

Imprisonment in Memory in Edgar Allan Poe's Songs of Grief

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Abstract

This research paper argues that the speakers in Poe's poems on death are so attached to their dead loved ones that they cannot move on with their lives. They cannot break out of the linearity of time, displaying a state of utter entrapment, where both the present and the future are almost doomed and foreclosed . Denying the death of their loved ones, the speaking subjects have a tendency to keep them alive through memory or by giving them different states of existence. Drawing on the key concepts in Freud' theory about death as represented in his essay " Our Attitude towards Death," (1915) this study shows that the speakers in Poe's poems on death deny the fact of death as a separation ; consequently , they create an illusory world to go beyond their fear of abandonment hoping for a reunion with the dead loved ones. Fear of annihilation leads the mourners in Poe's poems on death to create an afterlife , which is considered to be unreal according to Freud's secular view of death , in order to escape the sense of being abandoned by their dead loved ones. The concepts of denial , fear of abandonment , and defence mechanisms in Freud's theory are particularly relevant to the present study. The state of entrapment within the past and the tendency to create an illusory world where fears of abandonment and separation are surpassed are best represented in "The Sleeper" (1831), "Bridal Ballad" (1841), "Lenore" (1843), "To One in Paradise" (1845), and "Annabel Lee"(1849). The poems are examined in light of Freud's secular theory of death . The circumstances of Poe's life which form the background of these poems are also considered. Textual analysis includes the thematic as well as the formal features of the poems under study .

Key Words:

Abandonment , Edgar Allan Poe, Entrapment , Death , Denial , Memory .

With the 17th century scientific revolution and the rise of secularism in the late 18th century , the Western world has witnessed a decline of religion , a spread of unbelief and a loss of faith. Many traditional beliefs in the immortality of human souls , the existence of a cosmic father and of another ethereal and higher world have been

doubted. The crisis of religious belief in the West , Smart states , was " a consequence of increasing industrialisation and of the growing of a technological society" (143). This religious crisis has turned the Western man away from religion to reason and observation. It also led to the post 17th century fear of death as death now means nothingness and annihilation not a gateway into the afterlife. In " Changing Attitudes towards Death in the Modern Western World ," Toynbee states that " confronted by death without belief , modern man has deliberately been clipping his spiritual wings" (131). In other words , in an era of secularization many thinkers adopted a secular view about death and religion which asserted the eclipse of God and the afterlife.

It is no wonder then that the father of psychoanalysis , Sigmund Freud , shows an utterly secular not religious thinking towards death . As an atheist secular psychologist, Freud considers the afterlife as a myth and an illusion devised by the mourners to avoid the void of death and to cope with the idea of abandonment with a hope for being reunited with the dead loved ones. According to Freud , the afterlife is then an illusory world created by the mourners to deny the fact of death as a separation and to overcome a fear of abandonment . Freud envisions a future of secularism and modernity where humans disregard religion. In " Future of an Illusion," (1927)Freud declares that religion is a defence mechanism and a grand illusion created by humans to comfort them in a world of suffering , helplessness and death . Due to humans' instinctual desires to deny death as annihilation and separation , they devise an imaginative not real world to free them from all feelings of pain and sadness resulted from the death of loved ones. With regard to this , Freud writes that "religion is an illusion and it derives its strength from its readiness to fit in with our instinctual wishful impulses" (174-175). Drawing on Freudian's concept of the core issues with specific regard to fear of abandonment , and his defence mechanisms , particularly that of denial , as represented in his essay " Our Attitude towards death," the paper argues that the speakers in Poe's poems on death create an illusory world out of their fear of abandonment and state of denying the death of loved ones. According to Freud's secular view about death , Poe's mourners reject death as a separation and an abandonment ; consequently, they invent the idea of the afterlife to cope with the sense of being abandoned hoping for a reunion with the dead loved ones in another life.

Freud's "Thoughts for the Time of War and Death" is a set of twin essays written in 1915, six months after the outbreak of World War I. The two essays show the impact of World War I on European society and the state of estrangement, alienation and disintegration individuals

experienced. They show the regression from a civilized into a primitive, bloody and savage society. The first essay "The Disillusionment of the War" emphasizes the release of primitive instincts that European civilization always suppressed and the collapse of critical Western ideals among which is a system of ethics that goes against the brutality and barbarity done by individuals in war. The second essay "Our Attitude towards Death", the focus of the study, shows how humans perceive the event of death. It displays the mourners' different attitudes towards death particularly the death of loved ones. The essay focuses on certain key tools upon which the poems of Poe are analyzed such as denial, ambivalence, fear of abandonment, fear of intimacy, plurality of lives, searching for another loved ones and quest for the ideal world.

In "Our Attitude towards Death," Freud states that humans implicitly believe in their own immortality. Unconsciously, they are convinced of the impossibility of their own death. They think that nothing will happen either to them or their loved ones. Despite the fact that death is natural and unavoidable, humans keep denying death. Freud asserts human's denial of death: "No one believes in his own death, or to put the same thing in another way, in the unconscious every one of us is convinced of his own immortality" (305). Regarding the death of loved ones, humans "carefully avoid speaking of such a possibility in the hearing of the person concerned" (305). They cannot imagine or accept either their own death or the death of loved ones based on a belief in the other world and the immortality of souls. That's why humans seek in the world of fiction or literature, Freud states, "that plurality of lives." Through art humans can die but survive and born again unlike the ugliness of life where there is no second chance for rebirth. Due to the unwillingness to perceive death as part of life, the mourners completely collapse and are highly affected. Now the mourners can taste their own death when those they love die. The mourners' happiness "lie in the grave" with the deceased loved one. They refuse to "be consoled" or to "fill the loved one's place" (306). This perception of death contradicts with the implicit belief in immortality. Freud writes:

Then, in his pain, he [the mourner] had to learn that one can indeed die oneself, an admission against which his whole being revolted... Man could no longer keep death at a distance, for he had tasted it in his grief for the dead; but still he did not consent entirely to acknowledge it. (309- 310)

Consequently, humans' fear of being abandoned by someone they love resulted in fear of taking risks and fear of intimacy. Because of the intensified grief and the loss of interest in life experienced by the mourners, humans always suffer from fears of abandonment, intimacy and taking risks. Freud states:

Our ties of affection , the unbearable intensity of our grief , make us disinclined to court danger for ourselves and for those who belong to us. We dare not contemplate a great many undertakings which are dangerous but quite indispensable such as attempts at mechanical flight , expeditions to far countries , experiments with explosive substances. We are paralysed by the thought of who is to replace the son with his mother , the husband with his wife , the father with his children , if there should come disaster. (306)

Freud states that the mourner s' attitude towards death is extremely contradictory . For the mourner , death is both annihilation and a gateway into another realm of eternity . In the case of enemies and strangers , death is recognized as the termination of life . Regarding someone he hated , the mourner " had no objection to ; it meant the annihilation of a creature hated" (308). On the other hand , death is seen as a revival and a rebirth in the case of loved ones. As a result of denying the fact of death out of a fear of abandonment, the mourner believes in " the disjunction of the individuality into a body and a soul " and assumes " other modes of existence " (310). To transcend his fear of abandonment , the mourner creates another world where the deceased loved ones are still alive enjoying freedom and eternity. The inability to forget the dead and to be free from his memory , Freud asserts , is " the basis for assuming other modes of existence " giving the mourner "the conception of life continued after apparent death" (310). A continuous remembrance shapes the mourner's indulgence in ideas related to "former existences , transmigration of the soul and reincarnation , all with the purpose of depriving death of its meaning as the termination of life " (311). This strong attachment to the dead loved ones urges individuals to think of other means for keeping the dead alive. The mourner 's mind generates a desired afterlife that was later enhanced by religions which " devised the view of this after-life as the more desirable, the truly valid one, and degraded the life which is ended by death to a mere preparation" (311).

Freud adds that in cases of loved ones the mourner shows an emotional ambivalence towards their death. The loved ones , for the mourner , are enemies and loved ones at the same time . The love-hate relationship results from the loss of someone we love. Those loved ones , Freud declares , are sometimes turned into "enemies and strangers who " had aroused in him [the mourner] a measure of hostile feeling " (309). This feeling of hatred , Freud emphasizes , is accompanied by " a sense of guilt " due to the feeling of gratification and satisfaction experienced by the mourner towards the dead loved ones. Accordingly , during the process of grief , the mourner usually invents ghosts , and it is his sense of

satisfaction " mingled with sorrow that turned these new-born spirits into evil , dreaded demons" (310). In his essay " Mourning and Melancholia," Freud gives an explanation for this conflict of ambivalence towards the dead loved one. Freud declares that the loss of a love - object constitutes a love-hate relationship as instead of "the necessity of openly expressing their [the mourners] hostility against the loved ones" for abandoning them , the hate is expanded upon the mourner himself in the form of "self-reproaches" and "self-torments" (161-162). To express their hatred towards the dead loved ones , Freud states , the mourners " succeed in the end by taking revenge , by the circuitous path of self-punishment" (162). The mourner indirectly expresses his anger and hatred due to an act of abandonment through torturing the ego itself instead of the lost love object. Such anger and hatred can be ,directly or indirectly, expressed either upon the lost love object or the mourners' ego. At such case , ambivalence can then help the mourner transcend the crisis of death by creating a sense of hatred towards the dead one. The mourners can overcome the crisis of death and the feelings of pain resulting from the separation by showing hatred towards the dead beloved ones in order to move on with their lives and to forget the deceased loved one. To sum up , the mourners , according to Freud's secular view about death, display a tendency to revive the dead loved ones out of a complete denial of death and an utter attachment to their memory . They surpass their fear of abandonment by giving the dead different states of existence after death. To escape from the idea of death and to still be reunited with the dead loved ones , the mourners keep living in an imaginative not real world where feelings of abandonment are surpassed .

In the light of Freud's secular view about death , the paper shows that the American poet Edgar Allan Poe attempts to transcend death by a belief in rebirth. Poe's songs of grief show a religious attitude towards death that implies a belief in an afterlife , immortality of souls and existence of Heaven and Hell. Consequently , the paper argues that the mourners in Poe's poems believe in a world that is not real to overcome a fear of abandonment that results in a state of rejection and denial of death. Troubled by the loss of his dead beloved ones , Poe views death as an outlet through which he can experience another happier and perfect realm and be reunited with his beloved ones. Poe always had a death wish as death was more than physical annihilation . It is a domain beyond the spatial and temporal that can give him rest and peace. Bowra states :

From his present misery Poe sought for a deliverance which was no less than a complete destruction of himself and his circumstances , to be followed by a new existence in another world. He assumed that this

would come and that life had no meaning except in the anticipation of it (148).

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849) is one of the most important writers to express the 'secrets' of the soul. He is the discoverer of the modern disintegration of the human personality or psyche. As one of the pioneers of Dark Romanticism movement, Poe's literary works are often haunted by dark themes such as death, madness, alienation, decay, self-destruction, psychological torture, disintegration of personality, and feelings of regret and guilt. His literary worlds are often gloomy and full of haunted places, ghosts, mysterious events, dead people, and tortured souls. As "an acknowledged master of gothic mode" and "the interior monologue of a disturbed and troubled mind", Poe managed to have a significant influence on American and world literature (Thompson xv). This line of writing gained a high position in France, Spain, Russia and Japan. Many of his poems were translated into these languages. More importantly, he was greatly admired by French symbolist poets such as Charles Baudelaire, Paul Valery, and Arthur Rimbaud.

On the personal level, Poe's life "was marked by countless adversities, including family dilemmas, poverty, disease (tuberculosis), traumatic deaths in the family, alcohol, and drug abuse, and mood and behavioural disorders" (Teive et al. 466). His personal life was very difficult and filled with torturing memories as he lost many dear people such as his biological mother Elizabeth Arnold (1811), his first love Jane Standard (1824), his foster mother Francis Allan (1829), and his dear wife Virginia Clemm (1847). This is probably why death is a recurrent theme in his prose and verse specifically the death of a beautiful woman. In his essay "The Philosophy of Composition", Poe writes: "the death, then, of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world - and equally is it beyond doubt that the lips best suited for such topic are those of a bereaved lover" (19). Most of Poe's poetry then shows the life of sorrow, melancholy, gloominess and pain the alienated and doomed poet passed through.

Poe's poetry shows a complete attachment to the memories of dead loved ones as the speakers in the poems under study are not able to forget the deceased loved ones. Poe's poems, particularly that on death, display a state of utter entrapment as the mourners are unable to transcend the death of their loved ones, denying the fact of death. In "Repetition and Remembrance in Poe's poetry," Scraha states that Poe is primarily interested in the experience of the "lover lamenting his deceased mistress" (34). The speakers in Poe's poetry are torn internally; therefore the landscapes are often gloomy, reflecting the insignificance of the world. In

his poems, Poe's speakers struggle with loss as they have a strong desire to be reunited with their beloved ones. Forgetting the deceased mistress "is close to killing" as the lover's duty obliges him to remember her (Halliburton 44). Scraha argues that "this tension between withdrawal and attachment structures" shapes many of Poe's poems as the lover wants to overcome the loss, but he always returns to these painful memories of departed people (36). Memory becomes an obstacle that blocks the way towards the future as the speaker always attempts to get out of this prison of memories, but he cannot do so.

When facing a certain loss, people respond differently as some are resilient enough to be able to move on while others live only on the memory of their departed beloved ones. Some start to accept the loss searching for new alternatives for giving their life a meaning while other people become imprisoned inside the circle of the past, having no present and no future. In Freud's essay "Mourning and Melancholia," (1917) Freud states that in a normal situation, the mourner is able to transcend the loss by "adopting any new object of love, which would mean a replacing of the one mourned" (153). Poe's speakers show a devastating devotion towards the deceased loved ones. Driven by the never-ending remembrance of the dead loved ones and the fear of abandonment, Poe's mourners give a new life to the dead either by a process of reincarnation or keeping them alive in their memory. The state of entrapment within the past and the process of rebirth are best exemplified by Poe's poems "The Sleeper" (1831), "Bridal Ballad" (1841), "Lenore" (1843), "To One in Paradise" (1845), and "Annabel Lee" (1849). Through a textual analysis of these poems, the paper displays that all the mourners cannot accept the death of their loved ones or overcome the loss. Instead of forming new relations and searching for a new love, both the present and the future are almost foreclosed. Out of a fear of abandonment, a complete attachment to the memory of dead loved ones and a rejection of death, the speakers devise an illusory world where a reunion with the dead is possible.

This imprisonment in the memory of departed loved ones is also manifested in Poe's attitude towards the death of his wife Virginia Clemm. Poe's wife, Virginia Clemm, was not only a wife but also as a motherly figure whose demise robbed him of the desire to live and urged him to escape through absolute unconsciousness induced by alcoholism. After marriage, Poe gave her all means of comfort even in the times of poverty. However only six years after the marriage, Poe suffered a lot during Virginia's periods of illness and even more after her death. In a letter to George Eveleth (January 4, 1846), Poe shows his agony and troubled state

of mind in the times of Virginia's illness and his constant desire for drinking alcohol:

Each time I felt all the agonies of her death- and at each accession of the disorder I loved her more dearly & clung to her life with more desperate pertinacity. But I am constitutionally sensitive – nervous in a very unusual degree. During these fits of absolute unconsciousness I drank, God only knows how often or how much. (Ingram 174)

The loss of a love object, particularly the mother- wife Virginia, destroyed Poe psychologically. After Virginia's death on 30 January, 1847, Poe was left "heartsick, physically debilitated, and more than ever a prey to despondency and drink" (Braunelli 38). During her funeral, he could not look upon her face when she was lying in her casket. In a letter to Chevalier Reynolds on 29 October, 1899, Dr. R. D. Unger, who met Poe in Baltimore in 1846, writes: "the loss of his wife was a sad blow. He did not seem to care, after she was gone, whether he lived an hour, a day, a week, or a year" (qtd. in Harrison 1051). Poe was unable to get over Virginia's death as he lost all the interest in life. In "Character of Edgar A. Poe," Poe's friend Charles Chauncey Burr states: "Many times, after the death of his beloved wife, was he found at the dead hour of a winter night, sitting beside her tomb almost frozen in the snow" (33). To be liberated from all these painful memories and experiences, Poe began to drink alcohol to forget all his troubles. Instead of transcending Virginia's death Poe spent his life in an endless circle of agony and suffering using alcohol as a sort of relief. Poe's addiction to alcohol was an attempt to escape from a reality full of torturing memories; he says: "I have absolutely no pleasure in the stimulants in which I sometimes so madly indulge. It has not been in the pursuit of pleasure ... It has been in the desperate attempt to escape from torturing memories" (Ingram 174-175).

To overcome the crisis of death and the fear of abandonment, Poe manages to give the deceased loved ones different modes of existence either by poetry itself or keeping them alive in memory. He also creates a heavenly realm where the dead can enjoy eternity and happiness next to God. In order to recreate and restore the dead, Poe writes and creates art so that he can give his dead beloved ones an eternal life in his work. In "A Psychoanalytic Approach to Aesthetics," Dr. Hannah Segal states that the process of creation is attached to a desire to recreate something lost and destroyed:

... all creation is really a recreation of a once loved and once whole, but now lost and ruined object, a ruined internal world and self. It is when the

world within us is destroyed , when it is dead and loveless , when our loved ones are in fragments , and we ourselves in helpless despair- it is then that we must recreate our world anew , reassemble the pieces , infuse life into dead fragments, recreate life (190).

In Poe's songs of grief , the poet manages to transcend death and to revive the dead when mourning becomes associated with creation. The experience of mourning shapes the poet's attempt of recreating another world where the dead beloved ones continue living. He manages to relieve his pain through his art that becomes an entry into a new world of eternity and freedom where the dead can be revived and born again .

First published in January 1837 under the title "Ballad" and then republished in July 31, 1841 as the "Bridal Ballad", Poe's "Bridal Ballad" is about a young bride who married a wealthy man after the death of her lover D' Elormie in a battle. This young woman cannot transcend the past as the memory of her lover is still haunting her. She experiences a state of death in life as her life now is controlled by the past which keeps reminding her of her dead lover. The young lady suffers from a deep conflict between her new marriage and her past love. Such conflict is resolved by the triumph of the past over the present. The poem can be read as a reference to Poe's life. After Virginia's death, Poe did make new love relations but as Renaud states, "the memory of Virginia embittered the outpourings of his soul" (174). In Freud's essay "Mourning and Melancholia," (1917) Freud states that in a normal situation, the mourner is able to transcend the loss by "adopting any new object of love, which would mean a replacing of the one mourned" (153). The mourner is able to detach himself from the lost object ; however Freud adds that " against this demand a struggle of course arises - it may be universally observed that man never willingly abandons " the lost love object " not even when a substitute is already beckoning to him" (154). The mourner , Freud states , is completely attached to the lost love object instead of " the withdrawal of the libido from this object and transference of it to a new one" which can eventually lead to a pathological condition (159). The bride then cannot detach herself from the lost love object by forming a new relationship with somebody else. During the marriage ceremony the lady states that she can only hear the voice of the past represented by her old lover. Controlled by the past, the bride says:

And my lord he loves me well;
But, when first he breathed his vow,
I felt my bosom swell-
For the words rang as a knell,
And the voice seemed *his* who fell
In the battle down the dell,(*Poetry*74)

The Italicized pronoun *his* emphasizes the power of the past when compared to the present situation.

This bride imagines that she is marrying her dead lover not the wealthy man. The memory of the lover always chases her, making her unable to go on with her new life. In Freud's essay "Our Attitude towards Death," Freud states that the mourner refuses to "fill the loved one's place" by adopting anew love object (306). Instead of detaching herself from the memory of the dead loved one, the lady creates an imaginative world where the lover is still alive. She becomes in a complete state of denying the death of the lover as in case of loved ones, Freud states, the mourner cannot imagine or accept the possibility of someone's death (305). Due to this false reality the lady states that she is happy now: "And I sighed to him before me, (Thinking him dead D' Elormie,)/ "Oh, I am happy now!" (*Poetry 75*). The use of parenthesis symbolizes the lady's imprisonment and entrapment within the memory of the lover. After uncovering the real situation, the lady is not happy at all as she has broken all the vows she has made with her old lover, and abandoned the memory of him. However, the lady continues to resist these haunting memories of the lover. Such resistance is enhanced by the repetitive refrain "I am happy now" and the italicized verb "*proves*" that asserts the beloved's happiness (*Poetry 75*). She always tries to get over these feelings of longing and regret in order to move on and to start a life with a new partner. She persuades herself that she is happy now as she has the love of a man and all the wealth she can need:

The ring is on my hand,
And the wreath is on my brow;
Satins and jewels grand
Are all at my command,
And I am happy now.
(*Poetry 74*)

Despite the lady's failure to transcend her sorrow over the death of her lover, she manages to achieve a state of transcendence by showing a transcendent kind of love that cannot be forgotten by death. Out of her fear of abandonment and complete denial of death, the lady believes that she is still attached to her lover by experiencing an immortal and spiritual love that cannot die even after the lover's physical death. She keeps denying the death of the lover by creating love that is not subject to the earthly limitations. More importantly, in "Mourning and Melancholia," Freud declares that the loss of a love-object constitutes a love-hate relationship as instead of "the necessity of openly expressing their [the mourners] hostility against the loved ones" for abandoning them, the hate

is expanded upon the mourner himself in the form of " self-reproaches" and " self-torments" , deriving sadistic satisfaction from his suffering(161-162). To express their hatred towards the dead loved ones , the mourners " succeed in the end by taking revenge , by the circuitous path of self-punishment" (162). This conflict of ambivalence is a result of the anger felt by the mourners for being abandoned alone by the dead love one. Indirectly expressing her anger and revenge , the lady starts to blame and torture herself by admitting that by choosing a new life, she will be responsible for the suffering of her lover in his grave. She tortures herself, believing that her quest for happiness will intermingle with the suffering of the lover who is still alive in the other world. Similarly , this conflict of ambivalence is asserted directly later in Freud's essay "Our Attitude towards Death" . In Freud's essay " Our Attitude towards Death," Freud states that in cases of loved ones sometimes individuals have ambivalent feelings of love and hatred towards the deceased loved ones who are turned into "partly strangers , even enemies" (315). For being abandoned by the lost-love object , the lady directly expresses her anger and hatred towards the lover by turning him into an evil ghost who is going to do something evil to her . At such case , ambivalence can then help the mourner transcend the crisis of death by creating a sense of hatred towards the dead one. The evilness of the ghost can also symbolizes the bride's hostility towards the lover for hindering her quest for happiness and for preventing her from moving on with her life. Expressing her profound pain, she says:

And my soul is sorely shaken
Lest an evil step be taken,-
Lest the dead who is forsaken

May not be happy now . (*Poetry*75)

Such ambivalent feeling towards the dead loved one is only noticed in " Bridal Ballad". In the other poems , the loved deceased ones are kept as loved even after their death. The speakers in the poems under study describe their love towards the departed loved ones giving them other modes of existence. In this sense , the speakers achieve an act of transcendence by going beyond their tendency to hatred .

This devotion to the memory of departed people is also shown in "Annabel Lee" (1849) which is probably written for Virginia, the only woman Poe loved. There is no clear evidence that Annabel lee – the lady in the poem, is Virginia; however the story of the poem, to a large degree, expresses Poe's relation with Virginia and his attitude towards her death. The name "Annabel Lee" is just chosen for its sound and rhythm that suit the gloomy atmosphere of the poem. Poe's poem "Annabel Lee" is about two lovers separated by death. The italicized

pronouns "She" and "I" emphasize the physical separation between the lovers. After the death of his beloved Annabel Lee, the lover suffers a lot as her memory hinders him from living a peaceful life. The name "Annabel Lee" is repeated many times in the poem to reflect to how far her memory controls his life. The speaker states that Annabel Lee was killed by the envious angels who blew out a wind causing her death . In Freud's essay " Our Attitude towards Death," Freud states that humans have a tendency to deny the fact of death as a necessity by turning it into an accident . They attempt to eliminate death from life and to strip its inevitability. Freud writes : " Our habit is to lay stress on the fortuitous causation of the death - accident , disease , infection , advanced age ; in this way we betray our endeavor to modify the significance of death from a necessity to an accident" (305). As a result of refusing to accept either our own death or the death of loved ones , we eliminate death by turning it into an accident . The speaker says :

The angels , not half so happy in Heaven,
Went envying her and me;
Yes ! that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud , chilling
And killing my Annabel Lee.
(*Poetry* 102)

In his essay Freud goes on to assert that in the case of loved one , the mourner views death not as annihilation but as a gateway into other modes of existence. Out of his denial of death and fear of abandonment , the mourner believes in "the disjunction of the individuality into a body and a soul" and "the conception of life continued after apparent death"(310). The afterlife , for Freud , is an illusion not a real place that is created by the mourners to cope with the idea of abandonment and to satisfy their hope for reunion with the dead loved ones . The lover , Halliburton states ,is consequently imprisoned in "a continuing presence" of his beloved that is not absent at all, but exists everywhere around him (173). The lover gives Annabel lee a mode of existence by reincarnating her in everything around him such as the moon or the stars. The tense of the poem is rather changed from the past tense to the present tense in order to declare the continuous survival of Annabel Lee even after death. Giving the beloved a new life , the speaker says :

For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;

(*Poetry*103)

After the beloved's death the lover is unable to move on with his life. He is deeply affected and immersed in complete collapse .The lover's happiness and hopes are all gone away and buried with the beloved . in Freud's view , the mourner can taste and experience his own death by the death of somebody loved . Freud writes : "Then , in his pain , he [the mourner] had to learn that one can indeed die oneself , an admission against which his whole being revolted... Man could no longer keep death at a distance, for he had tasted it in his grief "(309- 310). Experiencing his own death , the speaker states that every night he sits and sleeps next to her grave:

And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling , my darling , my life and my bride
In her sepulcher there by the sea-
In her tomb by the side of the sea.

(*Poetry*103)

This pathological behavior shows the lover's entrapment in a sort of 'death in life' .It reflects the rejection of life and the spiritual death of the lover after Annabel lee's death. Such collapse and spiritual death is a preliminary stage of denial . To transcend his collapse and grief over the death of loved one , the mourner starts to create an illusory world to deny the fact of death and to avoid the void of death. The act of sleeping next to the beloved's grave symbolizes the lover's hope for reunion with the beloved through death that is considered an access into other desired realm. Not surprisingly that the poem is full of many religious references that emphasize the poet's belief in a heavenly world which , in Freud's view , is an illusion. This belief of an afterlife is central to the definition of religious transcendence where the distinction between the world down below and the ethereal world is emphasized. Throughout the whole poem , the speaker mentions religious words such as "Heaven," " angels," "demons," and "the wingéd seraphs of Heaven" (*Poetry* 102-103) . The poem is then considered a victory over death and despair based on the poet's belief in an after life where the presence of his beloved cannot die. The religious words assert the speaker's attempt at giving his beloved a new heavenly life where she can enjoy a blissful life next to God.

Annabel Lee is still alive through a transcendent kind of love that is not subject to the limitations of the material world. Out of his fear of abandonment and state of denying death , the lover asserts the impossibility of separation by experiencing an immortal and spiritual love that surpasses death. This preoccupation with spiritual love is an attempt at transcendence and an act that displays the ability of transcendent and spiritual love to overcome death. By

transcendentalizing his love , the beloved only departs physically not spiritually:

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we-
Of many far wiser than we -
And neither the angels in Heaven above
Nor the demons down under the sea
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:-

(*Poetry*103)

The conjunction "But" shows the speaker's attachment to his beautiful mistress and his belief in an afterlife .The rhyme in the four stanzas that usually end with three repetitive words " sea," " Lee," and " me" is substituted by another different rhyme using " we," "sea," and " Lee". This replacement of "me" by "we" anticipates the final union of the poet's soul with the soul of Annabel Lee either through the process of reincarnation or keeping her memory alive ."Annabel Lee" then is about a lover who could not get over his feeling of loss for Annabel Lee and chose to grieve over her death forever. He does not think of moving on and living his life again. He becomes loyal to his beloved's memory, thus, he, Halliburton states, is "alive in death" (173). Due to denying death and refusing to accept the idea of abandonment and detachment , the lover imagines a world in a hope for reunion with the beloved , which is not a real world according to Freud.

Death is always portrayed as a means for reaching the transcendent order as in "Lenore" (1843). "Lenore "is about a debate between Guy De Vere; the lover and Lenore's relatives who encourage the lover to sing an "anthem," " a dirge, a "requiem, or "a Sabbath song" so that he does his duty as a faithful guardian or lover (*Poetry* 68-69). Lenore's relatives want the lover to show his consideration for the dead Lenore through doing the rituals but he keeps refusing . In Freud's essay " Our Attitude towards Death," Freud writes : "Towards the dead person himself we take up a special attitude , something like admiration for one who has accomplished a very difficult task. We suspend criticism of him , overlook his possible misdoings" (305). However , the lover Guy De Vere displays a state of complete denial towards the death of Lenore that's why he refuses to do the rituals. He believes that doing the rituals means the death of Lenore and the complete absence of her physically and spiritually .

The poem begins with an assertion that the soul of Lenore has "flown forever", going to the world of the dead or Hades through the

allusion to the " Stygian river" which in Greek mythology means the river Styx that leads to the world of dead. The Greek Hades is believed to be a dismal habitation of the souls of the dead. The poem is also filled with religious references such as " God," " King of Heaven," " ritual," " Hell" and " Heaven" (*Poetry* 68-69). These religious references anticipate the revival of Lenore after death. Viewing death as an access into a better realm , the speaker says :

For her, the fair and debonair , that now so lowly lies,
The life upon her yellow hair, but not within her eyes-
The life still there upon her hair , the death upon her eyes.
(*Poetry*69)

The spiritual rebirth is symbolized by " the life upon her hair " while the physical death is symbolized by " the death upon her eyes". Throughout the repetition of the word "life" at the beginning of verse line , the spiritual rebirth of Lenore is asserted . Lenore seems to be dead, but life and beauty appear to be a dear companion even in her death. Out of a fear of abandonment and complete denial of death , Freud states , the mourner believes in "transmigration of the soul and reincarnation , all with the purpose of depriving death of its meaning as the termination of life" (311). The mourner , Freud adds , creates an afterlife that is more desirable than the painful reality out of his fear of abandonment and state of denial. Unlike Poe , Freud views the afterlife an illusion devised by the mourners to overcome their fear of abandonment and the idea of death as means of separation not reunion and rebirth.

The final stanza is so important as it reflects how the lover feels happy because of the departure of Lenore from "Hell" and the " damnéd Earth" to a higher and sacred realm . The tone is now transformed from a state of anger into a state of happiness as Lenore now has flown away from the earthly suffering. Driven by the continuous remembrance of the dead loved one and the fear of abandonment , Freud asserts , the mourner devises an ideal realm of happiness and rest (310). Drawing upon Freud's secular theory about death , the mourners in Poe's poems create an imaginative not real world to escape the idea of death and the fear of abandonment with a hope for reunion with the deceased loved ones. The lover then decides not to let the funeral bell ring, but instead he wants to sing a song of triumph or praise to celebrate and thank for Lenore's ascent into a better world where she can experience happiness , purity and perfection . Being a wealthy and innocent lady , the lover states that she is free from earthly chains and from the hellish Earth to be next to God in Paradise or Heaven - an everlasting abode which is blissful and beautiful . Far away from the hatred and greed of humans , the speaker says :

From Hell unto a high estate within the utmost Heaven-
From moan and groan to a golden throne beside the King
Of Heaven:-

Let *no* bell toll , then, lest her soul ,amid its hallowed mirth,
Should catch the note as it doth float up from the damnéd
Earth!

And I – tonight my heart is light: - no dirge will I uprise
But waft the angel on her flight with a Paeon of old days!"
(*Poetry* 69)

This religious attitude towards the perception of death is also highlighted in Poe's "To One in Paradise" (1834) that is embedded in Poe's tale "The Visionary" (later, "The Assignment"). "To one in Paradise" was first published as five untitled stanzas inserted in the tale, but in 1845 it was later published under this title, with the fifth stanza omitted and the fourth stanza slightly revised. The poem "To One in Paradise" describes the mourning of the speaker over the loss of his beloved and the good days he experienced during the life of his dear beloved. The title of the poem suggests that the beloved is still alive but in a peaceful and perfect realm (i.e. Paradise). The poem shows the lover's complete attachment to his beloved. The lover wants to transcend the past and to enjoy his life with another love object but he cannot . Instead of moving on with his life , the speaker cannot find a substitute for the lost love object . Entrapped within the memory of the beloved , the speaker says :

A voice from out the Future cries,
"On! On!"- but o'er the Past
(Dim gulf!)my spirit hovering lies
Mute, motionless, aghast!
(*Poetry* 70)

The repeated " On! on!" emphasizes the urgency of the call that encourages the speaker to look ahead, but in vain, since his soul is immersed in the past. The parenthesis " Dim gulf" suggests that the speaker is extremely engulfed and imprisoned in an endless circle of suffering and sorrow. The sequence of adjectives "Mute," "motionless," and "aghast" reveals the inability to get over the past and the death of the beloved . The speaker's attitude towards the beloved's death , according to Freud , displays a rejection of filling "the loved one's place" by somebody else (306). In " Mourning and Melancholia," Freud states that the mourner usually adopts " any new object of love , which would mean a replacing of the one mourned"(153). But sometimes this detachment

and withdrawal from the lost love object , Freud adds , is not achieved and the way towards normal life is " blocked" (168).

In his essay " Our Attitude towards Death," Freud states that the mourner can experience his own death through a complete collapse and loss of interest in life resulted from the death of someone loved (306). Freud goes on to affirm this state of death: "Then , in his pain , he had to learn that one can indeed die oneself , an admission against which his whole being revolted ; for each of these loved ones was , in very truth, a part of his own beloved ego" (309). Due to the unwillingness to accept death as a fact , Freud goes on to say , the mourners show a sort of "sensitiveness" towards the event of death (305). This sensitiveness ,represented by a complete collapse, drove the mourners to create an illusory and imaginative realm so that they can be reunited with the dead loved ones. The state of 'death in life' is a preliminary stage of denying death as the more the mourner's life is insignificant and gloomy the more he creates another realm as a compensation for this gloominess . The speaker states that he experiences a state of 'death in life' as life becomes gloomy and insignificant without the beloved. The adjectives "Mute," "motionless," and " aghast" suggest the spiritual death of the lover . The repetition of "No more – no more – no more" in stanza three asserts the loss of spiritual fullness resulted from the beloved's death (*Poetry* 70). The two words " all" and "no more" bring out "the semantic opposition between the plenitude and abundance in the speaker's life in the past and his present sense of its insufferable emptiness" (Studnariz 272). This juxtaposition highlights the sorrow and the collapse of the speaker as a result of this loss. This state of paralysis and powerlessness is later enhanced by nature imagery. The speaker highlights the spiritual emptiness and the loss of peace and rest:

(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder I–blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar!
(*Poetry* 70)

The " blasted tree" evokes the loss of life . The " stricken eagle" symbolizes the pain and sadness the speaker is immersed in after the death of the beloved. The waves breaking on the shore represent the anguish felt by the speaker as a result of spiritual emptiness after the beloved's death.

The speaker tries to convince himself that the beloved is gone forever; consequently he must surpass his pain: " For alas! Alas! With me / The light of Life is o'er!/ No more – no more – no more" (*poetry* 70). However the speaker's attempt at surpassing the memory of the beloved is

failed. Due to the speaker's fear of being abandoned , he creates another desirable realm where death is not seen as annihilation. Such world , which is real for the mourner , is an illusion for Freud as the mourner tries to overcome his fear of separation and abandonment by creating this imaginative world. Consequently , the speaker gives the beloved another life through the realm of dreams. To get over the pain in case of loved ones , Freud highlights , the mourner creates and assumes " other modes of existence" (310) .To keep his beloved alive, the speaker states that the realm of dreams was a gateway into a reunion with the beloved. The speaker dreams of his beloved dancing in an ethereal and perfect realm. These dreams were a sort of consolation for the speaker as his beloved is still alive somewhere dancing . Describing the beloved in a celestial way , the speaker says :

And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy grey eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams-
In what ethereal dances,
By what eternal streams.
(*Poetry* 70)

. Memory becomes the main cause of creating another happier realm. This world represents a sort of comfort and consolation for the mourner as his feelings of sadness and pain can be erased or relieved by a belief in afterlife. The religious belief in God or afterlife is manifested in " The Sleeper" (1831) in which death is seen to resemble the state of falling asleep . The poem describes a beautiful lady, Irene, who is in a state of deep sleep. The lover, throughout the poem, describes the beauty of the beloved during this peaceful undisturbed sleep that symbolizes death. The name of the sleeping lady, Irene, is derived from the Greek word denoting Peace. The meaning of Irene evokes the feelings of peace, rest, and serenity one finds in death. The speaker , throughout the poem , displays a complete state of denial regarding the death of Lenore by conversing with her as if she is still alive. The speaker also asks her questions as if anticipating to be answered by her . This state of denial , in Freud's view , leads the mourner to view death as a gateway to a life full of rest , holiness and peace and to create an illusory not real world(311). For Freud , the mourners in Poe's poems live in an illusion by a belief in an afterlife that is only resulted from a fear of abandonment and separation. The speaker thus describes the lady's triumph over death by enjoying a life full of sweet and beautiful gardens, a life that is characterized by happiness and comfort. The speaker states that the lady

should not feel fear as she is now in a better place where she can be free from all the troubles of physical reality:

Oh , lady dear , hast thou no fear?
Why and what are thou dreaming here?
Sure thou art come o'er far –off seas,
A wonder to these garden trees! (*Poetry65*)

The speaker tries to comfort himself through the affirmation that the beloved lady has moved into a more peaceful and happier existence . He invents a life after death as a kind of rejecting death as a separation hoping for a reunion with the dead loved ones. To transcend the fear of abandonment , the mourner keeps denying death by creating this imaginative world which for Freud is an illusory not real world. Now the speaker hopes that Irene enjoys a heavenly realm where she can experience peace and eternity :

Heaven have her in its sacred keep!
This chamber changed for one more holy,
This bed for one more melancholy,
I pray to God that she may lie
Forever with unopened eye,
While the pale sheeted ghosts go by!
(*Poetry 65*)

The strong attachment to the dead loved ones and the denial of the fact of death, as Freud shows , are what drive the mourner to assume " the perception of life continued after apparent death" (310). For surpassing the grief and going beyond fears of abandonment and separation , the mourner believes in a world which is , according to Freud , not real. The speaker then describes the female's victory over death and her rebirth : "Strange is thy pallor! Strange thy dress!/Strange ,above all, thy length of trees," (*Poetry 64-65*). The length of the lady's hair symbolizes her survival and rebirth after death . The speaker affirms that the lady triumphs over the rituals done by the family as grave is just a temporary prison for the soul will eventually be flown to an eternal and ideal realm :

Far in the forest , dim and old,
For her may some tall vault unfold,
Some vault that oft hath flung its black
And wingéd pannels fluttering back,
Triumphant, o'er the crested palls,
Of her grand family funerals- (*Poetry65*)

To conclude, this paper shows that, in Poe's songs of grief , the speakers cannot transcend the past or detach themselves from the dead loved ones. They cannot accept loss , so they continue to give a new life

to the dead again. Memories of dead loved ones become the main cause that makes the speakers live in an eternal suffering where neither present nor future exists. As an individual being, Poe personally experiences this imprisonment in memory that leads to a life full of sorrow, pain, and suffering. This state of utter entrapment is then reflected in his poems on death where miserable and painful memories block the way towards a happy future. Driven by a continued remembrance of the dead and fears of abandonment and annihilation, the mourners in Poe's poems on death create an afterlife, which is considered to be unreal according to Freud's secular theory on death, in order to escape the sense of being abandoned by their dead loved ones. Drawing on Freudian's concept of the core issues with specific regard to fear of abandonment, and his defense mechanisms, particularly that of denial, the mourners in Poe's poems on death create an imaginative and illusory realm to avoid the void of death and to still be reunited with the dead loved ones. To go beyond their fear of abandonment, the mourners in the selected poems keep denying the fact of death by giving the dead loved ones different modes of existence after physical death.

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