



## Article

**Title: “Approaching Psychoanalysis from an Interdisciplinary Perspective; an Attempt to Define its Core Nature, Significance and Relation to Both Science and Literature”**

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### Abstract

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The more we deal with any subject in a certain way, the more attached it gets to it. During the recent decades, a number of emerging disciplines have been interestingly shed light on and heavily approached from a “scientific perspective”, and yet, there have been considerable investigation on how these disciplines can also find room in a “humanistic perspective” based, of course, on solid arguments and thorough analysis. Psychoanalysis, this relatively new discipline, has been the sample of tremendous research especially during the last decade; this institution managed to prove its importance owing to the fact that it has been approached by other scientific and humanistic institutions mainly “psychology” and “literature”. This amalgam of institutions has erased the borders which keep them distinctively apart; therefore, it is of crucial importance to know more about Interdisciplinarity. This fact leads us to think of what psychoanalysis really is in the core, debate its touchable importance to our lives and, more importantly, look into how and why

it can be taken as a literary instrument. This article takes the responsibility of clearly investigating these concerns and providing relevant background.

**Keywords:** Psychoanalysis, Interdisciplinarity, Scientific perspective, Humanistic perspective, Literature.

## **Introduction**

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It is undoubtedly certain that some disciplines are quite hard to be approached and base research on; simply because they require a great deal of intellectual readiness and flexibility. Of those disciplines who imposed themselves and evolved through the late decades is 'psychoanalysis'; this modern discipline has become prevalent and present as a separate field worldwide. The important results that it could bring to the human life have transcended the clinical aspect to embrace other disciplines very smoothly.

This article is a brief overview of psychoanalysis as a discipline; it attempts to define its nature whether purely scientific or; rather, humanistic, and of course mark its limitations and shortcomings thanks to specialists who have been there for decades of experience. It is worth devoting a good deal of this article to the institution of literature which, too, has to embrace a psychoanalytic perspective; this apparently 'strange' relationship is very interesting as the article will show to its readers.

Moving from what appears to be scientific to what is certainly literary is one of this article's main concerns; this is to ensure the fact that Interdisciplinarity has become more visible today, and limits between disciplines are now melting giving birth to a heterogeneous amalgam of interrelated 'knowledges'.

## 1. What Does 'Psychoanalysis' Specifically Mean?

Surrounding the essence of the phenomenon 'psychoanalysis' is very important for the understanding of its philosophy and the foundations it resides upon.

Reliance on basic English dictionaries gives students no substantial knowledge concerning the real nature of the term; for example, Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines it as "a method of analyzing psychic phenomena and treating emotional disorders that involves treatment sessions during which the patient is encouraged to talk freely about personal experiences and especially about early childhood and dreams". This definition gives us a very general picture about the term and limits it almost exclusively to the notion of 'patient treatment', and this, is 'psychoanalysis' in its traditionally broad sense.

Brian Jarvis, in his extract from the manuscript *Psychoanalysis*, slightly stretches the previous definition and claims that the term simply refers to the idea of 'theory' which keeps a dynamic relationship between the body, the mind and social order. This claim suggests that the term also goes beyond the boundaries of the 'self' to touch on the surrounding conditions which influence human beings. What is even more inviting in Jarvis' manuscript is that he pays readers attention to the fact that "Whilst the popular myth suggests that psychoanalysis is 'all about sex', Freud in fact studied and wrote about a range of subjects that included religion." (p.2)

Psychoanalysis is, thus, more than just a 'method of treatment' or a 'theory'; it is a melting pot of subjects that makes us look closer at the human inner world. Fredric T. Perlman and Jerrold R. Brandell in their book entitled *Psychoanalytic Theory*, advocate the same idea of 'dynamism' and claim that "Classical psychoanalytic theory and, later, ego psychology stand in relation to social work theory and practice in much the same way as the theory of relativity stands in relation to modern theoretical physics." (p.41) Psychoanalysis, based on this understanding, represents a whole entity composed of many social aspects,

theoretical dimensions and of course scientific schemata. Christine Brett Vickers, an Honorary Research Fellow in History, has a very interesting article entitled “Explainer: what is psychoanalysis?” in which she not only reintroduces the fact that psychoanalysis is a scientific practice of treatment, but she speaks about the ‘unconscious’ saying: “the Psychoanalysis or psychoanalytic psychotherapy is a way of treating longstanding psychological problems that is based on the belief behaviours have underlying drivers which may be unrecognized and unconscious.” (p.1). Christine takes us a lot deeper into the nature of the practice which, according to her words, has a lot to do with what is ‘behind awareness’ which drives our behaviors. Christine’s idea of psychoanalysis allows some more space for the notion of change, that is, giving meaning to how human beings act and react to different situations based on deeply inner drives is of much help.

Carlos Peres Dias, on the other hand, opens his PhD thesis by questioning the term according to its constantly changing body; he says: “And this feeling, of being a beleaguered discipline, constantly needing to define its parameters and to protect its integrity, has been an almost constant aspect of the psychoanalytic landscape worldwide over the 20th century” (The heritage of Freudian Theoretical and Clinical Constructs in Contemporary Psychoanalytical Practice: Epistemological Conjectures and Clinical Refutations, 7). Carlos, in my perspective, defines the term according to its ongoing change; he refers to the “**Freudian heritage**” as one which only held conceptions concerning the purely biological nature of the discipline. However, later research and further investigation shows that the discipline is a “clinical and an intellectual enterprise.” (p.6) this is a controversy which seeks explanation in order to define the future structure of psychoanalysis. To my opinion, I think that the essence of the term is still difficult especially that it suggests a lot of interrelated notions and layers of inner understanding. I support my opinion with Thomas H. Odgen’s” interpretation of psychoanalysis in his book *This Art of Psychoanalysis*: “It is the art of psychoanalysis in the

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making, a process inventing itself as it goes, that is the subject of this chapter. Psychoanalysis is a lived emotional experience. As such, it cannot be translated,

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transcribed, recorded, explained, understood or told in words. It is what it is.” (p.1). Thomas sees it as an ‘art’ which is hard to define and explain; and he quickly shifts to describe it as being founded upon a paradox. That is, according to his own perception, practitioners in this field have to reinvent it again and again “throughout the course of the analysis” (p.6)

Moreover, the author Ruth Golan in *Loving Psychoanalysis: Looking at Culture With Freud and Lacan* follows the footsteps of Thomas in approaching the discipline and openly admits that it goes under no specific norms or regularities in essence; rather, it is seriously and mainly influenced by ‘language’ and ‘expression’, he says “I should emphasize that when Freud speaks of the unconscious, he is not referring to something that wants to express itself. The unconscious is not an expression; however, it does manifest through the failure of expression” (p.9). This idea further proves my opinion about the complexity of the discipline in spite of the easiness the term suggests. From a historical point of view, Sigmund Freud’s discoveries were not the earliest to contribute to the discipline of psychoanalysis; rather, David Hume and others preceded him almost a century ago. Jerome D. Levin explores, in his voluminous book *The Self and Therapy*, the evolution of the discipline and provides most of what researchers need to know about psychoanalysis. Building on what has been said above; Jerome initiates his book by asserting that psychoanalysis is a complex phenomenon which emerged as an immediate consequence to questioning the ‘self’, he comments “Our experience of ourselves is paradoxical. We experience ourselves as coherent and fragmented, as the same and as different ... An adequate theory must be able to account for continuity as well as discontinuity” (Jerome D. Levin: 1992,10).

Coming to the legend of Sigmund Freud, some authors have admitted that it is hard to read about this great man because his vision in his works is really challenging; in fact, besides the trilogy of the ego, superego and the Id, Freud paid much attention to the notion of “dream”. Rachel B. Blass, in her *The Meaning of the Dream in Psychoanalysis*, sheds a lot of light on this aspect of Freud’s psychoanalytic analysis and provides sufficient explanation to the dilemma of dream interpretation. Freud, according to her, worked on finding techniques which allow him to study the paths of dreams; this obscure process helped Freud discover how dreams are generated at the level of the mind. What is famous about Freud’s ideology concerning dreams is that he considered them as ‘guardians of sleep’, that is, they manifest themselves as a “revision” to what happens in reality. This said, Freud arrived at the conclusion that dreams have interpretations and what best characterizes them is that they are bound to no boundaries. (pp.69-71)

## **2. The Importance of Psychoanalysis**

### **2.1. Its Contribution to the Betterment of the Human Life**

As human beings, I think that we are mostly defined by the invisible side which resides right behind our appearances; this is a fact and modern science proved that the human body is more than just a fascinating building of bone and flesh. A lot of research has been carried out for the sake of coming closer to the human psyche which turned out to know no boundaries.

We start the journey of importance with R. S. Wyre with a book entitled *The Automacity of Everyday Life: Advances in Social Cognition* in which he demonstrates the benefits of practicing psychoanalysis within its social context; Wyre explores the idea that patients who suffered from unsociability because of shyness or any other social disorder sought relief in priming with words relating to “affiliation” like “friend”, “other”, “share”, that is sharing with others. The results were outstanding in the sense that symptoms of social disorders started diminishing and patients grew steadily social and performed well along with their peers. Living within a society necessitates having long-term relationships, and this social

fact led practitioners in this field to raise many concerns seeking improvement along with biological medicine (p.61). Within the same context of social stability, Guthrie et al., from Archives of General Psychiatry, further addresses the pivotal role which psychoanalysis plays in terms of social attachment; she reports that distress often causes social problems for most people, and going through consistent psychotherapy sessions will lead to a lot of improvement (Guthrie et al.:1999, pp.519-526).

Psychoanalysis paved new ways through which it met other sciences and experimental disciplines mainly biology; Peter H. Wolff, from Children's Hospital in Boston, asserts that psychoanalysis is still interesting despite the opposing views which regard it as a bad science. Being surrounded by children, Peter stresses the benefit of psychoanalysis in discovering the behavioral competencies which allow infants to build healthy relationships as they grow. Furthermore, he goes to talk about psychoanalysis in terms of politics and claims that it allows specialists to dig facts out of political events and contribute to social reform. This said, Peter agrees with Freud concerning the fact that social, economic, political and cultural conditions affect one's mental conditions, and that we have to ensure children grow up in healthy conditions in order to protect their mental potentials (Peter H. Wolff: 1998, pp.7-20). one's personality and character; current psychoanalysis, having gone far enough, suggests new methods towards understanding the self and its emotions, reactions and cognitions. Thorough scientific analysis of 'the right brain' shows that we can know more about the human psychic processes from a very early age; Vivian Green, in his book *Emotional Development in Psychoanalysis, Attachment Theory and Neuroscience Creating Connections*, offers us a typical example of how human beings develop emotions through infant-to-mother behaviour, he argues:

Since the mother's psychobiological attunements to the dynamic changes of the infant's affective state are expressed in spontaneous non-verbal behaviors, the moment-to-moment expressions of her interactive regulatory functions occur at levels beneath awareness. This microregulation continues, as soon after the

heightened affective moment' of an intensely joyful full gape smile the baby will gaze avert in order to regulate the potentially disorganizing effect of this intensifying emotion (Vivian Green: 2005, p.28)

Vivian, to my opinion, further ensures the importance of psychoanalysis in disclosing the human inner reactions and that today's biological sciences owe much to this discipline, and these human reactions, according to him, are means to survive and grow adaptive capacities and this "brings us back to the level of biological organism, the domain of the body" (p.26).

## 2.2. Limitations of Psychoanalysis

Despite the fact that psychoanalysis is a very rich discipline which provides a lot of insight concerning the unseen nature of human beings, it has been widely criticized for certain limitations. While some specialists consider its limitations simply as imperfection, others find them as a pretext to attack this discipline and reduce its validity and credibility.

We start this section with Kendra Cherry, in an article entitled "What is Psychoanalysis; the Psychoanalytic Approach to Psychology", she views psychoanalysis as overly fueling 'the unconscious', especially that it is abstract and not subject to direct scientific testing and experiment. Freud, according to her standpoint, placed too much attention to what he could not prove to be scientifically valid; along with this over-emphasis, she brings up the issue of 'sex' and 'aggression' being excessively talked about in the scope of Freud who considered them to be most of what characterizes the human psyche. Moreover, Kendra refuses to agree to the fact that one's past experiences and events determine the rest of life simply because science has proven that the human mind is a very flexible entity which is capable of changing one's life course whatever the current conditions, let alone the past. She adds that most of what Freud has managed to arrive at is doubted and is not necessarily valid, especially when it comes to 'generalization' since he mostly relied on observation and case studies. I personally see this very logical and I think that 'case studies' do not allow scientific credibility to emerge so that we can generalize based on the trusted outcomes. I further support her stand in the sense that many scholars recently started debating over whether

psychoanalysis is a science of simply a literary topic; it has become fairly normal to attribute psychoanalysis to literature, and of course, based on well-grounded arguments especially that it has become part and parcel of literary theory (p.4).

Criticism over the limitations of psychoanalysis continues to burn as a number of reports and articles, especially those of the New York Time's in 2007, noted the decline of psychoanalysis as a subject in psychology; this is mostly because of skepticism concerning the results which it calls for. Concerning the American Psychoanalytic Association, it considered psychoanalysis to be simply a 'historical artifact'; this is due to its heavy reliance on 'theory' which is analogous to 'historical facts' which remain part of history. Methods of treatment, though they provide healing results when it comes to certain psychological problems, the limitation which keeps them unfavorable is that they take a long time to yield expected results and people often look for fast-results to their illnesses. This limitation places more doubt around psychoanalysis and questions it as to why results take a long period of time, and to whether they are trusted or not.

"Where Psychoanalysis Went Wrong" is a scientific article by David M. Allen M. D., in which he openly criticizes psychoanalysis for its 'determinism' which always gauges one's present state based on their past background. This supports the previous argument of Kendra Cherry, and my opinion too, and opens doors to addressing psychological problems away from the past (p.3). Following the same line of argument, Michael Richards blames psychoanalysis for centering focus on 'children' and not aged subjects; children are very vulnerable to any danger and their psychology cannot be a reference upon which we can base results. The focus has to shift from dealing with children to social and economic problems which are more dangerous. I think that this limitation is logical because, to my opinion, if a child is brought up in healthy family conditions but finds himself/herself forced

to deal with certain social problems which they did not face before, I think measures will change and childhood will be of no use in this case.

### **3. Its Relation to Literature**

#### **3.1. When Science Meets Literature**

We start from the historical point of view which says that the Greeks and the Arabs were the first to link the natural world 'science' to the curriculum of the European university. The Greeks were known for their great contribution in almost all the fields, be it in the humanities or even empirical sciences. Religious and literary texts of the past were revisited and translated, and the early relationship between science and literature was growing clear as translation and interpretation went on. John H. Cartwright and Brian Bake, in their book *Literature and Science: Social Impact and Interpretation*, provide us with a number of literary texts which reveal the close attachment of literature and scientific language; for instance, they bring the example of Dante Alighieri's *The Divine Comedy* which contains a lot of non-literary words specially that the work describes the journey down the center of the earth towards hell. Words like 'layers', 'gravity' and 'mountains' have scientific denotations and the Dante's work is still literature; here we know that science can meet literature by means of language, and this, still keeps them apart in some way because each has its own characteristics (p.6). Geoffrey Chaucer's work, always with John and Brian, wove scientific concepts into his poems especially when it comes to stories of journeys and stars which often make reference to astrology and how stars guide people. Any astrologist without any previous literary background would think that Chaucer's poems are scientific, yet in fact, they are literary par excellence (p.12).

When we speak of science and literature, we must refer to John Holmes' article "Roundtable: Literature and Science vs. History of Science", in which he mentions the term 'scientific pronouncements' which supports what we previously discussed. It is in this article

that John explains that some purely literary works imply scientific facts and pronouncements which can only be scientifically proven. When we read a literary work, we often tend to come across 'empirical approach' as if it is science that we are reading; John makes mention of Robert Bridges' poem "Poor Poll" (1921) which addresses Darwinism as a scientific theory and emphasizes the kinship between species using words of scientific interpretation especially concerning 'adaptation', 'environment' and 'geological times' (pp.67-71).

What comes to mind when referring to literature is the notion of "culture"; literature is an art, and art is the production of a member in society, thus, it reflects the tradition of that society in one way or another. Science, on the other hand, keeps itself attached to the natural world and it seems awkward to talk about science in culture. In fact, there is a respectful debate as to whether or not we can consider science as part of the human culture; many creative writers and poets stand on the side of science and advance scientific knowledge. Max Eastman in his book *Literature in an Age of Science* (1934) brings up the fact that in order for one to read about literature and science from a cultural perspective, he says:

One of these obvious facts is that the same single individual, if he is big enough, can be both scientific and poetic. That is, he can learn the scientific point of view, understand the validity of science, lay up a certain store of information, and so, without ceasing to be a poet, win back, or retain, his old place in the forefront of the human culture. (Max Eastman, 1934, p.115)

We understand from Max's words that the human culture is large enough to contain science within its knowledge and that anyone with good background in literature can understand works of literature addressing scientific point of views and information.

Literature and science went even beyond the cultural scope and, in fact, promoted each other their ways; Jordi Sobles and Manel Traver trace some instances when literature worked for scientific purposes. They claim that, during the Renaissance, literature began to portray scientific characters mainly doctors, surgeons and chemists; this was not simply for the sake of plot, but also as a recognition to their prodigious contributions to the field of humanities.

Jordi and Manel, always with the same article of “Science, Scientists and Literature: the Role of Literature in Promoting Science and Technology” (2014), also provide the example of Jules Verne who goes even to the extreme of producing a ‘scientific novel’ which commemorates scientific achievements and notable scholars; this gives us a clear understanding about the interaction between science and literature. A literary genre called ‘science fiction’ managed to powerfully exist as a literary genre especially with the increasing adaptation of this genre in cinema.

Of those who are for the inclusion of science along with literature as culture is Birgitt Flohr who chooses to provide arguments to assert that science can be considered as culture. In her essay “The Relationship Between Literature and Science in the Nineteenth Century”, she talks about literature being a human construction since it relies on living or being part of the conditions of society, and science also, in the sense that it relies, too, on senses and human perception, so this makes it part of culture in general terms. I support Birgitt’s view by George Levin whose devotion to the study of Darwinism and literature led him to the conclusion that both science and literature can meet, reflect and even promote each other since both work for culture and science is a “cultural formation ... equivalent to any other” (George Levin: 1988, 3)

From the arguments discussed above, I conclude by saying that there is a very close relationship between science and literature in terms of cultural formation and reflection, and that they do not simply meet, but also promote each other.

### **3.2. Psychoanalysis in Literature; From a Scientific Enterprise to a Literary Theory**

The previous section investigated nature of psychoanalysis in general terms and the basic features which made it what it has become; now there is a critical question concerning the relationship through which this scientific enterprise can relate to literature as an art. It is a challenging question since we are about to bring two separate fields close to each other, yet it

is possible owing to certain aspects in common. Thomson Gale admits that since the early emergence of psychoanalysis as a scientific approach, it has displayed a powerful set of connections to the body of literature. Literary criticism has been the major mediator between what is scientific and literary, and generally speaking, Thomson in his article “Literature and Psychoanalysis” (2005) believes that the relationship between the two can only be determined by two aspects. On the one hand, the cultural aspect which refers to the contributions of both disciplines to the enrichment of culture, on the other hand, the structural aspect which refers to the fact that psychoanalysis is basically structured around narration and stories (pp.1-3). I personally believe the two aspects are credible especially the one related to structure because ‘therapy talks’ are governed by ‘language’ and in the case of children for instance, they are talked to and addressed using short stories for both fun and therapeutic needs. This vision of Thomson bridges a large gap between the two disciplines. Freud himself turned his attention to focus on literature for evidence and explanation. That is to say, he relied on literature to give meaning to his scientific interpretations and clinical hypotheses (Ibid. 5). To exemplify, the story of Oedipus which has been a source of inspiration to many critics has turned into an established psychoanalytic complex which no one can ignore or refute. Moreover, what fuels psychoanalysis and helps it grow is sense of imagination which it finds in literary narratives and poetry; this expression of inner desires and feelings helps us know more about the unconscious. Literary criticism, especially in the United States, relied on Freudian concepts in the explication of literary texts (Ibid. 7).

Benjamin H. Ogden, too, believes in the close relationship between psychoanalysis and literature and, in his book *Beyond Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism: Between Literature and Mind* (2018), he stressed the idea of ‘confessional literature’ which he thinks best links psychoanalytic interpretation to literary texts. This latter is kind of autobiographical writing in which one tries to tell the truth of oneself or about oneself as honestly as one can; it is a discloser of the self through literary words. The term ‘confessional’ is very telling in the sense

that it communicates the writer's deep wishes and desires. Ruth ParkinGounelas, having almost the same perspective as Benjamin, believes in his book "Literature and Psychoanalysis" (2001) that "writing, like the dream, is an attempt of 'His Majesty the Ego' to fulfill its deepest wishes, which are sexual, or at least related to the ego's drive to power and mastery" (p.25). Ruth attributes writing to freeing those long-held sexual whims in the molds of literary texts; I believe this is true because a great deal of sexual subjects have been overly written about and, according to Ruth, psychoanalytic presence in those texts cannot be overlooked. One of Freud's contributions to literature, Ruth writers, has been to encourage emphasis on 'the use of words in associational rather than logical sequence' (Ibid. 4), and Surrealism, as a literary phenomenon, is perhaps the best manifestation of the relationship between psychoanalysis and literature. Freud himself referred to surrealist poets as manifesting dreams using artistically rhymed words (Ibid. 26).

In her article "Literature and Psychoanalysis; Whose Madness is it Anyway?" Lorelei Caraman claims that is very hard to imagine psychoanalysis without thinking about the Bard Shakespeare; this is logically sensible because she believes that the elaboration of literary works is very similar to the dream-work (p.31). The similarities which exist between literature and psychoanalysis blur the huge binary of science/literature separating the two. To enrich this section better, there has been a log of discussion over the notion of 'suppressed desires' which seek release through fictional writings of writers; this idea is best investigated in AbdolbaghiRezaei and Sayyed Hassan Seyyedrezaei's coauthored article "The Contribution of Psychoanalytical Theories in Literary Criticism" (2013), in which they believe that writers who write about sexuality and romance are simply writing to seek solace in words for their 'suppressed whims'. Freud, also, believes that literature answers the questions that psychoanalysis asks about one's infancy suppression, aggression and sexuality (p.3). To support this psychoanalytic belief, I remind you of postmodernism whose critics stress the

importance of interaction between the authors and their texts because this interaction holds a lot of psychoanalytic features the authors themselves may have no idea of.

Freud, to our amazement, has been in love with literature and good fiction works because, as it is mentioned by Stéphane Michaud, he congratulated the great author Arthur Schnitzler on his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. Arthur was the author of extensive literary works which Freud himself admired a lot; this explains why he paid much attention to the relationship between literature and psychoanalysis (p. 3). This careful attention from the side of Freud helped other writers in literature to revisit the famous literary works and old manuscripts in an attempt to further blur the limits of literature; Joe Friedman's article "A Freudian Take on Beowulf" (2016) shares an interesting psychoanalytic context in one of the oldest epic poems ever *Beowulf*, he believes that the id aspect of Freud is powerfully portrayed in the character Beowulf and the monster Grendel, who both demonstrate a strong personality. Moreover, both characters desire to fight an invincible foe unarmed, this feeling of 'invincibility' and that 'urge' to prove it to themselves and to the world is a purely psychoanalytic feature in an old poem with fictitious characters as heroes (p.2). EdrissZhaleh, too, in his article "the Significance of Grendel's Attack in the Light of Lacanian Psychoanalytic Theory" (2016), believes that *Beowulf* holds a lot of features which bring psychotherapy beside fictional literature; he shifts from Freud to talk about Lacanian psychoanalysis which believes that a sacrifice is badly needed for the subject to enter into the symbolic order. In the poem, the urge which pushes the hero Beowulf to face the monster Grendel unarmed and be his people's protector is interpreted from a psychoanalytic point of view. In addition, Edriss talks about the 'ego-ideal' for society which is a powerful feature in psychology; this feature implies the unity of the Danish people and how they stood as one men against the danger without surrender (p.4).

To conclude this section, I refer to the fact that Freud's writings are most read by literary critics because he applied psychoanalytic insights to the study of literature and culture. The idea behind using psychoanalysis as a literary theory is not to diagnose characters to simply use technical terms; rather, to trace the movements of both authors' and writers' desires in the what they write and read. Psychoanalytic theory evolved out of science to delve into literature in order to uncover hidden psychoanalytic features implicitly shared by writers and Freud's writings are still indispensable for anyone wanting to understand continental philosophy or most literary theorists' writings today (Shmoop Editorial Team, pp.3-4).

### **3.3. Between Humanists and Scientists; Debate on the Real Nature of Psychoanalysis**

There is a heated debate over whether the discipline of psychoanalysis is linked to humanistic approach or goes within the scientific enterprise. This debate first saw the light when Freud's psychoanalytic assumptions spread all over the world, and due to the fact that psychoanalysis was adopted in many fields, its real nature as a subject was put to the question. Basically, two sides argue against each other as to whether psychoanalysis is 'scientific' or simply 'literary'.

Margaret M. Nash, in her PhD dissertation "The Status of Psychoanalysis and the Question of Science", opens this debate arguing that from the first time we hear the word 'psychoanalysis', we intuitively think that it shares features and links with science particularly biology (p.10). This is evident in the fact that the discipline relies on the 'analysis' of the 'psyche' as its sole *raison-d'être*; however, this is not enough for us to determine its essential nature. Margaret brings up Karl Popper's arguments on the real nature of psychoanalysis which keep it under the umbrella of the humanities; Popper claims that it is true that most believe that psychoanalysis is a science, but from a logical perspective, it cannot be. He supports his claim saying that it lacks the criteria which any other 'established' science is founded upon, that is, he questions the fact psychoanalysis is predictable and its results are

irrefutable. This is generally true in the sense that Freud simply relied on clinical case studies which often give similar results; Popper criticizes this fact and thinks that such results take no risk and are most of the time mere interpretations (Ibid, 21). Moreover, he moves to talk about the death of the science question and Margaret supports his view using Hans Eysenk's words "psychoanalysis as a self-contained system claiming to afford a scientific view of human nature is dead, even though the embalmed corpse may still be exhibited to the faithful" (Ibid. 22). Eysenk's comment on psychoanalysis accords to Popper's view and eradicates its scientific nature. Furthermore, Popper brings up the idea of Marxist theory and how it was first considered to be scientific until it was falsified and turned down; empirical events later proved it scientifically wrong, so Marx, fearing that it will disappear the way many theories did, re-interpreted it and kept it within a social and economic perspective.

On the other hand, scientists and scholars belonging to natural sciences regard psychoanalysis to be completely the opposite of what Popper and Eysenk think it is; their arguments are much linked to logic and facts that are difficult to refute. Always with Margaret M. Nash, she personally sees psychoanalysis as 'scientific' more than any other discipline especially because it relies on clinical diagnosis of diseases, and this diagnosis is very complicated by the fact that its diseases are themselves described using technical terms from different scientific disciplines. Disciplines like physics and chemistry, but mainly from psychology which is an established science of well-grounded foundation. Therefore, Margaret's view keeps attention on the nature of terminology used in psychoanalytic contexts and sees that this discipline can never function out of this scientific enterprise. It seems that the majority of scholars adhere to this wave of scientific interpretation to psychoanalysis mainly MonahWinograd and Marcia Davidovich whose article "Freudian Psychoanalysis and Epistemology" (2014) stress the fact that Freud himself considered psychoanalysis as a scientific enterprise due to the fact that its results are very productive and hypotheses stem out of careful observation of subjects. Freud, though was attacked by psychologists who wanted

excluded psychoanalysis from their discipline, remained faithful to the scientific background of psychology (p.4). Freud, they add, relied on the “Naturwissenschaft” model which operates in physics and was a constant in Freudian discourse. Thus, physics is part of psychoanalysis and this supports this side’s views.

Emanuel E. Garcia openly declares in his article “Psychoanalysis Science or Fiction?” (1986) that nothing can diminish the scientific status of psychoanalysis because it analyzes mental processes of human beings, and thus, requires a great deal of data collection and case studies, and it is enough to say that psychoanalysis, like other sciences, “seeks to know” (p.4). In addition, he adds that sociologists, writers, philosophers and economists usually have no idea of what analytic data are, so how can a scholar dare claim that it might be fiction or simply a matter of interpretive discipline (Ibid. 5).

Emanuel’s arguments find a lot of support in Norman N. Holland’s article “Psychoanalysis as Science” (2004) in which Norman explores the very close relationship between psychology and psychoanalysis; he asserts the idea that Freud followed somehow the same footsteps of psychologists but simply did not want psychoanalysis to appear quite theoretical and academic. Furthermore, Norman shares his personal opinion which sees that psychoanalysis falls quite naturally within medicine where diagnosis is a holistic skill and never a literary one. From these arguments, I personally think that it is logical and fair to look at psychoanalysis from a scientific lens especially that it inspires both medical treatment and biological background (p.4)

I conclude this part with the argument of Adolf Grunbaum who puts the arguments of the hermeneutic approach completely down to earth when he claims that its leaders; though call for psychoanalysis to be theirs, have not come up with a single new psychoanalytic hypothesis that would demonstrate the fruitfulness of their approach. As to the scientific approach, Adolf confidently claims that psychoanalysis is scientifically backed up and it is in

the lead along with psychology, and that mental events require more than just ‘texts’ and ‘interpretations’, but clinical testing, observation and data collection like many other sciences (Adolf Grunbaum: 2012, pp.15-16).

## **Conclusion**

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From what has been discussed above, I arrive at the conclusion that psychoanalysis is one of the most effective disciplines in the human life; it helps people enjoy a peaceful sense of life and contributes to deciphering all what is troublesome in the human behavior. This importance is to be stressed thanks to the impressive results that clinical and talk therapy sessions are demonstrating decades over decade.

As to the nature of the discipline, psychoanalysis though was marginalized and heavily criticized for its scientific nature, careful investigation and analysis of its subjects and methods of treatment and interpretation show that it is a purely scientific discipline. It is true that it relies to some extent on interpretations, but the core essence of its course of treatment is scientific as it has been made clear in this chapter.

Literature relies much on psychoanalysis as a ‘theory of criticism’ but not a method of treatment; it is very important to keep the two fields completely separate in nature but closely interrelated in reflection. Literature makes use of psychoanalytic theory for the purpose of manifesting traumatic experiences and terrifying effects especially those associated with the aftermath of colonization; perhaps what links the two even more closely is the theme of oppression which paved a lot of path between the two to meet and serve each other.

This article is a brief sample of a large clinic called psychoanalysis; it is not the mission of this article to provide everything about psychoanalysis as a ‘science’, but only to

give a good background which will help in understanding it even more and the methods that it relies on in theorization and clinical implementation.

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