

Tribhuvan University

Death Drive in Sylvia Plath's Poetry

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Ratna Rajyalaxmi Campus, Kathmandu, in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for Degree of Master of Arts in English

By

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Dec 2017

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I hereby declare that the thesis/research/term paper entitled,

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In my own original work carried out as a master student at the department of English

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Letter of Approval

This thesis, entitled "Death Drive in Sylvia Plath's Poetry" submitted to the Department of English, Ratna Rajyalaxmi Campus, by Hari Chandra Angdembe, has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Acknowledgements

This present thesis has been prepared with the good guidance of respected teacher Govinda Prasad Acharya I wish to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Govinda Prasad Acharya, lecturer of English, Ratna Rajya laxmi Campus, Kathmandu.

My special thanks go to my respected teacher Pradip Sharma (The Head of the Department of English) for his guidance and co-operation. I am also thankful to all my friends and relatives who helped me in carrying out this research work.

Finally, I would like to express my deep gratitude to my parents Mr. Shor Bahadur Angdembe and Mrs. Maya Devi Limbuni and all family members for their timely and robust encouragement and supportive role during the proposal writing and thesis writing phases.

December 2017

Hari Chandra Angdembe

Abstract

This paper analyzes Sylvia Plath's obsession with death as manifested in her life and in her poetry. This paper presents some results of a study that aims to investigate how the psychological state can be conveyed linguistically in the text of a personal nature. Figures of speech, in particular metaphor and metonymy, are generally understood to play important role in the expression of such complex phenomena. Certain Plath's poems "Ariel," "Sheep in Fog," "Lady Lazarus," "Daddy" "Edge" and "I Am Vertical" have been selected to outline her various perspectives towards death. It is well known that death is the end of human life but Plath finds death as a rebirth and renewal. Most obvious factors that shaped her attitudes towards death were the early death of her father that left her unsecured, and the unfaithfulness of her husband, Ted Hughes, who left her dejected and melancholic.

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Introduction: Plath and Theme of Death in her writing

This research explores the literary life of an exceptional writer, novelist and poet Sylvia Plath (1932-1963). The main purpose of this research work is to explore and analyze the reason behind her death wish reflected in her poetry. Her suicide in real life and her poetry that reflected her death wish are the ground of this research. Furthermore, it discusses on how death changes its forms. Moreover, this research presents Plath's view of death as a friend not as evil. Since it is impossible to discuss all poems of Plath in its full extent in the research paper like this, only few representative poems have been selected for the present study. They are "Daddy" "Lady Lazarus," "Sheep in a Fog," "Ariel," "Edge" and "I Am Vertical". Sylvia Plath became a rich and attractive target for critics because of the content of her poems. Analysis of Plath's life and literary work became the center of attraction after her suicide in 1963 when she was only thirty one years old, leaving two children and her brilliant works (her literary kids).

Many writers of the modern period employed the theme of death in their poetry, but few of them have expressed the wish for the death as clearly as Sylvia Plath did. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines death wish as "the conscious or unconscious desire for the death of oneself or others" (332). Death came as a prevalent theme in almost of her poetry. In her poem, everyone can find the patient desire for death. This desire for death is psychological, personal and social. Some critics described her as the poetess of death, for most of her poetry revolves around the theme of death. In more of them, she presents the wish of death. Her wish of death is different from poem to poem. In the surface level, her poems seem confessional but when we study her poems in a depth, death is found to have given more importance.

Her writings are completely different than other contemporary poets because she found solace in complete darkness, sadness and death.

Plath's wish for death could be interpreted in term of psychology. The poem exploits Freudian psychology. Plath's death wish in her poem is the overcome of psychological guilt. The rejection of family life and society led her to the final rejection of self. In psychology, frustration is a common emotional response related to anger and disappointment. Cause of frustration may be internal and external as well. Sylvia Plath had too much attraction towards death, which was also the external cause of frustration. Freud says, "aim of all life is death" (156). Freud takes death as self-destructive. Death also comes under some associated emotion like fear, anger, and hate. He further says, "Death drive is opposite to Eros and Libido and other creative life producing drive" (162). Death drive is referred to as "Thanatos" in post Freudian thought. Freud uses Thanatos as the death instinct and death drive. Thanatos is related with negative aspect of psyche. Thanatos develops the risk of self-destruction. This is synonymous to suicide tendency (Kalliopi II). Freud says that death drive is intrinsic. It is a universal feeling. Death drive is naturally developed in human and is the outcome of psychological guilt. Plath undergoes several expressions which directly or indirectly hint the theme of psychological guilt. As a result, she has abundantly expressed literary death in her poetry. Her motivation of writing such ugly and terrifying pictures of death is certainly not the glorification of death. It is her concern of her external frustration.

Nobody wants to die. But, people get attracted towards death due to frustration, which are generated or guided by external causes (Boswell II). People are scared of death. Everybody accepts death as most dreadful entity. Death is the full stop of life of all living beings. It is the bitter side of reality. But to Plath, it is found

that death is the solution to every problem. Furthermore, Plath does not see death as dreadful. She finds death very much loving (Allan 10). She has the understanding that those who can understand death will easily accept it because it is the ultimate reality and one must always learn to accept the reality of life. Plath uses technical and poetic language that adds up her contribution in literary world regarding the matter of death. Plath uses technical and poetic language that shows her contribution in literary world.

Her poems are full of psychological and social torments, which are portrayed and reflected in a dreadful style. Most of Plath's writings are parodies of her personal torment and pain. The reason behind her use of personal material is that she wishes the reader to confront the situation of herself. She believes that "The poetry has an extended role; it must express the poet's pain because the suffering has become the central fact of personal existence" (67). Through her writing, Plath tries to make a connection between her personal suffering in domestic life with the public torment and tragedy. Plath's married life was also not successful. Her married life gave her frustrating experience. She was disappointed with her married life. Her married life was a trouble one. She was neglected by her husband. Having dissatisfactory life and being fed up with life, Plath looks death as a means of fulfillment and achieving a new beginning. She wants to put end for her life because she was alienated from family and society as well.

Plath desires death because she cannot cope up with her present life. Plath asserts that she is completely dissatisfied with her life; she prefers death and her wish for it is stronger than her wish for life because life has nothing worthy to live for (Kaufman 8). In her poetry she describes death as she describes her lover; therefore, she calls death with so many beautiful names. Death for her is a savior, rescuer and peace giver.

Plath's Poems and Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysis is a term that is developed by Sigmund Freud. In literary term it means mental analysis. The study of psychoanalysis as an interpretive system begins with Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) and his early great books are: "The interpretation of Dreams," (1900) "The psychology of Everybody life" (1901) and "Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious" (1907). Psychoanalysis deals with scientific study of mind, the unconscious mind, theory of mind, human psyche development, the instinct and sexuality.

Freud initially theorized psychoanalysis with a topographical model. In this model, relation between the ego and unconscious is brought forth. The ego is related with consciousness and individual's contact with the external world, while the unconscious is a different space of instinctual drive and repressive mechanism of mind. Repression is forgetting or ignoring of unsolved problems, admitted wishes or traumatic past accidents which remain deeper in the unconscious mind; therefore, we cannot find way to the conscious mind (Levin 9). Unconscious mind generally blocks or defends everything stored in the store house of the repressed desires, wounds etc.

We get different kinds of psychoanalysis, but the psychoanalysis is going to be dealt here is a mental analysis of a special kind that works with special instruments which is known as neuron- psychoanalysis. It means the analysis of normal and abnormal activity by a certain definite method through the analysis of dreams, psychopathological actions, hallucinations, delusions and psychic attack of all kinds, which we find in normal sphere. While talking about its development Brill writes that "it was originally developed by working with the so- called "border- line case of mental diseases" (93) that is to say, Professor Freud has treated cases of so- called nervous neurasthenia, obsessions, and phobia.

The subject treated by psychoanalysis goes far beyond pure medical spheres, for when human mind is entered for the purpose of studying the origin of an abnormal manifestation; all his mental and emotional expressions are considered (Coward VI). The Austrian neurologist and psychologist Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis has become the most influential personality theory in the modern era. The subjects treated by psychoanalysis goes far beyond pure medical spares, for when human mind is entered for the purpose of studying the origin of an abnormal manifestation, all his mental and emotional expression have to be considered.

Sigmund Freud's Death Drive and Repetitive Compulsion

Death Drive was introduced in 1920, in "Beyond the Pleasure principle". Freud defines Death Drive as: The Uncanny-The bodily instinct to return to the state of quiescence that preceded our birth. Further he explains why human are drawn to repeat painful or traumatic events (even through such repetition appears to contradict our instinct to seek pleasure) through such a compulsion to repeat, the human subject attempts to "blind" the trauma, thus allowing the subject to return to a state of Quiescence (38). Freud says: "the aim of all life is death" (156). Freud takes death as a self-destructive and harmful to other. Death also comes under the some associated emotion like fear, anger, and hate. He further says that Death drive is opposite to Eros and Libido and other creative life producing drive. Death drive is referred as "Thanatos" in post Freudian thought. Here the word Thanatos is the personification of death. "In Greek mythology thanatos was a demon of death; a dead white dude (Greek poet Hesiod) wrote that the death drive thanatos was a son of Nyx (night) and Erebus (darkness), and a twin, or half- brother to Hypnos (sleep). The concept of sleep as being related to death is not an uncommon one.

Freud uses Thanatos as the death instinct, death drive and it is interested in negative, risk destruction and takes the born to die approach. Freud says that death drive are intrinsic, universal impose and feeling we all have. Death drive is naturally developed in human and is the outcome of psychological guilt. Post Freudian argues that if there is life drive then there is death drive. Freud thought there were competing drives, death (Thanatos) and life (Eros). We know that the death drive is interested in Negative, risk, destruction and that takes the born to die approach. The life drive on the other hand is concerned with preservation of human species and life. It controls the libido, which is sex drive. It also controls our needs for health and safety in the form of food sleep and shelter (Zepf6). It focuses on the positivity of pleasure.

Beside it in his essay "Beyond the Pleasure Principle". Sigmund Freud expressed that: "people repeat traumatic events over and over again. This includes recreating the event or putting oneself in situations that have a high probability of the event occurring again. This "re-living" can also take the form of dreams, repeating the story of what happened, and even hallucination" (Rettew II). Freud believes there are two ways to relive your past: through memories, or through actions, the latter being the basis of repetition compulsion. These are several schools of thought on the cause of repetitive reliving of negative experiences, and many are specific to certain situations.

In the context of Sylvia Plath she keeps on repeating desire of death through her poem in order to reduce anxiety caused by internal feelings. She wants to remove her anxiety, suffering and pain by the means of suicide. She wants to get relief from this traumatic world. She found only the solution to get rid from the traumatic world is the death.

Examination Poems of Plath

Few main works of Sylvia Plath, "Daddy," "Lady Lazarus," "Sheep in a Fog" "Ariel," "Edge" and "I Am Vertical" will provide Plath's drive towards death. Different perspectives and reflections are presented from psychological point of view. In fact, the artistic characteristics of the literary work are not the core interest here.

In writings of Plath, we find, directly or indirectly, her wish for death. But, in each poem, the reason behind her wish of death is different. In "Lady Lazarus" death is dealt in term of suicide, which strangely corresponds to her own suicide attempts and eventual death by suicide (Runco 6). She claims that she has mastered the art of dying after trying to kill herself multiple times. In "Daddy" she goes further in claiming that she wants to kill herself, finally forcing his cruel hold over her mind and her work (Hassen 6). The desire of death is excitedly expressed in "Ariel". In "Full Fathom Five" she speaks of his death and burial, mourning that she is forever exiled (Hassen 6). Like many modern and post-modern writers, Plath found that the twentieth century is an era of dehumanization and violence that requires poet an extraordinary exposure to suffering.

Her poem "Daddy" reflects her obsession with the idea of death and shows her desire for it as a way to stop her painful life. In order to understand and get a clear idea about the context of "Daddy" we have to understand about the background of the poem. The poem is written in the context of death of her father. In the poem, Plath has highlighted her relationship with her father and the pain she feels due to his attitude and refusal to get treatment. She wrote this poem in 1962, few months before her suicide. Losing her father at such a small age turned out to be the major cause of her frustration. This poem is a terrible poem, full of blackness. It is a poem of total rejection. In this poem, Plath dramatizes the turmoil of her soul. She tries to achieve

relief to become an independent self. This independence has led to her total rejection of everything in life. She rejects the memory of her father, and then rejects her father. The opening line shows her motif to stop her father's control over her and reveals her wish for independence. She thinks that best way to achieve independence is through killing her father's memory. She expresses her vehemence thus:

An engine, an engine,
Chuffing me off like a Jew
A Jew to Dachau, Auschwitz, Belsen
I began to talk like a Jew
I think I may well be Jew (31-35).

The rejection of family life and society brought her disappointment which led to the final rejection that of the self. Then, she attempts to rid herself from the captivity of her father by destroying the memory of her father. Plath here compares with the suffering and pain of the Jews who were tortured in Nazi concentration camp. This association between her pain and image of the holocaust aims showing the extract of tortured she had experienced in her life (Boswell 7). Therefore, death in this poem can be perceived as the method of escape.

Plath's inner struggle, and personal pain caused by her father's death are exposed here. This poem brings to light one of Freud's well known theories the oedipal complex. This theory holds that children form deep erotic connection to opposite sex parent. So, Plath reacts with hate for the father who has made her suffer by dying at the stage of her development. Plath tries to come over her psychological trauma by looking for someone who might possess some of her father's features to marry. She thought that by marriage she would find surrogate father who might compensate her of the lost love of her father (Martinez III). But, she didn't find

compensate through the marriage. So, marriage becomes the reason behind her wish for death.

"I am Vertical" is another poem in which death appears as a focal idea. Like most of Plath's poetry, this poem revolves around death, more specifically her obsession with suicide. The idea of death is described as a means of rebirth and regeneration. This is one of the elements which make Plath's poetry distinguished. The poem describes Plath's desire for an acceptance that she hopes to find through death. The whole poem is a metaphor about death and the wish for it (Hassen 3). The title suggests that Plath was dissatisfied with her life; therefore, she wishes to be a horizontal one by cutting her or rooting her out to stop sucking up the minerals. She expresses the feeling thus:

Tonight, in the infinitesimal light of the stars
The trees and flowers have been strewing their cool odors
I walk among them, but none of them are noticing
Sometimes I think that when I am sleeping
I must most perfectly resemble them (11-15).

The poem portrays death in very beautiful way, like that we will die but we will be closer in the end. Plath tells us how trees have place in life, and will live for a long time, and flowers are beautiful and they wish to have their beauty forever. Compared with them, she is leading a meaningless life and she wants to have a meaning for her dim life. Trees and flowers have function in this life and they are useful, while Plath lacks these qualities in her life. Plath believes that if she were lying down she would at least be useful and trees and flowers would pay her an attention. She thinks she is only useful if her body decomposes into the ground to feed the plants.

Sylvia Plath has presented the death wish in different ways in her poems. She did engage readers either in a personal or an impersonal way to view death either as a liberating force or troubling depressing experience (Stensker 6). Her depiction of death is reflected by the use of such techniques as imagery, language, structure, and tone.

"Sheep in a Fog" was written in 1963. It is a short lyrical poem where she used the atmospheric imagery to reflect her loneliness. She feels loneliness because of her failed marriage and the fact that she had committed suicide about a month later. In the poem, she presents a death of the poet that is the life of the poetry. There are two kinds of death: on the one hand, death as a process, as rebirth or renewal, as imaginary; and, on the other hand, death as end, as factuality. Plath rides into death in "Sheep in a Fog" but death is no longer conceived as renewal (Hassen 4). The Topic "Sheep in a Fog" itself symbolizes the death. Sheep is the personification of the speaker in this autobiographical poem. In general, sheep is taken as the ridiculous/stupid animal and 'fog' that symbolizes the death. So, the topic of the poem hints her death wish. Besides this, she has used several images such as 'step up' 'horse,' 'color of rust,' 'dolorous bell,' 'starless,' 'fatherless' all these symbolize the theme of death. The 'train' symbolizes the 'journey'. The image of 'smoke' of train breathing keeps us alive, but the train has left behind. It means everything is moving towards death. Moreover, In "Sheep in the Fog," she says, "A flower left out" (9). 'Flower' symbolizes the beauty, 'the flower left out it' means that the beauty of the nature is dying.

From this stanza, it is clear that she is upset with the nature also, she feels isolated and depressed. She doesn't find anything that gives her solace, so she finds death as the ultimate goal in the following lines:

They threaten

To let me through to a heaven

Starless and fatherless, a dark water (13-15).

'They threaten' symbolizes that both nature and the human beings do not comfort her. Both became obstacles to her, so she was disappointed with them. Each line and each stanza of the poem reflect the concern the frustration of the poet. The lines like 'Hills step off into whiteness' and 'Morning has been blackening' use images that show the dark side of the poet's life. In the poem, she finds herself as 'the lost sheep wondering' in the ugly and the meaningless world. She sees the world blackening. She sees this world as the dark heaven which frightens her. The paradox in this poem is that she sees this word as the terrifying heaven and terrifying death as the solace of living creature. The poem clearly reflects the frustration of the poet which leads her towards the imagination of death. Here the speaker thinks that only death might bring her comfort and relief (Alling 9). She tries to achieve relief to become independence. She thinks that the best way to achieve the independence is through killing herself.

'Ariel' is another poem by Plath in which terror and death predominate. It is composed of ten three-line stanza with an additional single line at the end, and follows an unusual slanted rhyme. Ariel is the name of horse of Plath but the horse is not mentioned in the poem. Speaker starts the journey from the horse when the poem starts. Horse is the symbolic meaning of death. It means the speaker is starting her journey from life to death. Plath has used several images in the poem which shows the dark side of her life and her wish for death. Such as 'Nigger eye,' 'Barrier,' 'Blood mouthful,' 'shadows,' 'sea'. Plath has mentioned: 'Black sweet blood mouthfuls, Shadows' (14). Here 'blood mouthful' means the speaker got death in her mind. From the above stanza, it is clear that Thanatos is dominant in the mind of speaker. She

doesn't find love, cooperation and collaboration with her life. She sees death as intimate goal of love and desire. So she consciously or unconsciously desire for the death (Stensker 8). Sylvia Plath's reflects her desolation the form of her literary writings. Patriarchal society is another cause of her desolation. She wants to take revenge with the patriarchal society by the means of suicide. She had expressed her anguish towards society following way:

Melts in the wall.
And I
Am the arrow,
The dew that flies
Suicidal, at one with the drive
Into the red
Eye, the cauldron of morning (24-30).

In these lines speaker used the word 'melts'. It means her connection with the human world is melting, even disappearing. She is disappointed with the human world. She is isolated from it. She didn't find the friendly behavior with them, so her connection with the human world is melting day by day. The speaker compares herself with the arrow that shoots and the dew that commits suicide at the sunrise. That is to say, she wants to shoot in the eye of patriarchy by committing suicide (Alling 6). Suicide is a mood of protest through which she shows her existence. From this point of view the red eye does not merely stand for the sun but also for the patriarchal social structure. So it is a suicide note of Sylvia Plath. The entire stanza can be taken as the imagination of the speaker. In which she wants to go away riding in horse and commits suicide. The horse shown in the parts supports this argument because imagination functions in the parts not whole. This desire of death is excessively

expressed in the poem. The above stanza suggests that death would release her from the difficulties of life, and bring her transcendence where her mind could free itself from mournful world.

For Plath death is not fearful experience. It is something interesting. She enjoys it as she enjoys any beautiful piece of art (Lane 3). This comparison shows the fact that Plath knows well what she wants. Death is not something new to her She had experience of horror of death three times before. But she did not achieve what she wanted. This also proves that she was an experienced one; she can do it perfectly.

"Lady Lazarus" is a poem commonly understood to be about suicide. It is narrated by a woman, and mostly addressed to an unspecified person. The narrator begins by saying she has "done it again." Every ten years, she manages to commit this unnamed act. She considers herself a walking miracle with bright skin, her right foot a 'paperweight,' and her face as fine and featureless as 'Jew linen'. She addresses an unspecified enemy, asking him to peel the napkin from her face, and inquiring whether he is terrified by the features he sees there. She assures him that her "sour breath" will vanish in a day.

The poem is spoken by Lady Lazarus, a speaker who shares a lot of similarities with the poet herself. Lady Lazarus begins by telling us that she has done 'it' again. What is this 'it'? We don't know at first. She compares herself to a Holocaust victim, and tell us that's she's only thirty years old, and that she has nine lives, like a cat. We soon figure out that 'it' is dying; but, like the cat, she keeps returning to life.

She tells us about the first two times that she almost died, and tells us that dying 'is an art.' She says that dying is a theatrical event, and imagines that people come and see her do it. In fact, it starts to seem as if she's performing a third death in front of a crowd at a circus or carnival. She compares herself again to Holocaust

victims, and imagines that she's been burned to death in a concentration camp crematorium. At the end of the poem, she resurrects (or returns to life from death) once again, and she "eats men like air." (Kaufman 7). "Lady Lazarus" can also be taken as the autobiographical poem. Plath herself is compelled to declare the motif of death and rebirth. As a literary figure she was successful though she was mentally desperate, she had managed to attempt suicide in her life many times. She herself expresses her attempt of suicide following:

The first time it happened I was ten.
It was an accident
The second time I meant
To last it out and not come back at all.
I rocked shut
As a seashell
They had to call and call
And pick the worms off me like sticky pearls (14-20).

Here Plath wants to say that she had tried to commit suicide when she was ten years old. Plath takes suicide as the art and her first attempt of suicide was an accident. "The second time I meant". From this stanza, it is clear that her second attempt of suicide was on purpose. She 'meant' to 'not come back at all'. But, she was found and brought back to life (Alling 12). Sylvia Plath attempts nine times suicide, but she did not succeed and at tenth time she did it. Sylvia Plath, by the way, tried to commit suicide during her college years. She took a whole bunch of sleeping pills and then hid in the crawl space of her mother's house. She wrote about this incident in her autobiographical novel *The Bell Jar*. Similarly, she uses the words "sticky pearls". This image connects the creature with death. It means she was already dead and

worms were eating her (Talib 6). When society takes life as an art, Plath considers death as an art using the image of theatre she compares her suicidal attempts with theatrically. As she is manager of her own death. She is capable of taking an exit from the theatre of life. The speaker prefers death to the death to domination.

This perspective is reflected in Plath's "Edge," which was written on 5 February 1963 and is thought to be Plath's last poem. Seamus Heaney, one of the biographers of Plath says:

The poem was a suicide note, which is to say an entirely personal, autobiographical communication from a distressed melancholic woman. For this reason, the poem is limited by the literal death of the poet, a death that cannot help but be read back into the poem. This death is a negativity that renews, and works within an economy of life. This is not just an imaginary death, but death as a figure for the imagination itself, as a negativity that may be harnessed in the interests of life. This poem carries the reader not only to the very limit of life, but also to the limit of poetry. And yet, if in this poem the woman is 'perfected,' it is through a death that takes the form of an aesthetic object, but in which the emphasis none the less falls very much on illusion (13).

Sylvia Plath chooses the word 'Edge' as the topic of the poem. Metaphorically, 'edge' is the beginning, it means now Plath is beginning her journey from Eros to Libido. She started her journey by description of the perfected women. Whose dead body smiles with the achievement, because the woman has completed her life; Woman is pleased by the perfection she has achieved. She has achieved her perfection by committing the suicide. She has used several images and symbols in the poem which recalls her attraction towards death: 'Toga,' 'Greek necessity,' 'night flower' are the

several images and symbol which represent the death wish of the poet. She mentions her death wish this way:

The illusion of a Greek necessity

Flows in the scrolls of her toga

Her bare

Feet seem to be saying:

We have come so far, it is over (4-8).

Sylvia Plath has brought the allusion from the Myth of Greek: 'Greek Necessity' and 'Toga' Here Greek Necessity refers the ritual suicide. 'Toga' refers to the gown that was worn to Socrates after he was given Hemlock. From the above allusion it is clear that she accept suicide as the honorable job. She accepts death as the perfected and positive experience. The bare feet symbolize the lack of protection and immunity. The tone looks submissive but it indicates the willingness to accept death as an outlet and escape of the aggressive world.

The speaker feels alienated in the world around her. No one cares for the Speaker's death even the moon, "the moon has nothing to be sad about/ Staring from her hood of bone." Therefore, she starts looking for something beyond death, which is the longing for perfection. Usually roses symbolize purity, so she compares her folding of the dead bodies of children as petals of a rose close (Mathew 9). Therefore she thinks that through death, she will have a new beginning. Plath asserts that she is completely dissatisfied with her life. She is no longer having a wish to live this dissatisfactory life. She prefers death and her wish for it is stronger than her wish for life, because life has nothing worthy to live for.

In the consistence with the nature of Eros and Thanatos, Plath sees the death as the ultimate goal of love and desire. The desire for the unity with the object of love

is frequently combined with the elements of Libido and Eros which is again perfectly focused on love, cooperation and collaboration (Matthew 34). People look for substitute love objects, and the first choice for young girl is usually her father's love. In Plath, however, the death of her father when she was eight years old preserved the little girl's oedipal obsession and gave death an additional meaning. So, death drive crept into the psyche of Sylvia Plath.

Plath and Her Death Wish:

Sylvia Plath achieved a rare feat of both critical and commercial success. Her work is read and enjoyed equally by critics, academics and common readers, and it features regularly on both university syllabuses and school syllabuses. Her work is highly acclaimed for being both literary and accessible, and she is regarded as one of Britain's most well-loved and successful contemporary poets. Different critics have explained the writing of Sylvia Plath in different way Fleih Hassen says:

Death has been represented in different ways in her poems. She did engage the reader either in a personal or an impersonal way to view death either as a liberating force or troubling depressing experience. Her depiction of death is reflected by the use of such techniques as imagery, language, structure, and tone. Most obvious factor shaped her attitude towards her death were the early death of her father and left her unsecured, and unfaithfulness of her husband, Ted Ted Hughes who left her dejected and melancholic to Plath (56).

Fleih Hassen interprets the poetry of Plath from the child psychological point of view. In his research, he emphasizes that her death wish in her literary writing was due to the sudden death of her father. His death left the daughter with powerful feelings of defeat, resentment, grief and remorse. So the absence of the father had influenced her emotional life negatively to the extent that it is reflected clearly in her poems.

Moreover, Elizabeth Hardwick views that Sylvia Plath's writings are deeply rooted in personal experiences. He further views:

In Sylvia Plath's work and in her life the elements of pathology are so deeply rooted and so little resisted that one is disinclined to hope for general principles, sure origins, applications, or lessons. Her fate and her themes are hardly separate and both are singularly terrible. Her work is brutal, like the smash of a fist; and sometimes it is also mean in its feeling. Literary comparisons are possible, echoes vibrate occasionally, but to whom can she be compared in spirit, in content, in temperament? (10).

Plath's choice of words, even in prose, dance through your mind and are hard to forget this is especially true, though, of her poetry. Each poem has a beautiful life of its own, but together as an anthology, the poems show Plath's true heart, fickle, angry, passionate, and uninhibited. In this regard Edward Butscher attempts to explain Plath's vision from the psychological perspective. Butscher argues:

The artist unlike a 'normal' adult still retains his word of fantastic illusions. The artist's "escapism" or "method" allows him to create his "visions" or "madness". The artist consequently assumes the role of God: "history is his biography, religion and religious rituals his myth of self and craft, and the cosmos itself a mere extension of his own conscious and unconscious perceptions" (8).

Through Plath's vision is psychologically explained by Butscher, its artistic value is still questionable since Butscher agrees that Plath's work doesn't transcend her life. According to Butscher, Plath is "consciously dedicated to fusing biography with poetry" so that the relation between art and life "can no longer be spit asunder or seriously challenged". In his analysis of Plath's poetry, Butscher always keeps her life

in the foreground, making the interpretation seems almost impossible without the study of poet's biography. Plath's poem carries the reader not only to the very limit of life, but also to the limit of poetry. It's not the poetry that kills her but it's that poetry that provides her shelter. Furthermore Barbara Galle views:

The use of personal experience in her writing was for Plath not a choice, but means of survival. Having learnt at young age that writing and academic success was only the ways of obtaining the love of her parents, she came to see her achievements as a proof of her own worth. "I felt if I didn't write nobody would accept me as human being" (Plath 2000a: 448). Continual writing, technique development, market research, and wish for success became an obsession that gradually took over her life (16).

Sylvia Plath believes that dying is an art, like everything else, and that she does it very well. Each time, "it feels real," and is easy for her. She believes people should pay to view her scars, hear her heart, or receive a word, touch, blood, hair or clothes from her. Regarding the writing of Sylvia Plath Charles Newman in his text *The Art of Sylvia Plath* writes:

Death is preminent but strangely unoppressive. Perhaps it is because there is no longer dialogue, no sense of 'otherness' she is speaking from a viewpoint which is total, complete love and death; all rivals are resolved as one within the irreversibility of experience. Plath creative energy was, it turned out, her self-destructiveness. But it was, precisely, a source of living energy, of her imaginative, creative power. So, through death it may have been a side issue, it was also an unavoidable risk in her writing her kind of poem (IV).

In my reading of Sylvia Plath's poetry, I found her writing express her own personal crises of pain and suffering. In an article Gary Lane Writes about Plath:

Fear and dread aroused such a force in Sylvia Plath that she could write poetry in a vigor which use to fright the readers till now. The Confusion and fear of death and partially a love for it is clearly visible in her poetry. She creates a unified poetry which flows out of her anxiety, tensions and fears. The phenomenon of fear, anxiety and dread entered in her from the moment she lost her father. This then occurred repeatedly as she came across several incidents in her life that involved pain, fear, anguish and hatred. Fear and dread in her seems to be more occupied because she was not able to accept her father's death, she had lost any trust or love in her mother. After her marriage, life also was a seeming burden on her body and soul. She was disturbed by her husband's behavior, his egoism and a feeling of male chauvinism. She went through many painful circumstances. Secondly she felt emptiness in life and society as a whole. She found the world disintegrating with the faithlessness of men, their lack of understanding for their female counterparts and the cruelty of society on those who are broken at heart (III).

Sylvia Plath's feeling of fear and dread generated such interest and energy which paved the path for the creation of readable poetry. On the surface level, her poem seems confessional but when we study deep level it is found that she has given more importance on death. Most of the poems written by Sylvia Plath have attraction to the death. Her poems are driven by Thanatos. She has developed friendliness with death. Her theme in a poem is personal experiences and sense of 'Death', 'Victimization', the 'Self' and 'Patriarchy'. Moreover, she explores the very intimate and even strange relationship between life and death. Death came to be a recurrent theme in the poetry of Sylvia Plath, and this theme has been represented in different ways in her poems. She did engage the reader either in a personal or an impersonal way to view death

either as a liberating force or troubling depressing experience (Mark 13). Her depiction of death is reflected by the use of such techniques as imagery, language, structure, and tone.

This research asserts that Plath expresses the internal alertness of death. She wants to deliver that every creature need to face the death and that death is not painful. She asserts that death leads to pleasure so not need to be fearful to die. Plath also represents her view of death as means of communication to portray her sad and boring life. She believes that death is happier moment then life. She senses death in every step of her life. She thinks every creature is struggling for death. She wants to aware the people that death is the last truth of life and not to ignore and forgot it. She tries to convince everyone to internalize the death as a universal truth and accept it without any fear. Plath's main intention is to aware people about the solace of death and their wrong deeds.

Frustration Reflected in Linguistic Creation

Plath's attraction towards death from her context of poem. Here I found result that the external frustration of the poet leads her towards the attraction of death. It is also found that society and family is responsible to lead the individual towards frustration. Frustration leads people towards psychological trauma. Plath's attraction towards death is the overcome of psychological Guilt. The rejection of family life and society which lead to the final rejection of self so she was attracted towards death. Plath's psychological guilt was conveyed linguistically in her text. Figurative language, particularly metaphor and metonymy are used to express her complex phenomena.

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