It is agreed that literature introduces a true representation of the human life whether in a direct or in an indirect way. It provides us with a deep insight to the behavior, conducts and the inner struggle of the humans in all eras and throughout centuries. This quality of literature enabled the critics to analyze literature on psychological grounds in order to put our hands as readers on the deep value and the aim of the literary work than merely the obvious value. This helped the critics to present various interpretations to one single phrase that looks very simple and uncomplicated. So if analysis means breaking down a subject to understand it in details and discover its essential features, the Psychological critical analysis of literature means to break down literature in order to understand it on psychological grounds. The psychoanalytic literary criticism started with Freud, because he used literature as an exemplar for trauma. Freud turns to literature to describe the traumatic experience because literature, like psychoanalysis, is interested in the complex relation between what we know and what we don't know about the human psych.

Freud notices that the unconscious expresses itself in many ways among which dreams, and that there is a close similarity between dreams and literature. He admits that both the dream and the literary text express unconscious materials in the form of complex displacement and condensation. So he applies the same rule that he prescribes for dreams interpretation to literature. Recently, the psychoanalytic schools have studied the traumatic experiences of certain minority group within a wide culture. This is exactly what happened in studying the problems of the Blacks inside the white American society. This is done through the psychoanalytic study of the black literature. On this account, the critics admit that most of the black literature that handles the problems of the black identity relates these problems to the discriminatory social system in America which has its origin in the slavery system. Slavery started with the history of the Blacks in America in the sixteenth century when a Dutch ship brought the first set of slaves to the shores of America from Africa. The slavery system and other forms of racial discrimination from which the Blacks suffered for more than two centuries left a lot of bitter effects on the identity of the black Americans. These effects like the sense of collective shame and inferiority complex were not easy to be removed by a political decision or other official efforts. These problems were deeply rooted in the history and in every way of representation including art. The humiliation and degradation of the Blacks was a main cultural aspect of the American society even after the equality laws. So it passes from generation to generation through every way of representation. The only way for the Blacks to correct their picture was to prove that they are talented and able to make a better future for themselves and their country. So if we revised the black literature we will find the shadow of slavery controls every literary work in a certain way.

Black literature emerging in the United States in the early 1900 is considered by many critics to be a response to the problems which the Negro faced in America and worldwide. The aim of that literature was to correct the image of the Negro and to establish a new more civilized picture against the bad picture that the white culture introduced for them. This literary movement comes to be known as Harlem Renaissance. The literature of Harlem gives us an accurate expression of the Afro-American search for identity, because the blacks began to search their identity in their glorious past, their heritage and folk traditions; and began to feel proud of their black skin.

Poetry was one of the main literary forms by which the blacks expressed their identity and cultural roots. But, many critics divided the poetry of Harlem into two waves. The first wave includes poets who wrote in the conventional white style to celebrate nature and they sometimes touch the racial issues, but not in direct way. The second wave includes the more innovative poets who expressed their identity on their own way. They turned to jazz, blues and their simple language to produce a kind of poetry that is completely black and beautiful.

Langston Hughes (1902-1967), one of the prominent literary figures in the Harlem Renaissance and the Afro-American literature, could be justifiably called the Afro-American poet laureate of the twentieth century. Hughes’ background and personal experiences influenced his literary writing. As a black person lives in a country dominated by whites, Hughes experienced many social injustices during his life. He was born and educated in the south during what can be classified as “Jim crow” years, so he experienced several events of discrimination that come with segregation. He wrote hoping to make the coming generations of the black Americans dream of a better future in which all races will be treated equally. Hughes was influenced with the themes of great poets like Walt Whitman and Carl Sandburg.

Hughes was a part of a new generation of the black American who considered the past as cultural heritage, useful for understanding as well as for making a present and a future. As heritage, the collective past is usable in at least two senses: it is central to the formation of the group identity, because it is part of the collective memory, and it is a cultural source that is explored and exploited not only by members of the group itself but by others as well. So Hughes’ poetry is considered a true representative of the Afro-American common past and collective trauma of slavery. Because, nearly, in all his poems, the memory of slavery appears clearly, despite his pride about that past and his optimism about the future of the Blacks on the American continent which comes against the misery and suffering of the past as well as it is a reaction to that past.
The beatings, lynching and daily humiliation of segregation which African Americans suffered in the South and all over America outraged Hughes. As a member of the Harlem society and the African-American community, he accepted the responsibility to speak out against these injustices in his writings. So his poems are considered by many critics to be one of the most ironic and powerful lines written by a black American.

Like all the African Americans, Hughes’ identity crisis comes from the fact of being black living in the American society. This identity crisis becomes painfully obvious in his literary works, because he suffers from a cultural schizophrenia which creates a conflict in his psyche because he is torn between his past and present. This is articulated in his poem “Cross”:

My old man’s a white old man
And my old mother’s black
If ever I cursed my white old man
I take my curses back
If ever I cursed my black old mother
And wished she were in hell
I’m sorry for that evil wish
And now I wish her well
My old man died in a fine big house
My ma died in a shack
I wonder where I’m going to die
(Being neither white nor black? (L. 1-12)

In this poem, Hughes expresses his suffering, because he does not know how to identify himself. He cannot identify himself as American, because the dominant culture refuses to accept him because of his black skin. Also he cannot identify himself with Africa because he has not the same tongue or culture. So he lost the sense of belonging to both the two cultures.

Langston Hughes’ poetry handles the problem of slavery and its effects on the black identity, and the social problems they faced even in the religious feasts. Hughes wants to say that while man is called a social animal, in the world of whites these words stand for two extreme poles of society - social for the whites and animal for the blacks. The blacks are not given the equal place in the society. The poet shows this inequality in the poem, “Merry-Go-Round,” The so-called social whites have no sympathy even for a black child. He has to sit in a segregated section. The poet says where is the Jim Crow section
On this merry-go-round
Mister, cause I want to ride
Down South where I come from
White and colored
Can’t sit side by side
Down South on the train
There’s a Jim Crow car
—On the bus we’re put in the back
But there ain’t no back
!To a merry-go-round
Where’s the horse
(For a kid that’s black? (L. 1-13)

Thus “merry-go-round” is a metaphor for America. It is a kind of satire on American society that is called a free society. A clear picture of the exploitation of the blacks is presented. So, social, cultural and psychological space has been denied to them. Because of his simplicity, realistic attitude in portraying the life of the Blacks and his universal themes, Today, Hughes’ poetry is being studied in the educational curriculum of the American universitie