shutter Island*, Teddy feels responsible for the loss of his family especially because he feels that he could have done something about the illness of his wife who was manic depressive, and he also thinks that he could have been there for his children and would have protected them. Besides hearing voices in his head, Teddy’s conversation with Dr. Cawley in this passage from the twenty-fourth chapter depicts his guilt:

“He cleared his throat, spit on the floor. “Because I can’t take knowing that I let my wife kill my babies. I ignored all the signs. I tried to wish it away. I killed them because I didn’t get her some help.”

“And?”

“And knowing that is too much. I can’t live with it.” (Lehane ch. 24)

This extract shows the mental struggle that Teddy is going through and the unbearable guilt that consumes him. The death of his family accentuated his remorse and turned it into a neurotic guilt that is irremediably related to his trauma.

Teddy’s survivor guilt alongside with his trauma and his repression of the event as well as his denial of reality and his double personality have led to a regression of his psyche and contributed in the impediment of his treatment. Conclusively, we notice how everything is linked and revolve around his mental illness, and although trauma and guilt seem to be relatively distinct at first hand, we cannot help but notice that they are in fact intimately related, and when combined, they share one common purpose: the destruction of the self.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has covered the psychoanalytic analysis of Andrew Laeddis's alias Edward/Teddy Daniels's trauma and the coping mechanisms that include the denial of reality, the repression of the traumatic experience, and a glance on his delusional behavior. Besides, it has shown the destructive effects of this mental disease on the main character's psyche and his attempt to cope with it through the development of a double personality and fantasy. In addition, it has dealt with the notion of guilt by exploring its different psychoanalytic connotations and types, the nature of its relationship with trauma, and has also demonstrated the impact of that feeling on the protagonist's mind and the way he has experienced it through his dreams.

## General Conclusion

In *Shutter Island*, Dennis Lehane adopts a third-person point of view to narrate the story of Andrew Laeddis alias Edward Daniels/Teddy and explores the issue of mental illness, specifically psychological trauma. Throughout the plot, the author displays the mental disintegration of the protagonist as well as the causes and the effects of this psychic decadence.

This research is divided into a general introduction followed by three chapters and a general conclusion. It has provided an insight into *Shutter Island* to progressively conduct to the analysis of the protagonist. This work is logically organized and has started from an overall introduction of the historical context to a deeper examination of the main character.

This dissertation has shown how trauma and guilt are related and how their impact on the protagonist's psyche is important through his hallucinations and the interpretation of his dreams. The different effects of his mental illness and the coping mechanisms that he has developed have been demonstrated and thoroughly studied.

Teddy developed denial of his reality as a defense mechanism and created a fantasy and an alter-ego, but he found himself unable to overcome this stage and this is what impacted and hampered his grief process. Besides, he was unaware of his own denial and his condition led to amnesia. In addition to denial, he adopted repression to cope with the shock trauma that he had been subjected to and from which he could not escape, he surrendered to the calamity of the situation, for he could not change nor control anything. Following that, the return of the repressed acted upon the protagonist's unconscious and memories of the traumatic episode kept coming back and recurring in his dreams and hallucinations.

Andrew Laeddis constructed another personality that resulted from his idealized version of himself. Edward Daniels is an anagram of his own name and is a respected marshal and the

heroic figure of an ex-veteran of the Second World War. His attachment to this ideal ego inhibited his acceptance of reality and his real self, and the protagonists' antagonistic relationship with his second persona and his will to get rid of him was driven by his unconscious desire to purge himself and clear his conscience.

In addition to the coping mechanisms and the psychological effects of trauma upon the protagonist, the psychoanalytic study has allowed to pinpoint the connectedness of guilt and the role it played in his mental affliction. During the analysis, it has been concluded that although the feeling of guilt is rather normal in usual times, in the case of Teddy, it became neurotic due to its repression that intensified his trauma and worsened his condition.

And as repression tends to return, his unconscious remorse manifested through dreams, besides, the kind of guilt he suffered from was survivor guilt since he felt culpable for the death of his family and considered himself as a father who had not been able to save his children and a husband who had not paid enough attention to his manic depressive wife.

Overall, we have noticed the convergence of these elements and their interaction as well as their impact on one another, and it is this combination that led to the regression of his mind. As a psychological novel, it was imperative to study *Shutter Island* under a psychoanalytic perspective and by adopting this literary theory for the analysis, we have been able not only to show the effects of trauma but also to examine each characteristic of this disease on the protagonist mainly the sense of guilt and their entanglement. And through his Gothic-inspired writing style and his intriguing plot, Dennis Lehane knew how to effectively transpose psychological notions into his literary work.

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