

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

UNIVERSITY OF 8 Mai 1945 / GEULMA

جامعة 8 ماي 1945/قالمة

FACULTY OF LETTERS AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES

كلية الاداب و اللغات

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

قسم اللغة الإنجليزية



Option: Literature

Depression in Adam Haslett's *Imagine Me Gone*:
A Psychoanalytical Study

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Master Degree in Language and Culture

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2020 – 2021

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my family and friends. A special feeling of gratitude to my loving parents, whose words of encouragement and push for tenacity ring in my ears, and who never stop giving of themselves in countless ways.

My beloved mother, **Chouabi Moufida**, my source of strength; I am so thankful for your support and love that helped me finish this dissertation. My dear father, **Zemmit Messaoud**, the man who supports me in everything I do. My Siblings, who always been by my side and are very special, **Maissa**, my soft and sweetest sister, my source of inspiration, **Dinou**, the best brother ever, and my young brother and sister, **Wail** and **Meryem**, the source of my happiness. To my nephew and niece, **Amir** and **Yasmine**, the joy of the family. To my dearest aunt, **Wahiba**, my second mother, her husband **Yassine**, and her children. And to my dear cousin **Abdou**. Without forgetting my brother in law, **Halim** and my sister in law, **Jijou**. I love you all.

I also dedicate this dissertation to, **Cheghib Hadjer**, my best friend since my childhood; the dearest of them all. A special thanks to **Moussaoui Manel** (my sun), my best friend and sister; I would like to thank you for all the good and bad times we had together, for all the food, joy and happiness we shared.

To my neighbor and more like a sister, **Ahmed Herga Manar**. To all my friends, who encouraged and supported me in different ways, together we created countless memories. And to my teachers and everyone who ever taught me a word throughout my career.

All the people in my life who supported me.

I dedicate this work to you all.

Malek Zemmit ou Zemmiti

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my lovely family who is my first support.

To my beloved mother, **Chouini Nadia**, the source of unending love, encouragement and my source of inspiration. To my father, **Moussaoui Amar**, the man who cared for my studies more than anyone. To my kind oldest brother, **Amine**, who always showed me love, and the most person who supported me the most, **Nadir**, my closest brother. To **Raouf**, the most annoying and kind brother.

I also dedicate this work to my second mother who raised me and taught me how to read and write, my aunt **Karima**, the person who I owe the most. Also, my aunt, **Asia**, who considered me as a daughter to her.

Special thanks to the one who made me realize the true meaning of friendship and sisterhood, my best friend, **Malak** (my moon). Thanks for being the shoulder I can always depend on. Thanks for all the unforgettable memories, all the laughs. And most of that thank you for being the best food partner.

Manel Moussaoui

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I want to express our gratitude to God Almighty for providing me with the strength, knowledge, skill, and chance to conduct this research study, persist, and successfully complete it. This accomplishment would not have been achieved without his blessings.

Second, I'd like to express my gratitude to Miss **Chihi Soraya** who served as my thesis advisor. My Guide has been an inspiration and a pillar of support for me on my path to this degree. She constantly let me do my own work on this dissertation, but she guided me in the proper path when she thought I needed it. I am lucky to have such a supervisor. Thank you, **Miss Chihi**, for the challenges you encouraged me to take on in order to help me become who I am today.

Finally, to my committee members, **Bouregaa Meriem** and **Boursace Houda**, for reading my work and reviewing it and providing insightful feedbacks.

Thank you.

Malek Zemmit ou Zemmiti

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the support of many people. Many thanks to the adviser, Chihi Soraya, who was the kindest supervisor. Thank you for your help and patience and also for your kind and supportive advice that you gave us.

Also, I would like to thank my teacher, Bouregaa, for the unforgettable year of master one. She made me love literature and chose it as a specialty. And I would like to thank her again and Mrs. Boursace for reading this dissertation.

Thank you.

Manel Moussaoui

Abstract

This thesis is an examination and a detailed interpretation of the characters of Adam Haslett's novel *Imagine Me Gone* (2016), in which he focuses on the inner side of them and the family struggles with mental illness and the chronic depression. Thus, it will look at the characters' behaviors and actions, using Sigmund Freud's and Lacan's Psychoanalytic criticism theories, which explain how humans have unconscious struggles and repressed thoughts, which affect their behaviors and that they should be analyzed in order to understand those behaviors. The author, with his great way of capturing the different inner worlds of his characters, focuses on his main character, who inherits his father's severe depression. The paper, therefore, will explain how depression affects the characters and how it prevents them from having a normal life within the family and with the outside world.

Key Words: Depression, Mental Illness, Adam Haslett, *Imagine Me Gone*, Psychoanalysis.

ملخص

هذه مذكرة فحص وتفسير مفصل لشخصيات رواية آدم هازلت " تخيلني ذهبت" (2016) ، والتي يركز فيها على جانبهم الداخلي وكفاح الاسرة مع المرض العقلي والإكتئاب المزمن .هكذا، سوف تركز على سلوكيات وأفعال الشخصيات، بواسطة إستخدام نظريات النقد التحليلي النفسي لي سيغموند فرويد و لاكان التي تشرح كيف أن الإنسان لديه صراعات غير واعية وأفكار مكبوتة تؤثر على سلوكياتهم. بطريقة الكاتب الرائعة في إلتقاط العوامل الداخلية المختلفة لشخصياته، والتركيز على شخصيته الرئيسية ، الذي يرث إكتنابه من والده .هذه الورقة سوف تفسر كيف يؤثر الإكتئاب على الشخصيات وكيف يمنعهم من التمتع بحياة طبيعية، داخل النسق العائلي ومع العالم الخارجي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: إكتئاب، مرض عقلي، آدم هازلت، تخيلني ذهبت، تحليل نفسي.

Résumé

Cette thèse est un examen et une interprétation détaillée des personnages d'Adam Haslett Le roman *Imagine-Moi Parti* (2016), dans lequel il se concentre sur leur côté intérieur. La famille est aux prises avec la maladie mentale et la dépression chronique. Ainsi, il examinera le comportements et actions des personnages, en utilisant les théories de la critique psychanalytique de Sigmund Freud et de Lacan, qui expliquent comment les humains ont des luttes inconscientes et des pensées refoulées, qui affectent leurs comportements et qu'ils doivent être analysés afin de comprendre ces comportements. L'auteur, avec son grand chemin de capturer les différents mondes intérieurs de ses personnages, se concentre sur son personnage principal, qui hérite de la grave dépression de son père. La thèse expliquera donc comment la dépression affecte les personnages et comment elle les empêche d'avoir une vie normale au sein la famille et avec le monde extérieur.

Les mots clés : Dépression, Maladie mentale, Adam Haslett, *Imagine-Moi Parti*, Analyse psychanalytique.

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Introduction

Many literary works deal with various forms of mental illness, and depression is one of the most widely explored topics in literature, owing to its pervasiveness among people and writers alike. Many writers experienced depressive episodes, which left an indelible mark on their work. Adam Haslett's *Imagine Me Gone* is one of the novels which deal with the mental illness and depression.

Adam Haslett's novel *Imagine Me Gone* is set in the United States (2016). It is regarded as one of the most successful works in terms of depicting mental illness in a clear and concise manner. The novel's main issue is depression, and the author's goal is to bring awareness to the subject, and how John suffered from this mental illness that affected his life and the lives of his family as well.

The primary goal of this thesis is to examine the psychology of the author and the characters in Adam Haslett's *Imagine Me Gone*, using Freudian and Lacanian insights to explain how the character develops and why because it provides the most useful information for demonstrating development of the mental illness in the characters, since the characters dealt with depression their whole life. Furthermore, it will be noted how Adam's life can be seen in his work as a result of the novel's relation to his real life.

The novel, *Imagine Me Gone*, by Adam Haslett has caught the attention of a number of literary critics. For example, Heller Mcalpin discusses in his online article, "*Unquiet Minds Make Absorbing Reading*," how Haslett painted a vivid image of the family's struggle with sadness and how they help one another.

Psychoanalytic theory is the one that will be used in analyzing Adam Haslett's novel *Imagine Me Gone*. Psychoanalysis is a psychological method founded by Sigmund Freud, a Viennese physician, in the 1890s and later developed by him, his students, and other followers. It includes actions, such as, applying methodologies for studying the human mind, developing a systematic understanding of the mind, and developing a method for treating psychological or emotional illnesses. Psychoanalysis grew to cover many aspects of life, including literature, over time, rather than only the treatment of mental disease to become as it is known now psychoanalytic criticism. The methods of "reading" used by Freud and following theorists to interpret texts are adopted by psychoanalytic critique. It claims that literary texts, like dreams, reveal the author's hidden aspirations and fears, and that a literary work is an expression of his or her own neuroses.

The foundation stones in psychoanalytic critique were laid by Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan. Literary texts, according to Sigmund Freud, are an expression of the author's inner unconscious wants and worries. Thus, analyzing a character's conduct will assist the reader in tracing the character's childhood, family life, fixations, traumas, and conflicts. These facts, however, are rarely addressed explicitly in the art; instead, they are frequently expressed indirectly through dreams, symbols, and visions. As a result, this criticism may occasionally supply readers with hints to help them understand symbols, events, and locations that are otherwise difficult to grasp; while, the formal kind of critique is Lacan's theory. It means that one can deduce the evolution of identity through language by concentrating on the text itself and evaluating conflicts, characters, symbols, and dream sequences. Jacques Lacan has had a significant impact on current psychoanalysis and literary theory.

This thesis includes three chapters. The first chapter examines the history of psychoanalysis in literature and demonstrates the main theories employed in psychoanalytic criticism in order to

help the reader better understand the literary work as well as the writer's psychology. The first section provides an overview of psychoanalysis and how it has evolved to embrace various aspects of life. The second incorporates both Freud's and Beck's ideas and theories on depression in literature.

The second chapter begins with a brief biography of the author, outlining the events that inspired him to write the novel as well as a brief summary of the novel. After that, the focus switches to the novel's three main themes: family, mental illness and anxiety, and homosexuality.

The third chapter analyzes the novel using Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalytic criticism, focusing on the main characters John and Michael, by using Beck's cognitive theory of depression as well as Freud's perspective on depression in their analysis. Furthermore, it aims to analyze the acts of the characters and provide an explanation for each one.

Chapter One: Psychoanalytic Literary Theory, Depression, and Literature

This chapter investigates the main approaches of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis and its developed theories that have helped to describe the human mind and its functions, and also the depression and its relation to literature. From the start, Freud's Psychoanalysis has just contained the mental part; however, now it incorporates almost every field including writing. Psychoanalysis is the apparatus that permits to see any sort of literary work and to comprehend the psychology of the author. Through time, different writers have discussed different mental issues in their literary works, and depression is among them, that the vast majority of individuals' experience.

I.1. An Overview of Psychoanalysis

I.1.1. Definition of Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysis is a word that refers to a collection of psychological ideas as well as a set of procedures that all highlight the unconscious as an important component in human adaptation and behaviors. The method of psychoanalysis was established by Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), an Austrian neurologist and psychiatrist, as a treatment for psychological problems. Freud's ideas were also used to develop a psychoanalytic theory of psychology that stresses the significance of the unconscious in all mental life.

Psychoanalysis is both a medical therapy for nervous patients and a vision of the human condition that continued to fascinate and provoke people long after Sigmund Freud's death. It includes the analyst dealing with transference, which is defined as a process in which the patient creates a dependent connection with the analyst that parallels the patient's parent-child

connection, resulting in the patient transferring his or her old childlike sentiments onto the analyst (Lipner and Muran 3).

Psychoanalysis's basic principle, that people live in conflict with themselves and try to solve problems by turning away from reality, arose from self-examination and the unique possibilities for observation given by the psychoanalytic method rather than by the experimental science (Wilson). The mask of adulthood has been removed in successful psychoanalysis. The neurotic has been stripped away, and the patient has found a space to understand and cope maturely with the immature sensations of neurotic rage, neurotic reliance, and neurotic self-deception. As a result, psychoanalysis can be characterized as a type of psychotherapy that aims to help people understand themselves better.

By interpreting a neurotic transference, the person can help to develop, work through, and resolve it. In this context, an interpretation is a psychoanalyst intervention that ties together both the conscious and unconscious aspects of the communications of the patients. According to Freud, dreams are a primary source of unconscious understanding. Freud discovered that the conscious content of a dream involves the dreamer's most recent needs, worries, and concerns; whereas, the hidden content of a dream involves unconscious childhood memories of wish accomplishment, based on his analysis of his patient's dreams as well as his self-analysis (Lipner and Muran 4).

Sigmund Freud and his afterward adherents such as the psychoanalysts, Carl Jung and Jacques Lacan, developed many of the standards, techniques, concepts, and hypotheses bringing out the psychoanalytic literary theory, and applied them within the field of literary criticism. In arrange to discover more clarifications to the symptoms of their patients (Bressler 124-125).

Psychoanalytic theory bargains with the mind and substantial side of people. This theory points to look at mental or psychic sicknesses. i.e. it is a concept that focuses on trying to get inside the head of individuals and trying to understand how they see the world based on their thoughts and experiences. Besides that, it is considered as a broad branch that deals with different aspects such as art, culture, religion, and more than that it has the closest relationship with literature.

Barry argues that Psychoanalytic Literary Theory may be a shape of literary criticism or literary theory which uses some of the methods of psychoanalysis within the interpretation of literature (qtd. in Megheni 24). It helps to understand the psychology of the author or to analyze the characters, and even to understand the author's methods. As Jung argued, "Art is a kind of innate system that takes possession of individual and makes it his tool" (37).

In arrange to recoup from their sickness, patients see specialists endorse suitable medicaments for them. Freud considered cases of his patients in his clinic to assist them to recuperate from their mental-emotional obstacles through the taking after components (Deribat 15).

Freud used to have his patients in his clinic where he used to inquire them a few questions based on the perspectives said howl. Those were in some cases from the infancy or wrongdoing period. In any case, the patients ought to not hide any part since the arrangement is within the part that they cover up or they are shy to uncover in front of individuals they respect, as the case of the young lady who misplaced locate, but at that point, she was cured after she visited Freud with her mother in his clinic. The Freudian Psychoanalytic Approach revolved around numerous concepts, the foremost vital ones of which are as follows; the ego is a levelheaded mediator, which leads and licenses desires to go out by compensating between them and the social law

without challenging it. It mediates between the self and the exterior world. The superego, on the other hand, is the moral censor, which keeps people inside social limits. Most of the time, it negates the ID. The latter, is one of the three components of identity. It is based on the rule of delight. It creates as individuals develop up. For example, some needs got to be satisfied quickly. The Id is the constrain for surviving. It spares creatures from termination; for example, the requirement for nourishment, drinking, and satisfaction. For humans, those needs ought to be guided consciously and satisfactorily. There are numerous sorts of defense mechanism, here are some of them: Projecting Defense Mechanisms is to toss someone's unpleasant or unacceptable contemplations on others. For case faulting individuals who do disasters and when one is within the same circumstance or an extraordinary case, s/he does the same thing or gets to be worse than the others. Additionally, one ignores his mistakes, deceptive behaviors and looks for those of the others. Subliminal Defense Mechanisms, is to encourage (aggression) with substitute objects. They are Freudian techniques, which are utilized unknowingly. They encourage an individual to get freed of tensions that emerge from unsatisfactory contemplations or repulsive sentiments. They are utilized to ensure people from tensions or blame. Regression Defense Mechanisms is the development shows up when one faces push. For example, a child may suck his / her thumb when they need to appear that they are hungry. Besides, a few grown-ups who missed parts of their childhood behavior act like teenagers whereas they are within the fourteens. In expansion, a child of six or more mirrors babies to draw in individuals around him, particularly when there's another infant in the house.

Displacement Defense Mechanisms is to fulfill an encouraged (aggression) with a substitute question. Example sports to put out our feeling such as outrage, or to stop smoking.

I.1.2. Psychoanalytic Criticism

Psychoanalytic criticism, like many other schools of criticism, employs a number of textual analysis techniques, including biographical, historical, formalist, intertextual, reader response, and feminist criticism. It utilizes Freud's and other theorists' "reading " methodologies for interpreting texts. It claims that literary texts, like dreams, reveal the author's hidden aspirations and fears, and that a literary work is an expression of his or her neuroses. While it is possible to psychoanalyze a specific character in a literary work, it is generally assumed that all such characters are projections of the author's personality. This critical endeavor, like psychoanalysis, looks for signs of unresolved emotions, psychological conflicts, guilt, ambivalence, and so on inside what may be a disjointed literary work. The conduct of the characters in the literary work will reflect the author's own personal traumas, family life, sexual difficulties, fixations, and other issues. However, psychological content will be portrayed indirectly, disguised, or encoded (as in dreams) using concepts such as "symbolism ", "condensation", and "displacement " (Megheni 24).

One fascinating aspect of this technique is that it supports the relevance of literature. Freud states that:

The dream-thoughts which people first come across as they proceed with their analysis often strike us by the unusual form in which they are expressed; they are not clothed in the prosaic language usually employed by our thoughts but are on the contrary represented symbolically using similes and metaphors, in images resembling those of poetic speech. (Freud 26)

According to Freud, the criteria by which a person's psyche is measured are always unclear, which is always a symbol or a metaphor that indicates a specific meaning.

Freud's approach of psychoanalytic criticism is a historical/biographical kind of critique. It is historical in nature since it concentrates on the author and the historical setting in which he or she lived. It is biographical since it focuses on the text's creator. The critique of Sigmund Freud describes human action and behavior. It frequently incorporates the psyche's influences, which include the id, superego, and ego.

Barry argues that Freudian critics emphasize the contrast between the conscious and unconscious mind; even more, in literary interpretation, they also pay great attention to the unconscious motives and sentiments of the author or the characters represented in the work. Finally, they concentrate on the literary work's "psychological" environment (qtd. in Megheni 25).

Barry and Bressler argue that Lacan's method is a formal type of critique (Megheni 27). It means that one may deduce the evolution of identity through language by focusing on the text itself and evaluating conflicts, characters, symbols, and dream sequences. Jacques Lacan has had a significant impact on current psychoanalytic thought, as well as literary theory. According to Lacan's famous statement, the unconscious is structured like a language. He redefined Freud's theories of the conscious and unconscious. in terms of De Saussure's idea of "signifiers" and "signified" (qtd. in Megheni 27).

Lacanian critics, unlike Freudian critics, pay particular attention to the text's unconscious intentions and feelings, rather than the author or the characters. They show that Lacanian psychoanalytic ideas like the mirror-stage¹ are present in the literary work. They consider the

literary work as an illustration of Lacanian ideas about language and the unconscious, notably the widespread obscurity of the signified and the unconscious's importance.

I.2. Depression

I.2.1. Definition of Depression

Many people find the anguish and loneliness of depression, a mental disorder, difficult to comprehend. Manning stated that:

Depression is such cruel punishment. There are no fevers, no rashes, no blood tests to send people scurrying with concern. Just the slow erosion of the self, as insidious as any cancer. And, like cancer, it is essentially a solitary experience. A room in hell with only your name on the door. I realize that every person, at some point, takes up residence in one or other of these rooms. But the realization offers no great comfort now. (qtd. in Bartha, et al. 8)

Depression is a term that can refer to both a sad and despondent feeling as well as a psychiatric disease. Everyone experiences melancholy, depression, or the blues at some point in their lives, generally as a result of a disappointment, the death of a loved one, or another traumatic life event. This is a common response, and our low emotions normally pass fast. A depressive mood, on the other hand, can sometimes last and turn into a problem, a more serious mental health issue, often known as depression, either clinical or major.

Psychologists define the word depression to denote a period of low mood that most people experience from time to time. Some people think that depression is a kind of feeling that a person experience that makes him/her sad, yet it is more than that; depression is a serious Psychological

condition that affects a person's life which makes him suffer emotionally and physically. It changes how he/she feels, acting and function in his daily life. Depression differs from one person to another, but there are common symptoms that show us if a person is depressed or not, such as, troubles of sleeping (either sleeping less or more), feeling hopeless and also losing appetite, and feeling fatigued all the time.

I.2.2. Types of Depression

Depression differs from the emotional swings that most people experience daily. It is a mental illness marked by persistent sadness and loss of interest. And it has different types.

The first type called Major depression is also known as major depressive disorder, clinical depression, unipolar depression, or just 'depression.' It is the most common type of depression. It is characterized by a bad mood and/or a loss of interest and pleasure in normal activities, as well as some other symptoms. The symptoms occur on most days and continue for at least two weeks. Depression symptoms interfere with many aspects of a person's life, including interpersonal relationships and jobs. It is classified as psychotic or melancholic. Psychotic depression is that people suffering from a depressive disease may lose touch with reality and develop psychosis. This might include hallucinations or delusions, such as the belief that they are evil or bad, or that they are being followed or stalked. They may also be paranoid, believing that everyone is against them or that they are the cause of disease or negative events in their environment; whereas, Melancholia is a severe form of profound depression characterized by a wide range of physical symptoms. For instance, a depressed person often begins to move slowly. They are also more probable to have a depressed mood and a general lack of enjoyment in life (“Types of Depression”).

Persistent depressive disorder, often known as dysthymia, is a kind of depression that lasts for a long time. The person could lose interest in everyday tasks, feel despondent, be unproductive, have poor self-esteem, and a general sense of inadequacy. These sentiments can linger for years, interfering with his/her relationships, career, and day-to-day tasks. Symptoms of persistent depressive illness tend to come and go over time, and their intensity might vary. Symptoms, on the other hand, rarely go away for more than two months at a time. Furthermore, significant depressive episodes can occur before or throughout the persistent depressive illness, a condition known as double depression. Symptoms of persistent depressive disorder can cause severe disability which may include; loss of interest in regular tasks; melancholy, emptiness, hopelessness; exhaustion; thoughts of remorse and worry about the past; fear of social activities, low self-esteem, feelings of failure, difficulties making decisions, excessive anger, and a reduced appetite or overeating. It is unknown what causes the chronic depressive disorder. Same as major depression, it may have several causes, such as biological differences, brain chemistry, life events, and inherited traits (“Persistent Depressive Disorder”).

Bipolar disorder is sometimes known as "manic depression," which causes mood swings that vary from high energy with an "up" mood to low energy with a "down" mood. i.e. it is a mixture of depression and mania. Mania is the polar opposite of sadness; its symptoms include feeling wonderful, having a lot of energy, having trouble concentrating on things, speaking quickly, and being angry. This isn't a figment of my mind. The individual may lose contact with reality and have a psychotic episode, such as hallucinations and delusions. Bipolar disorder is strongly related to the family background. Conflicts and anxiety can set off periods in persons with bipolar disorder, and the disease is frequently misinterpreted as depression, alcoholism, schizophrenia, or hyperactivity (“Types of Depression”).

I.2.3. Beck's Cognitive Theory of Depression

Beck's primary hypothesis is that depression is primarily a cognitive illness marked by three negative, self-relevant beliefs. The first one is a negative view about the self (e.g. feeling worthless), the second is a negative view of the world (e.g. being dissatisfied with the current life circumstances); the last one, is a negative view of the future (e.g. feeling pessimistic about their capacity to reach desirable objectives) According to Beck these three beliefs are the core element of all varieties of depression, and he referred to them as the negative cognitive triad ("Depression").

According to Beck's cognitive theory of depression, early childhood events contribute to the formation of early maladaptive schemas and related assumptions about ourselves, the environment, and the future. Following a crucial incident, generally, a trauma or life event, early maladaptive schemas and malfunctioning assumptions are activated, resulting in negative automatic thinking and depression-related behavioral, motivational, emotional, cognitive, and physical symptoms (qtd. in Poot 3) i.e. A depressive episode occurs when a big life event (for example, the loss of a loved one or the loss of one's work) collides with one or more dysfunctional beliefs. The combination of these variables triggers a negative self-schema marked by negative attentional and interpretational biases.

Beck stated that Crucial incidents are "an event which is appraised as a total, irreversible depletion of one's domain" (qtd. in Potee 3) which can comprise both continuous and discrete occurrences. Such occurrences do not necessarily result in depression; it is the meaning attached to such occurrences that determine whether or not they result in sadness, which is guided by early experiences and ideas about the world and discrete occurrences. Beck also claims that

negative thinking is a key component of depression. Numerous studies have indicated that persons who are now depressed have a more negative attitude about themselves, their present life condition, and their future than persons who are not depressed (“Depression”).

I.2.4. Freud Views about Depression

Since Sigmund Freud is the father of psychoanalysis; he emphasized many mental illnesses, such as depression. In his book, *Mourning and Melancholia*, published in 1917, Freud discussed the phenomena of depression, claiming, among other things, that depression may take two forms: the first is connected to sadness or grief, referred to as "Mourning," and is the result of the loss of someone you love. Melancholia, on the other hand, was defined by Sigmund Freud as the loss of the meaning of life ("Depression"). Years later, in *Civilization and its discontents*, Sigmund Freud wrote about depression (1930). He gave an extensive discussion of the evaluations in the context of family and society. According to him, people may be unintentionally aggressive in order to avoid negative consequences and maintain a positive relationship with the outside world. According to Freud, the superego is involved in the link between depression and aggression (“Manuscript”).

Later on, based on Freud's theory, modern analysis has recognized the two concepts that are related to self-perceptions: when a person feels that there is no one or anything that could pull him out from the situation of sadness, hopelessness will contain him, which automatically leads him to depression. And the other point that contemporary researchers have added is the feeling of worthless; individuals here will see themselves as fragile and their lives have no meaning. It does not seem cruel that we may discover one side effect in one individual, now and then we confront both

perceptions in one case i.e. an individual may feel hopeless and loses the intrigued in life at the cruel time he may feel frail ("Depression").

I.3. Literature and Depression

Depression affects everything, especially, writing and literature (Nicholson). It is statistically confirmed that most writers suffer from depression. But, depression is caused by the standard variables, such as biochemistry gone awry, early childhood events, life variables, and so on, and not by writing. Having bad childhood events, flawed brain chemistry, and many life events may enhance the writer's probability of having depression. Being constantly confronted with negative reviews, rejection, fluctuating income, and declining sales make the writers prone to depression. And what others think of a writer determines a large part of their success.

Depression is unconcerned by who you are, how well-known you are, or how many books you have published. It is what it is. JK Rowling, for example, was a famous author who battled serious depression. Stephen King, who used drugs and alcohol to cope with his misery, Anne Rice, who became depressed after the death of her five-year-old daughter, and many more (Sabre). This does not mean that all the writers are depressed, or that you have to be depressed in order to write. As Alan Manvitez quoted, "There is some element of truth to the stereotype, but you don't need to be depressed to write, just as you don't need to be mad to be creative" (qtd. in Sabre).

Sometimes the writing causes depression, and other times the literature is about depression or represents the writers' sentiments and mood. Many writers wrote about depression, and many of

them were depressed themselves. They intentionally and subconsciously reflected their mental health in their writings.

One of the most well-known depressed authors of the contemporary period, and the author of the *Harry Potter* series is J.K. Rowling. Before becoming a global successful author, she suffered from depression as a single, poor mother, relying on darker feelings to create the "Voldemort," and the monsters who tortured and plagued the series' protagonists. Her works support Thomson's view that disclosing your depression to others might sometimes be a method of seeking treatment; Thomson stated that writing could be a way for one author to signal others, while for another, it could be a method of recording the information obtained from their ruminative efforts (qtd. in Vann).

Sylvia Plath, one of the world's most recognized poets. Her work *"The Bell Jar"* is a well-received depiction of a character's suicidal depression. She attempted suicide for the first time when she was 19 years old; but despite her battle with depression throughout her short life, she had a successful writing career. According to the researcher Thomson, depression's influence in creative writing would also depend on the specific writer, their personal history, their situations, and the type of their depressions (qtd. in Vann). The famous unhappy writer committed suicide at the age of 30 by inhaling gas from the oven.

Virginia Woolf is a well-known author who produced several notable works of literature. Aside from her bright mind, which propelled her to tremendous success, she suffered for the rest of her life as a result of depression. Woolf's mental problems came from her family, which is the primary cause of her suicide. Her father, Leslie Stephen, was diagnosed with "neurasthenia," while her mother suffered from depression. We can deduct from this that Virginia acquired mental illnesses from her family. She did not have a single traumatic incident that devastated her

life; rather, she went through a series of them, beginning with sexual assault at the hands of her stepbrother George when she was nine years old. This sad event marked the beginning of Woolf's suffering, which had a negative influence on her psyche. Virginia Woolf wrote about it in her short story "*22 Hyde Park Gate*" She offered a detailed account of her stepbrother George's harassment of her. Virginia suffered a major loss in her life not long after this incident when her mother died. Virginia's struggles were depicted in several of her writings, including "*Mrs. Dalloway*" and "*To The Lighthouse*", but owing to her repeated attempts at suicide, Virginia couldn't write like she used to because she was depressed. On March 28, 1941, Virginia packed her pockets with stones and drowned in a river.

F. Scott Fitzgerald was an American writer with many successful literary works. He began to write at an early age, and his first work was published when he was thirteen years old. Scott is one of the writers who suffered from depression; his condition started to deteriorate following his great success with "*Side of Paradise*". Fitzgerald's wife Zelda was diagnosed with Schizophrenia, which allowed him to expand his knowledge of psychology, but it doesn't end there (Vann). Fitzgerald had a bad case of depression in 1936, which caused him to have writer's block. At the time, Fitzgerald thought that his writing abilities were slipping away. He died from a heart attack at the age of forty-four.

« Wisdom comes through suffering » (Aeschylus); from these few words of the Greek writer Aeschylus, we can assume that most of the brilliant works of the greatest writers were raised from a mind that suffered. Greeks believed from the beginning that there is a relationship between inspiration and madness. Recently, researchers shed light on the link between

depression and creativity in different kinds of arts including literature they found that the lack of balance of the psyche of the individual raises the creativity in the writer in particular poets (Thomas 1). Poets and fiction writers have a higher proclivity for madness; according to numerous studies. Among these studies Ludwig's (1995) showed that artists are more prone to depression, this theory was debated due to the writer Sylvia Plath who suffered from depression in addition to her a lot of writers faced depression, however, they came up with great works such as Theodore Roethke who suffered from depression and his illness marked in his poems which expresses the personal sorrow of seeking spiritual truth and wishing to be free of the mortal world. Edgar Allan Poe was also considered one of the writers who had a hard experience with depression he was a writer and poet and most of his suffering is notable in his poems. From this, we cannot deny that in some cases suffering minds are like muck to creativity and masterpieces because through, their suffering, their thoughts and concepts about life will go deeper (Pérez).

Literature can be written about depression, even if the authors are not depressed. Adam Haslett the American fiction writer wrote about depression even though he was not depressed. "*Imagine Me Gone*" one of his well-known works is about a couple, Margaret and John, who married despite his chronic depression. Adam stated that it is the most intimate book he has ever written. And that mental illness runs in his family; his father committed suicide when he was 14 years old. As a result, the novel focuses more directly on familial material. The challenge was to remove himself from the material sufficiently to be liberated from the facts. He had to grant himself the freedom to use and depart from life's substance, to make the imaginative steps required to write a novel (O'Keeffe). He explained that the novel is a depiction of his family situation and their experience with depression. Haslett stated that depression and darkness are

characterized by a lack of emotional attachment and a loss of feeling. He said “whatever else this book is; I hope it's emotional” (qtd. in O'Keeffe).

This chapter aimed to give general views and studies about the theories and the concepts that will be applied to the analysis of the novel and the characters. The theory of psychoanalysis expanded from a therapeutic procedure to a multifaceted theory, especially, the Freudian approach and Lacan's psychoanalytic criticism. This theory has advanced psychology and has even spread to other fields of study such as literature, where psychoanalytic literary theory is used to analyze works of literature as well as the writers themselves, along with their feelings and moods. It studies the mental health and the psychological problems and issues of the characters and the authors; the major mental disease that is dealt with in literature is depression. Depression is the most common psychological disorder which is known in the literature. It is known that writers are more prone to depression or more interested in writing about it. *Imagine Me Gone* is a good example of depressive literature as it depicts the life of family which suffered from depression for years, starting from the father to his son, and how their depression affected the whole family. The novel is an excellent literary work for analysis utilizing both Beck's and Freud's depression theory and psychoanalytic criticism of Freud and Lacan, due to its well-structured events and its depiction of the real family events and the family members' issues with the father's and the son's mental illness.

A general overview of the novel, from its author, the plot summary to the major themes will be presented in the following chapter to help the readers better comprehend it. It will help understand the characters, and how the story is told.

Chapter Two: Adam Haslett's *Imagine Me Gone*

Adam Haslett is an influential American writer of half-English origins whose novels achieved great success and won prizes. He mostly deals with psychological problems in his fiction such as mental illness and family depictions. This chapter offers a general overview of one of his most famous and successful novels, *Imagine Me Gone*. It includes a short biography of Adam Haslett, the representation of the characters in *Imagine Me Gone*, followed by the plot summary, and finally concludes with the themes that dominate the narrative.

II.1. Biography of the Author

Adam Haslett was born on December 24, 1970, in Rye, New York. He is half-English; he was born in Port Chester, New York, and spent the first nine years of his childhood in Kingston, Massachusetts, before moving to Oxford shire, England, with his family. Three years later, the family moved to Wellesley, Massachusetts, where Haslett attended high school. After graduating from Swarthmore, he worked for George Trescher Associates in New York and the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund. His first time of full-time writing began when he was awarded a seven-month contract from the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, Massachusetts. He then went to the Iowa Writers' Workshop, where he completed most of his first book. He went on to Yale Law School after Iowa and worked for a US Attorney's office, a prison legal services clinic, and a New York City law firm. In 2002, he returned to New York, where he has lived and worked since then ("Adam Haslett").

Adam wrote several works that saw great success. "*Notes of my biography*" considered his first short story it was published in *Zoetrope* magazine. It was the first story of his collection "*You Are Not a Stranger Here*". And the main subject of the book is mental illness. *Union*

Atlantic, his first novel, was published in 2010 and is about a property dispute between a young banker and an elderly school teacher who is outraged by the banker's new mansion. The novel was completed the week before the financial crisis of 2008, and it depicts the culture of impunity that contributed to the Great Recession. And it was nominated for the Commonwealth Prize and won Lambda Literary Award. After six years from that his second novel *Imagine Me Gone* was released. The novel was about the struggle of a family with depression and how this mental illness affected all the members of the family. *Imagine me gone* achieved great success, in 2019 it classified among the twenty best novels, and won the Los Angeles Times book prize (“Adam Haslett”).

Besides, that Haslett published different works that contained essays and reviews. He also wrote about American politics, the financial crisis, and a variety of cultural subjects, including gay marriage, in magazines such as *The New Yorker*, *Vogue*, *Esquire*, *The Financial Times*, *The Guardian*, and *The Nation*. But his main focus was on fiction which he did not just write about; he has also taught at Iowa Writers' Workshop and Columbia University as a visiting lecturer (“Adam Haslett”).

II.2. Plot Summary

When John, is hospitalized for depression in 1960s London, his fiancé Margaret is faced with a decision whether to continue with their plans despite what she now knows about his health, or to avoid the pain that his depression may cause to her. And finally, she makes the decision to marry him despite everything. *Imagine Me Gone* is the vivid story of what happens as a result of this act of love and faith. The novel centers on Margaret and John, a married couple. John suffers from depression, as does one of his children. The story is told by the couple and their three

children, with each giving a different view for different chapters. According to Publishers Weekly, Haslett's book "tenderly and luminously deals with mental illness and the life of the mind." The narrative style (which alternates between monologues, letters, and messages from the doctor's office) can be stiff at times. Haslett, on the other hand, has created an interesting character in Michael. This is a haunting and hypnotic novel.

Margaret, a young American girl, is getting ready to marry her fiancé, John, a young Englishman. She goes to the United States for the holidays and then returns to England, where she discovers that John is in the hospital. His continuing struggle with depression has brought him there though it is the first time in a long time. Margaret still intends to marry him and stays with him while he recovers. Margaret and John remain together after many years. Michael, Celia, and Alec are their three children. Michael, the same as his father, is the only one of the three who suffers from mental illness. Michael suffers from severe anxiety. John's life begins to change when he loses a number of jobs and finds himself jobless with no prospects of finding work. His depression is triggered by his concern about his inability to provide for his family. John says his final goodbyes to his children before taking his own life.

Following John's death, his family focuses on assisting Michael, whose mental state deteriorates as he grows older. He commonly obsesses over women he is unable to have since they are married or gay. People avoid Michael as a result of his obsessive behavior, which adds to his anxiety. He is having difficulty getting into college and, later, graduate school. He starts getting into school, but he does not complete his studies. He drops out of college; then, he has a mental breakdown, forcing him to drop out of graduate school and move back in with his mother. He has amassed debts over the years by taking out loans that he was unable to repay. This,

predictably, adds to his anxiety. Medicines assist Michael in dealing with his situation, but the more he utilizes them, the more medicine he requires.

When Michael suffers from anxiety episodes, he seeks help from his family. They offer him encouragement as he continues to chase women who do not show up for dates with him. During these instances, he feels as if he is unable to breathe. Because of their devotion to Michael, the family frequently neglects the needs of others and suffers financial problems. In the meantime, they have personal matters to attend to. Celia is dissatisfied with her job and finds it difficult to commit to her partner whom she lives with. Alec, who is gay, struggles with commitment in the same way that his sister does. Margaret is suffering as a result of Michael's failure to repay all of the loans he has amassed.

Alec decides to arrange a sort of intervention and attempt to wean Michael off his medication. Celia, who is not hopeful about the result, agrees to assist and hopes for the best. She and Margaret are on the edge of collapse from the pressure of trying to help Michael. Michael agrees to concentrate on helping himself because he wants to move on, just like the rest of the family. Unfortunately, Michael is unable to survive without his medication and he ends up dead. He left a note for his family which helped them in dealing with their own problems. They have finally grasped Michael's meaning. Celia marries, and Alec commits to someone. Margaret moves to a new home and is able to remember her life with John without feeling unhappy.

II.3. Representation of the Characters in *Imagine Me Gone*

Adam Haslett writes in the first person, swapping between Margaret, John, Michael, Celia, and Alec, the members of the family unit. This approach is suitable given that the novel is about a family dealing with the ravages of mental illness and answering the question of how they're

willing to go to save those they love. Adam represents this story with five voices because he wanted to distinguish the voice in order for the reader to see the characters as distinct individuals. Through presenting each character in a separate chapter, Adam allows the reader to understand each character in a good way which makes them understand more about their relationship with each other and how they were the main effect on each other since the book is all about the family dynamic and how they deal with Michael and his father in order to help them (Haslett 00:10:49- 00:11:04).

Adam's main goal this is to show that even when the characters have a good intention to help their family members. Their help will be ended up changing their family to what they want them to become not to what the character that needs help to need to become which is being themselves. The best example of that is when Alec tried to help his brother Michael by taken away his Medication in the hopes he will get better but it ended up with Michael's death. Hereby representing each character individually, the reader will realize better the intention of the characters to their family members and the reason for coping with Michal and the father (Haslett 00:11:07- 00:12:12).

II.4. Themes of the Novel with Illustrations

Adam Haslett applied many themes on his novel, but only the major ones are going to be discussed and analyzed in this study with giving illustrations from the novel itself.

II.4.1. Mental Illness and Anxiety

The historian Roy Porter points out that mental illness has a complicated history in which it has been utilized by society for several purposes, and perceptions of it have evolved based on the needs of a certain group of individuals (qtd. in Walk 5). Mental illness and writers appear to be

inextricably linked; it became a topic for discussion and writing. The theme of insanity has always had a place in literature, whether it is written from a personal or a socially conscious perspective (Bullis 5). Mental illness is also useful for authors since it provides an easy way to ensure that readers understand the link between the characters' actions and their mental state (Walk 27).

In *Imagine Me Gone*, and for four decades, a whole family is destroyed by mental illness. The novel is a captivating depiction of how depression and anxiety affect both the ill and everyone who loves them. Mental illness in the novel starts from chapter one, with Margaret, a mother and frequent librarian, who is concerned about the insecurity of her existence with her British husband, John, a miserable venture capitalist who is depressed and plagued by 'the beast' within him, she is at the same time so worried and anxious about his situation, and she says about him:

He has moods, and occasionally a stretch of a few weeks when I notice his energy flagging, and I don't suppose I'll ever be able to rid myself of the worry I have then, that it will all get much worse... You could call that perverse. Fear playing that role. But it's not only fear, and what is hard to explain is that the fear is also a kind of tenderness. I'm the only one who knows in the way I do that he needs someone to watch over him. (Haslett 25)

John suffers from mental illness and depression; his narration part is only present in the first chapter because it ends by him committing suicide. John describes the way he felt the day he suicided:

I sense a tingling in my feet and ankles and up into my calves. It is the opposite to numbness...My lower ribs rise with my breath up off my stomach, stretching the

skin from navel to sternum, arching my back. It feels as if my lungs have doubled in size, allowing me to swallow air in great gulp-fulls. (Haslett 103)

It is also mentioned how John committed suicide, he describes it as follows:

The razor opens the skin of my wrist almost painlessly. Blood runs down my palm, and along the length of my fingers. My head rolls back, and I gaze upward. And there it is: the face of the beast—my face—human after all. (Haslett 104)

When John commits suicide as a result of many job losses, the family's collective concern shifts to Michael, the eldest son. He is a precocious adolescent who is prone to crazy fabrications and is the inheritor of his father's disease. This emerges in Michael as an anxiety disorder that dooms him to a life of failures, matching John's. All the family members are anxious in their way. Celia about her relationship with Paul, Alec is also anxious about many things, such as his mother's finances, his job, and his relationship with Seth.

Michael is the center of the novel; he suffered from mental illness just like his father did. In chapter two, at the start of his part of narration Haslett mentioned a patient intake of Michael in which he was asked a question by his psychiatry:

“What are the problems you are seeking help for?” He answers:

“Fear, trembling, individualism, and white supremacy” (Haslett 107)

Michael is aware of his illness and problems and all that is happening he says:

In brief, Dad didn't make it; Mom's never taken a pill in her life; Alec had an ulcer early on, when they were still fashionable, but has since transitioned into the

back-pain industry; and I'd guesstimate Celia's chronic fatigue peaked out around '94 somewhere in the Bay ARE. (Haslett 108)

Mental illness is very familiar in Haslett's works. He removes the novel real-life problems and focuses on the family relationships and struggles such as mental illness and anxiety, observing how each one's life is changing, ending John's and Michael's health problems with death, making Celia a responsible adolescent before her time, and making Alec a freak who prefers one-night stand than actual relationships. *Imagine Me Gone* is a long, character-driven work that should be appreciated for its deep and empathic picture of a family. Michael is a fascinating character who is both clever and tragic. This is not a plot-driven story, but rather one propelled by the novel's never-ending tides of sorrow and hope.

II.4.2. Family

The value of family cannot be underestimated. The connections with parents, children, and siblings or the lack of connections thereof may have a major impact on people's lives, whether they are loving or trying. The same can be said for fictional characters. As a result of their experiences through the novel, their family views may be challenged, transformed, or renewed (Letourneau). Relationships are what make the family works as a literary theme. The relation is determined by the external conflict of the plot as well as the protagonists' behaviors. These building pieces will have a significant impact on the family relations and may influence the characters' perspectives on the family by the end. And there are several ways to examine the family as a theme because each literary family is unique and its members have their thoughts and views about the family concept.

Haslett in *Imagine Me Gone* depicts the theme of the family from many perspectives. Starting with love and sacrifice, Margaret does not want to leave John just because he has a mental disease, but in fact, she decides to marry him despite everything and even though she knows that he is depressed and he may never get rid of it, which for sure will affect their lives. Margaret sacrificed her life for love. She says: “I fell in love watching him do that. I knew the starkness of the difference between his savoir-faire and his wordless, heavy-breathing grasp in private...” (Haslett 19).

Margaret accepts to marry a depressed guy and builds a family together. They have a normal life together in the first years of their marriage, she declares: “In the fifteen years of our marriage, he’s never gone back to the hospital or come anywhere close, in fact. He’s never had to stop working, or gone nearly so low” (Haslett 25).

This quote makes it clear that John despite his chronic depression he kept trying so hard to fight it to have a normal life with his family full of joy and love. Margaret says about John: “He kisses my cheek. However nervous he was at the beginning about our lovemaking, he’s always been gentle” (Haslett 32).

John in fact despite his illness he always tries to be a good father, he does not want to make his children feel the need for certain feelings or things, he gives them what he did not have from his father, this was mentioned in the first chapter in the only existent part of John’s narration, in which he says:

I taught my children how to handle themselves on the water, how to step in and out of a boat... I taught them how to ride their bicycles... I cut paths in the field

for them to ride on, and built them a tree fort... You could say that I fathered them as I was never fathered. (Haslett 74)

Love is also seen in the novel through the characters' behaviors as they all try to stay together no matter what struggles they have or problems they face; they are enjoying their life like a normal family, Margaret says:

And here we are, the five of us, floating up Route 1 in this boat of a car, the children beginning to scramble again in the back: Michael calling out additions to his list of a hundred names...causing Celia to climb over the backseat to protect her from Michael's mockery, while Alec stands up behind his father's seat and reaches his hand around to play with John's double chin, asking how much longer it's going to be, all of them their father's impatient children. (Haslett 26)

Family is depicted also in *Imagine Me Gone* through the members' relationships, and how they stand together and care for each other even in the simple things. Michael in the first chapter he writes letters to his aunt all the time, he tells her: "The truth is; I think Mom's really pissed. Which always makes me nervous. I want to find a way to calm her down" (Haslett 62).

This quote shows how Michael cares for his mother and that he wants to calm her, which marks the family bonding. He also tells his aunt: "The five of us have our eyes fixed on one another like cement. Someday soon you'll come to visit us in England at our new house and we'll all have a good laugh about the crazy turns life can take" (Haslett 67).

The family bond is seen in how all the family members stick together despite their father's mental illness, they help John in ways they themselves do not notice but John does. He says:

“My family will never know how they saved me. Margaret, maybe, but not the children” (Haslett 88).

John also says about his daughter Celia: “She is being kind. As she was raised to be. To strangers and relatives and those to whom it is good to show care” (Haslett 97).

Even when suiciding John thinks of his family, and how it selfish from him to leave them alone. But, depression is stronger than him, the beast defeated him this time. He says, talking to himself: “You wretch! It cries, desperate for its life. You selfish wretch! Leaving them with nothing! But it is no good. It is my prey now” (Haslett 104).

After John's death, the family focuses on assisting Michael, whose mental state deteriorates as he grows older. He inherited his father's depression. Now the care of the family is shifted to him. All the family members care about him and are worried about his situation. Celia tells him: “I want to help you” (Haslett 244).

His mother Margaret states: “I drove up there to visit him almost every day, bringing him bags of pistachios, which he's always loved, and music magazines, and whatever toiletries he needed” (Haslett 252).

The family is worried about Michael and is trying to help him get better. Alec cares the most for Michael even in the simplest things. Alec says to Michael: “It's all right if you need to wake me up, just knock on my door” (Haslett 291).

Alec keeps on trying to help his brother Michael, which makes him take away his Medication in the hopes he will get better, but unfortunately kills him.

Even after John's and Michael's death, the rest of the family keeps their bond together they are somehow still connected to them even if they are not alive. And that they all stand as one unit not as individuals. Which is said by Celia: "We're not individuals. We're haunted by the living as well as the dead" (Haslett 311).

II.4.3. Homosexuality

Adam in his novel *Imagine Me Gone* represents homosexuality as a theme to his novel in different characters. Homosexuality is represented in the main character Michael. Adam shows that Michael's father was not the only reason for his depression. The other reason that makes him depressed or makes his situation getting worst is his obsession with women he could not have. Whenever Michael finds a woman and he wants to be with her, he discovered that she is married to someone else he will feel depressed and his situation gets worst. Michael frequently contributes to the novel's comedic levity. He jokes, when asked about his sexual proclivity for unavailable black women. This ambiguity is balanced somewhere else when Michael admits that his desire for black lovers has "morphed into something more packed, He says: "I would have been a lot better off as a lesbian of color," (Haslett 134).

He says: "The desire to physically overcome racial privilege by becoming [my lover's] slave...But the fact is my life has been all caught up with black women" (Haslett 133-134).

Michael's attraction to women cannot cause him serious anxiety, which makes him suffer from depression for a long time because he could not have what he wants every time. Perhaps without this obsession, he would not suffer from depression that much because whenever he could not have a woman he wants he will feel that he is alone and could never have the love he deserves. And he says it in these words: "I never would have kept up my work if I hadn't seen up

close the depression and self-hatred that women I've tried to be with have suffered but not wanted to discuss" (Haslett 134-135).

In Adam's novel, homosexuality plays an important role in Michael's psyche, it can be classified as one of the psychological diseases that negatively affect a person's life and health.

On the other hand, there is his brother Alec, the family's youngest member, who has a very contemporary gay point of view. Alec is a journalist who considers himself to be a "clean-cut professional." He is, however, obsessive to the point of being known as "the family actuary." He is constantly concerned about money and, out of fear of his mother's household mold, wears a mask at Christmas family gatherings. Alec's homosexuality started when he was young (Cordova).

Alec confessed to his mother that he is gay when he was seventeen, he was confident and not ashamed of his situation. his mother declares: "He was only seventeen, still a boy, when he announced it to me, and yet he did it with such seriousness and finality" (Haslett 177). Although he was proud of himself as gay when he was younger, it caused him pain as he grew older. Alec is unable to find the right man with whom he could spend the rest of his life happily. But, he can finally commit to someone after his brother Michael's death.

Imagine Me Gone is a literary work that depicts reality. Adam Haslett when writing this novel chose to base his themes on real-life matters, he wanted the readers to understand the hidden message behind it. *Imagine Me Gone* is not only a story of a family who struggles with mental illness, but, it is also a reflection of the family's bonds despite their differences and problems and how they stand for each other despite everything. The novel offers fascinating events narrated by the five characters each from his/her perspective, which makes the readers thirsty to know more

and more by raising questions and develops their critical thinking. In the coming chapter, an application of the psychoanalytic literary criticism of Freud and Lacan with Beck's and Freud's theories of depression will be applied to the novel to analyze the characters and the writer himself.

Chapter Three: Psychoanalytic Criticism and Depression in *Imagine Me Gone*

This chapter applies Freud's and Lacan's psychoanalytic criticism and depression's theories of Beck and Freud on *Imagine Me Gone*. This criticism will help and permit the reader to better comprehend the psychology of the author and the characters.

III.1. Psychoanalytic Criticism on *Imagine Me Gone*

III.1.1. Freudian Criticism

Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory is used in Freudian criticism to interpret a work in terms of the author's known psychological problems or, conversely, to build the author's psychic existence from unconscious revelations in his work and also the character's hidden thoughts. As a result, the current study will illustrate how Freud's concepts can be relevantly applied to Haslett's novel, *Imagine Me Gone*, for better and appropriate understanding.

The psychoanalytic theory is used to analyze the author and his life, and the literary work is seen to supply evidence for this analysis. And this is often called "psychobiography." Haslett's life actually is not well known; a lot of parts of his life are hidden, but, in one interview, he stated that *Imagine Me Gone* is somehow a depiction of his real life in which he said: "This is the most personal book I have written" (Haslett). He depicted his real life with all its events whether hurtful or joyful in the novel. His fiction is driven by his repressed desires; the unconscious contains traumatic events, emotions, unacknowledged desires, anxieties, unsolved conflicts, and so on. This unconscious is created by expunging painful events from consciousness, a process Freud referred to as repression ("Psychoanalytic Criticism"). Haslett used many things from his real life in his novel; the most remarkable ones are the historical settings and the place where the

characters lived. As already mentioned in his biography, Adam is half-English from his father side, and half-American from his mother, which is the same thing used in *Imagine Me Gone*, the father John is English and the mother Margaret is American. They also lived in both England and America exactly like what happened in his real life. The timing of the novel when John and Margaret got engaged is mentioned in the part of Margaret on the first chapter, “That autumn of ’63 after our engagement” (Haslett 20).

The parents in the novel got married around the year 1964; and the author was born on 1970, and he already mentioned in one of the interviews that he had an older brother. From this we can grasp that the time setting of the novel is so much close to the author’s real life. The fact that they have moved from London to live in America did not please Adam, and it is seen in his novel when Margaret says:

This isn’t the town we were meant to live in, or even the country, and it’s not the place we want to put the children through school. We lived in London and had Michael and Celia there for a reason, because that was John’s home. (Haslett 15)

So the repressed complains and feelings of the author are seen through his characters.

Haslett’s father committed suicide because of mental illness, and it was mentioned by him in an interview about his novel, *Imagine Me Gone*: “Mental illness is in my family – my own father committed suicide when I was 14” (Haslett). This action for sure was traumatic and hurtful for Adam, and it was repressed in his unconscious. Adam moved this trauma from his unconscious to the conscious through his fiction; he portrayed his dead father on the character of John, who also committed suicide, leaving his family struggling.

The novel opens with a message; Haslett dedicates this message to someone called Tim:

For Tim: Jean Genet said “Perhaps all music, even the newest, is not so much something discovered as something that re-emerges from where it lay buried in the memory, inaudible as a melody cut in a disc of flesh. (Haslett 7)

This message is somehow related to one of the main characters. In the novel Michael is portrayed as an intelligent and charming boy who likes spending time making house music. And Haslett’s message is clearly dedicated to someone who is obsessed with music. In one of the interview he stated that the character of Michael is created based on his brother. He said: “My older brother, whom the character of Michael is based on, was a man who lived in through music to an extraordinary extent” (Haslett). It can be seen through the quote that he is affected by his older brother.

Michael’s personality is remarkable with particular artistic talents in contrast to other boys of his age. Hence, the author emphasizes his intelligence and distinction from his siblings in music and also in his writing skills; he is portrayed as an inventive character, a precocious child who uses big vocabulary and writes letters to his aunt, Penny, in a very inventive way. One of his splendid quotes comes as follows:

So there she was, live, in person, in the same room as me, in dazzling white sequins and blood red lip gloss and metallic-blue eye shadow, her upper lips and nose flaring slightly heavenward, just like on the album covers, and her long painted fingernails wrapped tightly around her wireless black mic. That audience of luxury-craft pickers had no concept of her larger significance. They were just there to digest. (Haslett 57)

These magnificent expressions are so inventive which for sure can be a depiction of the author's talent.

The desires of the author were portrayed in his fiction. Adam confessed in an interview that he is gay, so he portrayed his homosexuality in the character of Alec, he said: "I've always written about the world I occupy, and I am gay, so the psychic life of that interests me. I wanted to take the gay character, Alec..." (Haslett). Haslett has a desire to have a happy family who lives in harmony despite the struggles and the mental illness. The family in the novel was brought together after what they passed through, starting from the father's suicide to the death of the older brother. Adam said the same about his family to the interviewer: "My family are very close; we were probably brought together by my father's death" (Haslett). He said that his family knew about what he is writing, that he had to realize that this would be a difficult book for them to read. But he conceives of this novel as a love tale about a family, so he knew there would be no character assassination. And, while he pulled characteristics from his family for the characters, this is balanced by other components that he imagined (Haslett). It is seen also from the quote that Haslett was inspired about his family in the creation of the characters, which according to the Freudian criticism is a sign of repressed emotions, desires and maybe fears the author has about his family.

The psychoanalytic theory is utilized to examine one or more of the characters, the psychological theory is used to explain the characters' actions and motives. The work seems more realistic the closer the theory appears to relate to the characters ("Psychoanalytic Criticism").

According to Freud homosexuality is related to the theory of Oedipal Complex. The oedipal triangle (child, mother, and father) is essential for development. The theory claimed that the heterosexual outcome reflected 'normal' sexual development, whereas the homosexual outcome signified arrested sexual development. In theory, the boy develops feelings for his mother while being jealous of his father. In the natural course of development, the son rejects his feelings for the mother and identifies with the father, resulting in an ego strong enough to seek his own love object later in life. And If the boy does not let go of his motherly instincts and connect with his father, he will have a weaker ego, unable to seek love objects in females, and therefore will exhibit homosexuality (Phelan 344).

The homosexuality is portrayed in the novel through the character of Alec. He is the family's youngest member, who has a very contemporary gay point of view. He knew about his homosexuality in a very young age, and he was proud of it, he was not ashamed or something else, even when he confessed it to his mother he did it with pride and force. Margaret says: "He was only seventeen, still a boy, when he announced it to me, and yet he did it with such seriousness and finality" (Haslett 177).

Alec in his childhood was so loved by his father, Margaret tells the story of them as children and she says about Alec: "His father's attention is pouring over him, and only him, like the air of heaven" (Haslett 27).

Alec is so attached to his mother since he was a baby, he is different from his brother Michael, when his mother touches him he does not mind it which is a sign that he is attached to his mother, she says: "Alec is so easy to touch. He never doesn't want to be touched" (Haslett 29).

Being close to the mother and not giving up her to the father is what build a weakened ego and therefore is the reason for being gay as Freud stated, and nothing else, because according to what have been told by Margaret, Alec is strong enough to face his own problems and discomforts, she says about him and his sister Celia: “Celia’s and Alec’s discomforts were creaturely and fluid; they passed through them and were gone” (Haslett 30).

Alec’s love for his mother is seen behind many accidents; in one of the letters that Michael writes to his aunt he tells her:

Unfortunately, as we were on our way to dinner the first night, Mom tripped on one of those raised metal doorjambs...but she got her other leg caught up too and was whipped down onto the metal flooring pretty hard...Basically, I think she broke her leg. (Haslett 54)

And he continues: “Alec is currently missing. We lost him at lunch buffet the day after Mom’s accident and haven’t been able to find him since” (Haslett 54).

These quotes show that Alec could not handle his mother’s accident and he run away from everyone.

The previous analysis shows that Alec always cares for his mom and makes it clearer that nothing is the reason behind his homosexuality, except his bond with his mother which is never dissolved and is exactly what Freud explained in the Oedipal Complex theory.

III.1.2. Lacanian Criticism

The formal type of criticism is Lacan's methodology. It means that one can comprehend the work by concentrating on the text itself and examining conflicts, characters, symbols, and dream sequences to evaluate the development of identity through language (Megheni 27).

Lacanian critics, unlike Freudian critics, pay particular attention to the text's unconscious impulses and feelings, rather than the author or the characters (Megheni 27).

Lacan selected language as one of the standards that characterize the beauty of a literary work because it is one of the areas that he concentrated on for literary criticism. On the contrary of Freud, he suggested that the author's main source of pleasure for his readers is an aesthetic pleasure.

Consider being a little distinct piece of work when it comes to Adam's style. The novel is divided into chapters; each of which is told by a different character. Each chapter was given a title based on the character's name. The purpose of doing so is to demonstrate their true intentions as well as their feelings and actions. Margaret's first chapter detailed all of her feelings regarding her husband and how their relationship had changed. She stated that despite spending the entire year with her husband, she still does not know him very well and that her feelings about him have changed. She says:

That tension of not knowing but wanting to know. You'd think that after seventeen years of being together and three children and moving together from London to a small town in Massachusetts, this kind of mystery would be dead and gone, the ephemera of early love washed out by practicality. And much of it is. He doesn't charm me anymore. (Haslett 20)

Adam also used precise words in which he described the situations of the characters enabling the reader to visualize and live every situation the character went through, especially, when describing John's or Michael's ailment. He provided a comprehensive picture of the symptoms of depression and how they felt. John felt like this before he dies, as stated in the prior quote:

I sense a tingling in my feet and ankles and up into my calves. It is the opposite of numbness. My muscles are awake; my blood moves freely. This halo of warmth creeps over my knees, easing space into the mattress. It lingers over my belly, and my gut goes slack, unclenching the muscles at the base of my spine. (Haslett 103)

In his novel, Adam also used a different manner of storytelling than usual. He used written letters between Michael and his aunt to shift the reader away from the ordinary text and into letters that highlight Michael and his aunt's connection and how close they were, as they always shared each other's stories. One of those letters include:

Dear Aunt Penny,

Greetings. I hope this letter finds you better off than we are. Our journey is proving to be a rough one. It started with the town car dad had hired to drive us from his friend's house in Armonk to the west side piers breaking down on the Henry Hudson in ninety-five-degree heat... (Haslett 53)

Adam's writing style aids the readers in comprehending the issue of depression and how it affected the character. He makes them feel every moment they went through by using the correct words and giving them a precise depiction. Aside from that, it elevated his novel to the level of literary beauty.

III.2. Depression in *Imagine Me Gone*

III.2.1. Beck's Analysis of Depression in *Imagine Me Gone*

Gonca and Savasir state that Beck's cognitive theory argues that people who are depressed have unfavorable self-perceptions. They have a negative perception of themselves, viewing themselves as inadequate, worthless, and unlovable. They have a negative view of their future,

feeling it is hopeless and that no amount of effort would make a difference in their life; and they have a negative perception of their surroundings, seeing it as overwhelming, full of failure and difficulties. The cognitive triad was named after these three characteristics. Negative thinking influences one's views, interpretations, and memories of personal experiences, resulting in a negative worldview and depression (qtd. in Sokolova).

The major theme of *Imagine Me Gone* is mental illness, the whole novel is built on depression and how the family deals with it from each member's point of view or perspective. The struggle starts with the father, John's depression and continues with the eldest son Michael's depression. As a result, Beck's Cognitive Theory of Depression can be relevantly applied on both characters, John and Michael.

Starting with the father, John; he starts suffering from depression before he marries Margaret. She explains: "I didn't understand what his flat mate was saying when I called the day I got back to London and he told me that John had been admitted to the hospital" (Haslett 22).

This is the first time Margaret knows that John has depression. John suffers from depression since he was in college; and before he even knows her. She says: "It turned out this wasn't his first time he'd been hospitalized. His second year at Oxford he'd had to leave for a term" (Haslett 22).

His illness makes him interpret things, starting from his parents who do not visit him when he stays on the ward as Margaret tells: "John stayed on the ward for a month. His father visited once, his mother not at all" (Haslett 24).

This can be a sign to John that his parents do not care for him; he interprets it as not being loved or wanted. Even when he is hospitalized they do not to give him the attention he needs.

John has interpretations for almost everything such as in the beginning of his part in the first chapter in which he despairs: “The rock is mute...Every human thing, a ruin in waiting. On a planet that is a ruin in waiting... I only know that this trial is what has become of my silver of time” (Haslett 73).

Even a rock is given an explanation for its existence by John. He has a different way of thinking and seeing things, he says:

So like a cripple I long for what others don't notice they have: ordinary meaning... Self-accusation being nothing if not repetitive. There is nothing deep about this. It is merely endless. (Haslett 74)

A lot of interpretations, which in Beck's theory, are of the three characteristics of the cognitive triad, lead to his depression.

John's views about himself are the other reason for his depression; feeling guilty, insufficient, and failing in things make him have a negative perception about himself. His failure starts when he got back to Britain; he says: “My great return to Britain was a great failure” (Haslett 73).

John feels guilty for moving twice from Britain to America and back; he explains: “to settle the children in English schools, and then less than three years later to retreat back here to America. Because of me. Because I was fired by my own partners” (Haslett 73).

He suffers from a lot of business failure and career disasters in both London and Massachusetts.

John starts to suffer again from depression after many years of his marriage; he explains:

A fog blinded me, thicker than ever before. I slept in the monster's arms. I felt its breath on my neck, its scaled stomach rising and falling against my back, its head and face invisible as always. I couldn't pretend anymore to Margaret... I could smell the rot myself, my armpits, my breath, my groin, as though the living part of death had already commenced. (Haslett 75)

John keeps on blaming himself even for his depression, he sees himself as an obstacle for his family, that without him life can be easier for them. And he continues:

The darkness bristles with life. There is story upon story to tell. But in the fog there is nothing to see. The monster you lie with is your own. The struggle is endlessly private. I thought it was over. (Haslett 75)

The third characteristic of the Cognitive Triad is the memories of personal experiences. In fact, John does not tell much about his early life or his memories, in the first chapter he says:

You could say that I fathered them as I was never fathered, ... My father did what his time expected of him without complaint, and I have no bitterness toward him. We weren't meant to know each other and we didn't. (Haslett 74)

This quote shows clearly that John really wanted to know his father; he wanted to have a strong connection and be close to him. But at the same time he does not really blame him for his illness. This can be seen as a painful experience, the fact that John's relation with his father in his childhood or adulthood did not go well as he planned or wanted. His relation with mother also was not pleasant, she was somehow cold and harsh on him and his brother, and he tells about her:

She would shoo my brother and me into the reinforced room, get the little bag of food from the cupboard, and tell us to sit under the dining room table while she and my father sat in chairs nearby. (Haslett 86)

The same as with his father, John does not hate his mother. He does not blame any of them for anything, he just wanted to have a close connection with them, he says: "I forgive her everything I had ever blamed her for and tried to love her more without saying anything" (Haslett 86).

Instead John keeps blaming himself for everything even his depression. All of what has been said drives him to commit suicide leaving his family struggling despite all what they try to do to help him get better and forget about his illness. He explains:

At last, I have the beast out in front of me, out in the open. I sense it trying to run, to flee ahead of me into the woods. But the long night is ending, and there is nowhere left for it to hide. Not in my children's faces. Not in Margaret's stubborn love. Not in all my failures. There is no cover left for it on this terrain. I know its paths too well... Invisibility. That is its last defense. That I won't have the courage to look it in the eyes. (Haslett 104)

This quote explains everything, that John is fighting hard his depression, inventing hope for a better life in his children's beautiful faces and his wife's unconditional love. But unfortunately, the beast finally gets him.

The same characteristics of the Cognitive Triad can be applied to understand the reason behind Michael's depression. Michael is both a heartbreaking and a witty character through the whole novel. Even as a child he asserts himself as the wittiest.

Starting from his childhood experience with his father. Michael is an intelligent kid, but his father prefers his brother Alec. Margaret says about Michael: "It's been a week and John hasn't spent ten minutes alone with him yet, and now he's gone off with the other two" (Haslett 37).

She also says about John:

He doesn't know what to say to his elder son; it's sticky and awkward, and he'd just as soon glide over it, flicking the switch from treating him like a child to treating him like an adult who can teach himself how to cope with the world.

(Haslett 37)

John always loves Alec the most. He sees Michael as a witty boy who does not need much attention especially that he is the elder son, but, Alec is the youngest who always get the whole attention. Margaret says: "Alec will be quieted to the point of trance, by the story, but also because his father's attention is pouring over him, and only him, like the air of heaven" (Haslett 27).

Michael since he was a baby he always acts like an independent boy who does not need attention; as Margaret tells:

Michael it's been fraught from the start. Babies are scrunched little creatures, but then they splay flat on the crib or floor. Expect Michael never quite did. Like a little old man, he remained almost always hunch-shouldered and bent at the waist.

(Haslett 29)

Margaret feels that the relation between John and Michael should be better since he is a kid, and tries to help, she tells John: "Spend time with Michael... While we're up here. Take him on the boat, the two of you. Or pack a lunch and take a walk. Will you?" (Haslett 31).

Michael also does not like the fact that they moved from Britain, he confesses: “I didn’t want to leave Britain. Things made sense there for a couple of years.” (Haslett 119).

The staleness of John with Michael and his complains about moving from place to another according to Beck’s Cognitive theory can be the cause of his depression.

Michael’s views about himself gets him into a severe anxiety which ends with depression. His problems, such as, failed relationships, constant debt, and lost jobs make his situation worse. His obsessions in the relationship get him to perceive himself as a failed person. A series of relationships that stress a human in full bloom before persistently tormenting him after they've ended. As he explains:

I don’t know what most people mean when they use the word love. If they haven’t contorted their lives around a hope sharp enough to bleed them empty, then I think they’re just kidding. A hope that undoes what tiny pride you have, and makes you thankful for the undoing, so long as it promises another hour with the person who is now the world. (Haslett 114)

He suffers because of love; he is in between which makes him doubt his worth. He says: “I only knew that she was delivering me into purgatory, between the irrevocable hope of being with her and the death of life without her” (Haslett 115). He also says: “I just organized my life around her as I had organized my life around Angie” (Haslett 124).

Love is not the only obstacle in Michael’s life. He also suffers from debts; which is mentioned in one of his part of storytelling as follows:

Dear borrower: If you are having difficulty making your loan payments and you have exhausted all periods of deferment and grace, you may be able to receive relief through the process of forbearance. (Haslett 275)

Even if this seems a normal life problem, but, for Michael regardless of his situation it makes it worse for him, his self-perception is weakened, as a result, makes him feel unable to deal with his own problems knowing that his mother gives him money and is an abyss of neediness.

The early life experiences, from his father's staleness to the changing of the country. And the situation he lives as he grows up, such as facing problem in having a normal love story because of his weird obsession with married women, and his debts which all make him view himself as unworthy, miserable, needy, and pathetic. They are the cause of his depression according to the Cognitive Triad of Beck's Cognitive Theory.

III.2.2. Freudian Analysis of Depression in *Imagine Me Gone*

In *Imagine Me Gone*, Adam Haslett represents depression through the characters who have a long experience with this mental illness. The novel is about a family that contains five members; John and Margaret and their children Alec, Celia and, Michael.

John is the first who struggles with this illness in his family. John has been fighting this "monster" since childhood. John and Margaret fell in love and decided to get married. Everything is great until one Christmas. Margaret went to the United States to spend her Christmas there when a phone call made her pack her things and get back to Britain and finds out that he has depression. John's situation is so bad that his wife didn't know him at first, as she says: "His face was so drained of spirit I barely recognized him. If he hadn't moved his eyes I would have thought he was dead" (Haslett 22).

It was not the first time that John enters the hospital since he struggles with this disease for a long time. And Margaret clarifies that when she discovers that it's not his first time: "It turned out this wasn't the first time he'd been hospitalized" (Haslett 22).

John's depression does not appear from one night. The symptoms began months later, and it starts to develop beat by beat. Since Margaret was the closest person to him she began to notice his actions, it started from the autumn of 63 where John began to talk less than usual, and he was talking very fast, besides he stopped seeing his friends as he used to do. John was droning slowly into the bottom without noticing that or anyone else. He lost interest of the things which he was interested in and start acting cold like nothing is attracts his attention anymore, there is an example that Margaret shows: "Harold Macmillan resigning as prime minister was the sort of thing he would usually have been reading and talking about furiously but he showed barely any interest" (Haslett 21).

John's situation is not stable especially when it comes to his emotions he is emotionally influenced by people whom he does not even know. The next quote of Margaret shows how John is sensitive about Kennedy's death: "I didn't expect him to cry-it wasn't his president" (Haslett 21)

Both grief and depression are characterized by pain. According to Freud, in grief, the world appears impoverished because the loved one is no longer present, whereas, in melancholia (depression), the ego has become impoverished. The melancholy patients denigrate themselves, speaks of themselves with contempt, believe they are morally repugnant and unworthy of someone else's love. The condition is followed by an eating disorder, insomnia, and a loss of will to live. This feature of depression, according to Freud, is an expression of dividing of the

personality, in which one part operates independently of the other. One part can criticize and humiliate the other, making the patient feel lonely, worthless, unhappy, and guilty of a variety of misfortunes (Knutsen).

After a long battle with depression, John starts to recover from it and comes back to his normal life and everything is perfect. But it does not last, John begins to collapse when he starts to lose his jobs, he cannot find a stable job, he keeps moving his children from one place to another. The previous quotes show that:

First to go over there, to retrieve our furniture from where it had remained in storage, to settle the children in English schools, and then less than three years later to retreat back here to America. Because of me because I was fired by my own partners, told they couldn't afford my debilitation any longer-at the firm had started. Back here to different town and different schools, everything new again.

(Haslett 73)

According to Freud's theory of depression, the reason behind John's depression is losing his jobs; which makes him feel worthless when he cannot provide for his family. In addition, he is always worried about the view of his family of him that makes him feel he is a burden for them.

John says:

A few months ago, I overheard her describing to a friend on the phone the exhaustion of trying to get me out of bed in the morning; how her energy for the day was spent before breakfast. (Haslett 101)

Although John's family is the only thing that supports him and tries to help him get rid of his illness, it is one of the reasons why his condition deteriorates. His responsibility towards his

family makes him feel weak and not have the strength to take care of them, which results in a feeling of worthlessness and that his presence in life has no meaning. John's depression ruins his life and also affects his family members and does not stop on that; this mental illness leads him to death.

Imagine Me Gone believes Michael to be the primary character. He is John and Margaret's eldest son, as well as Alec and Celia's sibling. Michael is the only child that inherited his father's depression. Michael suffers from anxiety when he is just a baby. When he is a baby Margaret notices that he is different. she can already detect his congenital apprehension. She says: "Without knowing what it was, I'd felt that tension in his little groping arms and fitful legs, the discomfort of the foreknowledge" (Haslett 30).

Michael is not close enough to his father when he is a child, he is not spending enough time with his father, which leads him to frustration, especially as he sees him spending his time with his siblings. Margaret mentions that in one of her chapters by declaring:

"Where is your father?"

"He's mucking around in the boat he took Celia and Alec."

"Why didn't you go?"

"He glances over the shimmering water, ignoring my question." (Haslett 37)

Michael does not express his discontent with it; instead, he keeps himself busy the most of the time, as his mother also states: "Michael plays with his brother and sister some, but fills most of his hours with reading and sketching out his elaborate parodies" (Haslett 37). And also she states that: "It's been a week and John hasn't spent ten minutes alone with him yet" (Haslett 37).

His father's ignorance has had an impact on his mind from childhood, resulting in major challenges in his adult life. His father treats him as if he is an adult who wants to deal with the world on his own while all he needs is for his father to show him how to act in every situation he encounters. John does not treat him with the care and love that a kid should receive. But despite all that Michael loves his father very much.

John's treatment of his kid is not motivated by hatred. When Michael moves to London for his studies, John is very proud of him and misses him at the same time. John declares his emotion in this quote: "My son in London as a young man. It's hard for me to picture" (Haslett 102).

One phone discussion between Michael and his father convinced John that his oldest son would follow in his footsteps and become depressed. Michael is anxious about his exam at the time, so he dials his father's number to calm him down. John does not want his kid to go through what he has gone through in his life; instead, he wants to assist him and get him out of this position before it is too late. He says: "He senses the trouble. He knows it is there. If I could only take that part of him with me, to spare him. But I can't" (Haslett 103).

Unfortunately, this phone call is the father's and son's unexpected parting. Michael has the impression that this would be the final time he speaks to his father. Their most recent talk is about:

"It really is late with you," John says.

"You'll be fine—with the exam. You're a good writer."

"You think so?"

"Yes."

"Okay, then" Michael said. "I guess I'll go."

“Good-bye, Michael. Good luck.”

“Okay, Dad,” he says. “Bye.” (Haslett 102)

Michael's battle with depression begins at this moment, and the cause for this is his father's death. According to Sigmund Freud's "Mourning" theory, the most common cause of depression is the loss of someone you care about as it is the case with Michael. The death of his father shifts his life in a new path.

Through multiple letters between him and his doctor, Adam depicts Michael's illness rather than his father in his story. He also states his situation several times when he enters the hospital. Margaret backs up this claim when she says: “Michael was sleeping so much in the hospital” (Haslett 253).

Because they don't want him to wind up like his father, Michael's family assists him in getting out of this circumstance. However, they are unsuccessful. His fate is similar to that of his father.

The third chapter examines the novel by analyzing it using Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalytic criticism and shedding light on the major characters, John and Michael by applying Beck's cognitive theory of depression as well as Freud's view on depression in their analysis; which makes the novel much easier for the reader to understand and unveil the hidden meaning behind the characters' actions and situations.

Conclusion

This thesis attempts to concentrate on the application of two psychoanalytic techniques for reading Adam Haslett's *Imagine Me Gone*, through Freudian Criticism and Beck's Criticism. The aim was to analyze the character's situation of depression: It is a tight focus on a family torn apart by father-and-son fights with chronic depression and anxiety and their endeavor to address the question of what makes a decent, meaningful life.

The work is divided into three chapters. The first chapter begins with an introduction to psychoanalysis and the concepts that will be applied to Adam Haslett's work analysis. The theory of psychoanalysis grows out of a Freudian therapy practice and Lacan's psychoanalytic criticism. These theories are applied to literary works in order to comprehend them and determine the author's aim. Depression is the most widely mentioned mental health condition in literature. The first chapter covers everything to know about depression and its connection to literature. Furthermore, how several writers suffered from depression, which led them to produce great literary works that embodied this mental illness in a clear image.

The second chapter delves into Adam Haslett's novel *Imagine Me Gone* by providing a brief overview of the author and the novel as well as how Haslett portrays his characters through their voices; each chapter is dedicated to a different character, allowing the reader to grasp the characters' true intentions. And this is Adam's principal purpose in employing this strategy. Furthermore, it examines the primary topics of *Imagine Me Gone*, which includes mental illness and anxiety, the novel's core premise. The novel paints a vivid picture of how mental illness and anxiety affect John and Michael as well as the rest of the family. Due to its central position in the tale, family is also depicted as one of the novel's key themes. Margaret's refusal to leave John

despite his illness begins the novel's definition of family. It also depicts how members of the family attempt to assist John and Michael. The homosexuality of the protagonist, Alec, is the novel's final theme.

To clarify Adam's idea, the final chapter of this thesis applies Freud and Beck's theories of depression to the characters John and Michael. By the application of these theories, the novel can be interpreted to two main results.

The first is that, according to Freud, depression can be caused by the loss of something that makes life important, as it is for John when he lost his job and realized that he couldn't provide for his family, making him feel useless and unworthy of their love. While his second idea is applied to Michael, who is likewise depressed and whose condition worsened after the death of his father. The application is one of Sigmund Freud's theories of depression.

For Beck's application, John feels bad since he continually relocated his family from one place to another, causing them to be unable to live in a stable environment. John lost his self-confidence and began to regard himself as useless as a result of his shame and blame, which led to depression.

It begins for Michael in his childhood, when his father was distant from him and preferred Alec as his favorite son.

Adam Haslett's *Imagine Me Gone* is a new work; it should be read more because it is an excellent depiction of the mental disorder despair.

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