



**DEPRESSIVE DISCOURSE: A STUDY OF
SELECTED POEMS BY THOMAS HARDY AND
EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON**

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**DEPRESSIVE DISCOURSE: A STUDY OF SELECTED
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ROBINSON**

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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that in my opinion, the thesis submitted by Mohammed JASIM titled “DEPRESSIVE DISCOURSE: A STUDY OF SELECTED POEMS BY THOMAS HARDY AND EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON” is fully adequate in scope and quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own work and all information included has been obtained and expounded in accordance with the academic rules and ethical policy specified by the institute. Besides, I declare that all the statements, results, materials, not original to this thesis have been cited and referenced literally.

Without being bound by a particular time, I accept all moral and legal consequences of any detection contrary to the aforementioned statement.

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Abstract:

The current thesis represents an attempt to analyze some selected poems of Thomas Hardy and Edwin Arlington Robinson. The poems of these two poets witness some elements that carry some elements of depression and sorrow. The circumstances that the two poets had witnessed in their lives forced the two poets to write in poems that reflect the bitterness of life. The melancholic tone that the poets employ in their poems depicts the harshness of their life. In her *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia*, Julia Kristeva refers to the attributes of the mourner in both sexes. Julia Kristeva tackles the topic of melancholia, investigating this situation in the milieu of history, art, philosophy, literature, culture, and religion, psychoanalysis, and so forth. She describes the depressed as an individual who considers the feeling of himself to be a critical aim and an almost impossible target and how the love of a missing attachment identification lies at the very heart of the dark heart of depression. The current thesis tries to apply the notions of Kristeva that appear in her book *Black Sun* on some selected poems of Thomas Hardy and Edwin Arlington Robinson.

Keywords: Julia Kristeva, Black Sun, Depression, Depressive, Melancholia, Melancholy, Mourning.

ÖZ

Bu tez Thomas Hardy ve Edwin Arlington Robinson'dan derlenmiş bazı şiirleri analiz etmeyi amaçlar. Bu iki şairin şiirleri bunalım ve hüznün unsurları içeren bazı öğelere tanıklık eder. Bu iki şairin hayatlarında gördükleri şartlar onların hayatın karamsarlığını yansıtan şiirler yazmaya itmiştir. Şiirlerinde kullandıkları melankolik ton hayatlarının acımasızlığına işaret eder. Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia adlı şiirde, Julia Kristeva her iki cinsiyetin de ağıtçısına yapılan atıflardan bahseder. Julia Kristeva melankoli konusunu psikanalizin yanı sıra tarih, sanat, felsefe, edebiyat, kültür ve din bağlamında da ele alır. Kristeva depresif kimseyi benlik algısını önemli bir takip ve neredeyse ulaşılamayan bir amaç olarak algılayan kişi olarak tanımlar ve bağlılığın kayıp kimlik sevgisinin nasıl bunalımın karanlık kalbinin tam ortasında yattığını açıklar. Bu tez Kristeva'nın Thomas Hardy ve Edwin Arlington Robinson'un bazı seçili şiirleri üzerine olan kitabı Black Sun'da görünen ve ona ait kavramları uygulamaya çalışır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Black Sun, Bunalım, Depresif, Julia Kristeva, Melankoli, Yas.

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ARŞİV KAYIT BİLGİLERİ

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SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH

The main reason behind this study is to discover the people's depression in their life and the causes of poets' depression in their poetry as portrayed in selected poems by Thomas Hardy and Edwin Arlington Robinson.

PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this study is to explore the reasons behind people's depression especially poets in their poetry as in Thomas Hardy and Edwin Arlington Robinson. The significance of this study is to highlight depression in literature and how we can get the benefit or how do we treat such cases.

METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

The depressed characters in the poems of Thomas Hardy and Edwin Arlington Robinson are analysed by the Depressive Discourse theory. The research result assists the readers to understand the capacity of the influence of depression and Depressive theory upon these characters.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH / RESEARCH PROBLEM

The concept of depressed character can be observed in similar and different simultaneously by both poets Thomas Hardy and Edwin Arlington Robinson. Both poets portray a depressing picture in their poetry because of the loss of love or the bad situations in their time.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS / DIFFICULTIES

The limitation of the current thesis is focusing on the main poems for each poet. The study will be dedicated to discussing the elements of depression and melancholia that appear in each poet's poems. also, the theoretical framework on which the study stands is mainly the views of Julia Kristeva that appear in her book *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia*

CHAPTER ONE

1.1. Depression and Melancholia

Any interpretation of melancholia and depression must continue with a deeper look at their past relationship and how it has evolved over time. Current scholarships on the past of melancholy and grief can be narrowly split into two schools of thinking, one underlining consistency and the other underlining historical detail and transition. Stanley Jackson's remarkable amount on the past of melancholy and despair covering over two centuries is illustrative of the former. Jackson claims that, after Hippocrates, melancholy has demonstrated "both remarkable consistency and remarkable consistency in the basic cluster of symptoms" (Jackson, 1986, p. ix). Others have taken a similar view, indicating that melancholy as a medical term has shown considerable stability across the years, interrupted perhaps by the widening of the depression label at the end of the 20th century to obscure the distinction between natural and unhealthy low mood (e.g., Borch-Jacobsen, 2009; Lawlor, 2012). Taking a particular view, some authors have emphasized variations in how depressive moods have been understood and encountered in different periods of time (see, e.g., Bell, 2014; Radden, 2000). Both opposing viewpoints highlight the complexity in distinguishing melancholy and despair, whilst at the same time stressing the significance of a complex and contextualized historical analysis to both definitions.

Melancholy has its origins in ancient Greece, which is originated from the words (melas) and the word (kholé), meaning 'black bile.' In accordance with the

humoral hypothesis that has governed Western medicine for decades, doctors assumed that melancholy formed when the abundance of black bile was generated in the stomach, growing to the head to cloud the mind and the spirit. Great depression will sometimes ensue, preceded by crippling dreams, often preceded by frightening nightmares (Gowland, 2006, pp. 86–88). The humoral paradigm, which argued that health and disease relied on a delicate balance between the four humors of the body (black bile, yellow, blood, and phlegm), also developed the cultural trope of the "melancholic temperament" that has persisted in modern times. Throughout most cultures, there has been a clear connection between sadness and theological misery, as well as between melancholy and introspection. In Roman and medieval Europe and North Africa, sadness haunted the faithful in their mystical contemplation. During the 4th century, for example, melancholy feelings could be manifested as *acedia*, often referred to as the "noon-tide demon" as it appeared to prey upon monks residing in Egyptian desert colonies during the hottest time of the day (Kuhn, 1976, pp. 39–64).

Critics of the depression diagnosis, such as Edward Shorter, have argued that the disease referred to as major depressive disorder today is merely a modern variant of a cluster of stress-related symptoms (anxiety, sadness, sleep problems, inertia, failure to focus, etc.) that have affected individuals for years, but still should not be recognized as a psychiatric condition in the sense of depression. Rather, today's depression is better described as a cultural phenomenon close to that of "vapors" in the 18th century or *neurasthenia* (nerve exhaustion) in the late 19th century (Shorter, 2013, p. 6). Shorter subscribes to the doctrine of "two

depressions," which is accepted through fields of differing meanings. Shorter distinguishes between endogenous depression (melancholia) and the socially and culturally induced type, which is today the predominant form of depressive disorder identified in primary care (Ibid). George Rousseau provides a distinct explanation of the two narrative depressions, acknowledging the division between the "pre-medicalized category (melancholy) and the post-medicalized category (depression)" (Rousseau, 2000, p. 74). Rousseau's viewpoint is primarily historical; it concerns how these two types, and associated afflictions, such as nervous illnesses, have been perceived throughout culture, and how this history is published by academics now. Shorter, on the other hand, writes from the point of view of modern psychology and is concerned with distinguishing "real" timeless mood disturbance (melancholy) from culturally generated depression. He states that the DSM-III task force initially wanted to incorporate "minor" and "major" depression in the updated textbook but felt under strain to remove the former as "insurance companies would never pay for anything 'minor'." And thus, Shorter claims, "the doctrine of two distinct depressions" of "melancholy and non-melancholy" was done away with, leaving psychology with a single type.

In the following sections of this chapter, the study will be mainly dedicated to discussing the terms of Depression and Melancholia which appears in Kristeva's book the *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia*. The two terms were highly elaborated by the French feminist in her book, and thus, the two terms will be highlighted depending on the views of Kristeva.

1.2. Depression and Melancholia in Kristeva's *Black Sun*

The idea of melancholia, a 'facility' of disconcerting silence, has breached the bounds from Ancient Greece to the present day among medical, cultural, and literature studies. Kristeva, in her book *Black Sun*, explores the connection between "depression" and the past of melancholy in a psychoanalytic, literary, and artistic sense. Her book is not only a Freudian interpretation of melancholy and depression, but it also reconstructs a disorder as a linguistic condition with symbolism, a deficit of voice, and a sense that persists. Thus, in *Black Sun*, melancholia is her primary metaphysical word, much like the abject and the "semiotic" in her former works (Chung Su, 2005, p. 164).

Kristeva's melancholy work can be seen as an essential component of her project of bringing the indescribable into language and desire. In melancholia, there is a private investment in the "symbolic power" of language, a division between effect and language. Melancholic conveys the dynamic of the emotions or effects of the tone, modulation, and voice gestures at infra-verbal or semiotic levels. There is a symbolic failure, a situation of abjection, or Kristeva situation is also called "asymbolism". However, the melancholy asymbolism is not a situation of static silence. Instead, it has a state of lively dynamics that fluctuates between "melancholy and semiotic mother confusion and a therapeutic identification with the symbolic father" (Kristeva, p. 5). Kristeva interprets the sonnet, "El Desdichado" (1853), by Gérard de Nerval's, to show the melancholy, dark, and at the same time the radiant, picture of the "black sun". Dynamic tensions between dark and radiant and between sadness and writing reflect Kristeva's "uncomfortable" understanding of melancholy.

Melancholia stems from a rejection of detachment from the mother, a fear of the "matricide," which is our essential need, says Kristeva (Ibid). Paralyzed without being capable of speaking it in the state of misery, the melancholic only experiences what the French feminist calls as the "melancholic Thing". in her *Black Sun*, Kristeva commits herself, on the radiant hand, for "expressing and opening up the hermetic veil of melancholy" (Ibid, p. 7). In the chapter entitled

“Art and Literature”, Kristeva is most curious about the issue of portraying the indescribable in melancholia. “Art and literature”, focuses on the overcoming of melancholia, establishing a type of symbolic vaporization, that is, a symbolic “sublimation” of the topic that replaces the missing parental item.

The alternation between two poles, what is the condition of melancholy in the *Black Sun* of Kristeva, exactly? In what way does it become dynamic? Why does the melancholic arise, gaining meaning and representation, from asymbolia? “How does she/he cross boundaries of art, literature, and society and create connections? What's the motherly issue here”? Will the maternal aspect of melancholia relate to some big change of societal archetypes? Does it motivate the mournful woman or have her sink further into the quiet darkness? One of the greatest considerations of this chapter is to analyze, with its operations of negation, its sublimation, and its matricide, the complex relationship between melancholia and writing in Kristeva's *Black Sun*.

That chapter would also seek to illustrate the complex part of melancholia in the development of literature and art. Kristeva opposes melancholia by the "writing cure," or "artistic", and this confrontation is at once the most troublesome soothing, and complex element of Kristeva's philosophy. This hypothesis runs the risk of a destructive indirectness, restoring women to a symbolic oppressive order that, in the first place, led to the development of female sadness. The chapter is therefore a criticism aimed at sharpening the understanding of the implicit stereotypes or intellectual limitations inherent in the conception of melancholia by Kristeva, a gender analysis that aims to make visible a definite gender bias that constructs Kristeva's book.

In Kristeva's book, the French feminist is reduced by a trivial but enlightening diversity of melancholy and "pressure". The melancholia of the institutional and recurrent form is a severe sickness marked by more regular depressive/manic changes, contrasted with depression, which is of lower severity and regularity. The viler melancholia and milder sadness of Kristeva, therefore, recall the traditional psychoanalytic differentiation between hysteria and

neurosis. However, after finding out the shared ground common by the two, "the equal unbearable sorrow for the motherly object" (Kristeva, p. 9), Kristeva is not equipped to retain this crucial difference.

Concerning preserving this fine differentiation, Kristeva is not prepared to do so, since she discovered that the ground upon which they stood, "the impossibility of mourning for the maternal object," was shared by the two. (Ibid). Here she ignores the discrepancies between the two and suggests that a "melancholy/depressive" composite should be spoken about. Furthermore, Kristeva describes her position: "I will therefore speak of depression and melancholia without differentiating the characteristics of the two disorders, but taking into account their mutual construction" (Ibid, p. 11).

She plans to put behind pointed nosological issues, incorporate what she calls Freud's "politically correct" stance, and continues on her search for "a non-communicable grief" (Ibid, p. 3). Without going through depth concerning different forms of depression, Kristeva asserts, "from a Freud's perspective, I can analyze matters. On that basis, from the heart of the melancholy/depressive combined, distorted as its boundaries can be, I would attempt to bring out what applies to a shared experience of object displacement and a shift in demonstrating ties" (Ibid, p. 10).

Kristeva draws on Freud's principle of melancholy, claiming that sadness is mostly caused by the lack of the infant's interdependent relationship with the mother (the semiotic). The griever is driven by this bond to redeem his mother from the "external" world of words and signs (the symbolic). "As soon as I lose my mother and depend on denial," Kristeva says, "I recover her as a symbol, picture, name" (BS 63). Kristeva argues that without this ability to embody the mother in language, sorrow will transform into melancholy, no longer longing for Freud's "object of desire," and for the parental "Thing," a non-object of loss and desire that avoids significance. So, sadness is unresolved grief for the pre-objective mother—the parental Thing. The parental "Thing," related to the "pre-discursive or pre-oedipal economy," is an unnamed and unrepresentable female

point of opposition for reaching the symbolic and "pathological society" as opposed to phallogocentric prototypes of well-being.

Pre-symbolic, handheld, and appalling location is referred to in the refrain as the "motherly 'Thing'" according to Kristeva, "Thing" is everything that cannot be grasped by the senses, the central point of repulsion and attraction, the location of sexuality where one's object of lust should be removed (Ibid, p. 13). In many ways, the concept of "the real" is founded in the works of Julia Kristeva. The maternal "Thing" is a melancholy situation that occurs as a traumatic narcissism that tries to avoid understanding. In the concept of the Nervalian metaphor of the "black sun," which parallels the impact of absolute insistence on remaining unconscious: "the Nerval is a stunning metaphor that indicates persistence without existence, a light without depiction: the Thing is an imaginary sun, black and brilliant at the same time" (Ibid, p. 13). The "Thing" is the result of unbearable love in the "crypt of the inexpressible effect" (Ibid, p. 53). The maternal Thing is the other (feminized) who confines and incarcerates the mourner in a labyrinth of emotion, peculiarity, and strangeness: "My pain is the thing hidden from view, my muted sister" (Ibid, p. 4).

For Kristeva, sorrow comes down to a choice of "dying or not trying to kill": being a mother-killer or a melancholy, choosing suicide or matricide. Matricide is the first phase toward autonomy and healing; the mother must be "killed" in order to become an autonomous and psychologically sound subject. The "maternal Thing" can only be lost and found again by the "act of matricide," as Kristeva puts it, "through an amazing symbolic endeavor" (Ibid, p. 28). Kristeva claims that when it comes to the "Death-Bearing Woman" theme:

The absence of the mother is a physiological and behavioral necessity, which conditions our individuation given that it occurs under appropriate conditions and may be desexualized: whether it's through a miraculous symbolic effort that makes the lost object metaphorically erotic or whether it is in cultural concepts transformed into an "irreplaceable" erotic item (one thinks of the

cathezes, by women and men in social ties, aesthetic and intellectual manufactures, etc.). (Ibid, pp. 27-28)

To kill the mother, or a matricide, is "a vital necessity" for the psychological health of women and men; "not to kill the mother" indicates insufficient incorporation into the symbolic, which is demonstrated by such melancholy, asymbolisms and also the drive to death to commit suicide: (Ibid, p. 28). "The maternal" object has been adopted by Melancholics. They revoke the mechanism of negation, refusing to invalidate their loss of the mother. as Kristeva says:

Since the vocabulary starts with the negation of death (Verneinung) and the sadness induced by grief, signs are subjective. People who are distraught reject the negation; they delete it, place it on hold, and helplessly return to the original object (Thing) of their failure, which is precisely what they refuse to lose and from which they cannot break free. 43-44) (Ibid., pp. 43-44)

Why would this rejection of mother's loss take the psychically abusive type of what Kristeva considers matricide? Kristeva believes "matricide" to be the only credible choice for the cause of death. However, one can believe that his confidence in the advantageous properties and the inability of matricide is deeply problematic. Her matricide hypothesis is based on the deep-seated misogyny of the Freudian Oedipal drama. It gives "death" and "mother" a dark representation of a burden on people, namely death as a woman and death as death, the primary symbols of Melancholy and "death-bearing mother." As David R. Crownfield points out: "Death is symbolized as a woman; death by metonymy is symbolized as an absence" (Crownfield, 1992, p. 21). Kristeva states that this condition is like what Freud considered the death push a relapse to an archaic state or a regression from matricidal to suicide. She said that death's drive seems to be a "biological and logical inability to transmit psychic energy and inscriptions," thereby breaking "movements and links" (Kristeva, p. 17). Additional to the tenets of sexism and matriphobia, the gendered conception of sadness prevalent in the concept of matricide is additionally undermined by the conceptual framework that

actively promotes the musical representation of male despair and systematically undervalues the asymptotic silence of female despair. Another concern emerges with Kristeva's gendered understanding of why a woman should be less worthy of matricide than a male and therefore more oppressed by a "dead-bearing mother." Kristeva does not respond directly to this argument, however, his mindset is clear: that is, women cannot commit matricide, and the mother transforms from a missing "object" into a "pre-object."

Kristeva is at risk of feminizing sadness due to the connection between melancholy and the mother and the parent, furthermore, this also solidifies the position of cultural production as being patriarchal. A mirror image of the other exists within the same, the melancholy demands the maternal thing, the notion of alterity. The maternal problem for Kristeva is not only a place of resistance but also a foundation for healing. It should be "conveyed through a completed mourning and beyond" (Ibid, p. 66). Thus, the agony of loss is balanced with the joy of mastering signals (Ibid, p. 67). Kristeva describes the effort to convey the inconceivable as an effort to defeat the grief for the lost maternal thing.

In *Black Sun*, one senses the irony of matricide for a gloomy woman everywhere as her rejection (Verleugnung) of negation turns to the "the application of an unbearable mourning"—the development of a clear melancholy and a maternal thing that is not open to any signifier (Ibid, p. 44). This denial or rejection makes matricide impossible since it ignores both the signifiers and the drives and the impacts of symbolic representatives. This means that females find it extremely complicated to destroy the mother because they have encrypted the mother within themselves through communicating with the mother (Burton, 2007, p. 77). A melancholic lady, captured between love and loneliness, is predestined to sacrifice a vital portion of her subjectivity in the pursuit of an impossible matricide. Matricide is a form of suicide for a melancholy female because she takes the mother or the parent thing with her to the vault of her essence. In heterosexual culture, too, a melancholy woman may not have a mother-substitute as an object of desire in the way that a melancholy male does. This means that

because it is basically gay and must be kept hidden within a heterosexual society, feminine sexuality is melancholy.

In *First Things: The Maternal Imaginary in Fiction, Painting, and Psychoanalysis* (1995), Mary Jacobus describes this problem in depth:

Women's relative strain of symbolic effort, according to Slavic theorist Julia Kristeva, is what separates them from men. If heterosexual women and homosexual men can retrieve the missing motherly object as an erotic object, heterosexual women must engage in "a giant elaboration" in order to locate an erotic thing other than the prime motherly object (i.e., a heterosexual object)—far more than males are required to do in the pursuit of their own heterosexuality. (p. 52)

In *Black Sun*, Kristeva does not just read psychiatric instances of feminine distress but also works by Marguerite Duras, Hans Holbein, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and Gérard de Nerval, four melancholy artists. Kristeva narrates the psychoanalysis of three suicidal people in the chapter entitled "Illustrations of Feminine Depression," although she reflects on a melancholy artist in one of the other four pages. Her three feminine depression examples illustrate the commitment of patients to the mother or what Kristeva called "the maternal thing." As Kristeva argues, feminine depression is more widespread than masculine depression and more challenging to manage in certain cases since the attachment of an individual to her mother is sometimes insurmountable. "Her analysis of the four artists, on the other hand, shows her distress about "the creative capacity of Western man," which is the capacity to "move sense to the very position where it is wasted in death and/or non-meaning" (Kristeva, p.103), to give "the lost meaning with a real satisfaction," and to assert "the personal perception of sadness of sad enjoyment (Ibid, p. 102).

In *Black Sun*, Hans Holbein is the very first melancholy artist that Kristeva speaks about. The work of Holbein, *The Body of the Dead Christ in the Tomb* (1521), is applied in the chapter "Holbein's Dead Christ" to highlight the idea that

a piece of art is focused on a conquered suffering, a melancholy that represents a symbolic redemption: that is, a symbolic redemption of the subject. After this Kristeva interprets Nerval's sonnet "El Desdichado" in the next chapter, "Gérard de Nerval, the Disinherited Poet," as the dispossessed melancholia's effort to enter the world of signs, to offer the thing he mourns a label. The melancholic poet Nerval's job is to invent a poetic vocabulary similar to "the Thing" and then sublimate this painful encounter into "an independent symbolic object-a sonnet" (Ibid, p. 162),

Nerval's sonnet portrays the essential moments of melancholy with tremendous force and in great details, like Holbein's drawing. Using a double-blind technique, Nerval flirts aggressively with the Item in his sonnet and repulses the dark asymbolia by making an 'I' who authors. In order not to be entangled by asymbolism, Kristeva's key argument here is that melancholy should be maternalized or feminized and expressed in or by prosodic polymorphism—alliterations, melodies, and rhythms—as an alternative to univocal details. For Kristeva, the "folly of Nerval" is beaten by the loss of his painting, especially by the shape and methodology of his polymorphic form, which allows it. Dostoyevsky's *The Writing of Pain and Forgiveness* is discussed in Kristeva's book. For the fruitful redirection of melancholy, gloomy association with the mother in writing, the depiction of immoral and esthetic forgiveness. That is, in a modern style, Dostoyevsky is able to verbalize the power of pain. The writing of Dostoyevsky completes a rejuvenating transition for Kristeva and better shows how the "unconscious could scratch itself in a new story that won't be the everlasting reoccurrence of the drive to death" (Ibid, p. 205).

Kristeva continues with her study of the melancholy artist in the final part of the book, *The Malady of Grief: Duras*. In this part of the book, Kristeva refers to Marguerite Duras. In comparison to the three earlier "male" authors, Dostoyevsky, Nerval, and Holbein, whose texts were extremely celebrated, Duras, the only "female" artist deliberated in *Black Sun*, is viewed with reluctance and eventually rejected as an instance of disappointment not different than that of the depressed

females addressed in the text earlier. "For Kristeva, Duras' "discourse of dulled pain" catches the "malady of death" in "an aesthetic of awkwardness" and "a noncathartic literature," a style obviously less musical than that produced by male contemporaries of Duras" (Ibid, p. 225). Kristeva's likenesses of Duras are evidently contaminated by her behavior toward depressed women and female melancholy musicians. "In a sound of admiration, if not reverence," Doane and Hodges (1992) write of the male musicians, "Holbein's minimalist style is 'dignified' (p. 119) sober'; Nerval is 'brilliantly' perceptive." Dostoevsky discovers the solemnity and beauty of forgiveness. "At the end of those novels written on the verge of sickness," Kristeva observes, "there is no purification in place for us, no change, no sign of a beyond, not even the enchanting elegance of style or irony that might offer a bonus of joy in addition to the discovered bad" (Kristeva, pp. 227-28). For Kristeva, Duras is the perfect female poet caught in "Thing's primordial universe." As a result, her prose reveals her inability to rise above this inner desolation and sublimate the terrible "passion for destruction" in a respectful manner (Ibid, p. 221).

"Duras does not place it in the style of Mallarmé, who found music in sentences, nor does it put it in the style of Beckett, who improves the syntax that labels the period or passes forward through fit and starts and prevents the flight of the plot," Kristeva writes at the end of the chapter (Ibid, p. 258). Duras, in her opinion, is incapable of making the supreme expression of grief, and her appeals' indirect remarks "point to a tragedy of words in the face of the unnamable consequence" (Ibid, p. 258). Rather than silence and nothingness, Duras' work leaves us with "a blankness without sense" and "a landscape of disturbing, communicable ill-being," "attached with oratorical awkwardness" (Ibid, p. 257). Duras, on the other hand, is part of a "tragic" current universe full of "abysmal disappointment," refusing to accept the "postmodern obstacle" that is "closer to human humor" (Ibid, pp. 258-59). "Women are concerned with sadness and the abyss in Kristeva's scheme rather than with the comic," Hodges and Doane rightly observe (p. 76).

Another woman melancholy in *Black Sun* is barely mentioned by Kristeva. She takes a dismissive tone while arguing about Duras and de-estimates her job and style blatantly. Kristeva obviously has a sexual prejudice in coping with "Melancholia," which is described as unhealthy and disturbing, since female melancholia implies the ability of women to translate or metaphorize, not to mention sad women, will never behave as an agent who has the power to send mother or motherly stuff. Male artists are, instead, the fortunate agents who can transform the pre-discursive and melancholized thing into a fresh conversation or artwork. As Kristeva asserts, "Melancholy is for them the secret source of a new rhetoric" (Kristeva, p. 224). Provided the prejudiced understanding of women's melancholy by Kristeva, the female melancholic can only be confined to a 'impossible' mother's corner that cannot be esthetically sublimated.

1.3.The Male Depression According to Kristeva:

The trajectory of sadness marked the shift to a psychotic condition of re-inscription of the symbolic of itself from the despair of denigration – Rejection (*Verleugnung*) of negation (BS 44). The lack of melancholy, the addiction to the maternal *Item*, or the death drive is overcome by reassembly to an entity the melancholic recuperates in language through this rite of passage. By using Freud's theory in "The Ego and Id," Kristeva claims that the melancholic may rectify the decrease of the thing with the "father of individual prehistory" through his "primary identification" (Kristeva, p. 13): Kristeva argues that:

The most significant identification is the possibility of becoming reconciled with the loss of the Thing, which could be achieved with the introduction of the "father in individual prehistory". When someone's primary identification begins, this results in compensation for the Thing (the individual, his/her property, his/her body, his/her belongings, etc.) and, simultaneously, secures the subject (the person, their property, their body, their belongings, etc.) to another dimension, one of imaginary adherence, which helps to illustrate the link between trust and faith. (Kristeva, pp. 13-14)

This direction is essentially "phallic or symbolic," with the aim of assuring "the subject's arrival to the world of signs and existence" (Ibid, p. 22). The man writer's depiction of melancholy is "a cultural and discursive phenomenon that has granted males a cultural right to show and represent a loss in order to turn it into a symbol of advantaged subjectivity" (Ibid, p. 23). The male author has a "masochistic" longing for melancholy that it will ultimately bring him peace. Matricide is at ease for the masculine melancholy, allowing him to eroticize his beating heterosexually by substituting a mother as an object of love. The male melancholic is a dominant symbol who arbitrates through semiotic and symbolic worlds, drawing on a variety of subject roles to articulate the multiple reflections produced by melancholia theory (the mother, the narcissistic, the patient, the analytic...).

In the name of the parent, the misery of the depressed artist is still gendered, firstly feminized, and then rescued. This agony of melancholy finally grants the male artist of melancholy a comfortable place within the canons of literature, philosophy, and sculpture. Male melancholia, specifically by writing itself, is rendered to reflect a delicate or sublime illness characterized by depiction. A line of flight from asymbolia to writing 'from the moment of the negation of the effect' is traced by the depiction or direction of melancholia:

Writing only comes into being at the intersection of emotion and behavior when the impact is negated, allowing the efficacy of signs to emerge. As Aquinas would say, writing allows the effect to slip into the effect— actus purus. It conveys affects rather than suppressing them; it proposes a sublimatory outcome for them; and it transposes them into another in a threefold, fictional, and symbolic bond. Writing is transformation, transposition, and translation since it is forgiveness. (Ibid, p. 217)

In *Black Sun*, Kristeva claims that the "artist plagued by melancholy," attempting to overcome the mother who bears death, fights a never-ending war against the "symbolic abdication" that surrounds him/her (Ibid, p. 9). She specifically mentions "poetic form"—melody, rhythm, semantic polyvalence,

symbol decomposition, and recomposition—as a possible "container"[...] capable of keeping an ambiguous yet adequate control on the thing" (Ibid, p. 14). It can help control depression by transforming "effect into patterns, signals, and shapes" (Ibid, p. 22), as literary production "bears witness to the result." Composing, labeling, exalting and analyzing pain "into its smallest bits, which is undeniably a way to curtail mourning" (Ibid, p. 97). Kristeva, in truth, understands the eventual connection between melancholy and prose. "For those who are racked with sorrow, writing about it can only have significance if writing originated from the same melancholy," she notes at the beginning of the *Black Sun*, in a tone suggestive of Robert Burton's in *The Anatomy of Sadness* (Ibid, p. 3). Kristeva, like Robert Burton, "writes about sadness while being busy resisting melancholy" (Burton, 2001, p. 21), involves in melancholy writings by preserving the essence resulting from that same melancholy.

The process of melancholy, according to her, is a flowing energy-trace-libidinal wave that is uncontrollable. Her ability to understand Nerval's "light without depiction": [...] an elusive sun, black and bright at the same time, drove her to write about *Black Sun* melancholy (Kristeva, p. 13). This urge to compose in sadness is not a desire to represent, but a desire to print, to record, the desire itself. The ability to write pushes the "I" melancholy to the point that the "I" melancholy becomes a means of expressing and composing as a bystander to melancholy. Kristeva, like Freud, claims that writing is the greatest prevention and treatment for melancholy and that it can be resolved and finally laid to bed. The publishing sector has a versatile platform for the healing and artistic phase. It not only documents the condition of melancholy, but it also represents the start of the practice of signifying. Kristeva is more worried regarding the medicinal outcome. For her, creative and literary creations have culminated in a healing device "whose prosodic budget, character engagement, and tacit symbolism establish a very real semiological reflection of the topic's struggle with symbolic failure" (Ibid, p. 24). To hypothesize depression, Kristeva makes the *Black Sun* a homeopathic solution to melancholy. Kristeva's poetry is therefore both a symptom and a solution for her.

The Kristevan melancholia is characterized primarily as a language pathology, which originates from an unlikely mother's grief, or from a rejection of the necessity of the matricide, — a language "disagreement" and language disease. Kristeva stresses the asymbolic character of melancholy, in particular its discrepancy, repetitiveness, and monotony. Asymbolism essentially is not interpreted or metaphorised, and vocabulary is not used to provide importance to missing mothers. Kristeva is nervous to track a pathway that rights "work of the art as charm", while conceptualizing sadness as a disease of language, as a counter depressant (Ibid, p. 9). Leaving the tongue-tied sick females behind Kristeva values artist fetishism over melancholic hysteresis, vanity, and "suicidal masochism." The direction of melancholy is ultimately called for, as Kristeva explains:

Since psychoanalysts work with speech, how do we gain access to the pain if the dejected individual refuses language and discovers it useless or false? That is why, despite the fact that they are expressed by words, I have stressed the significance of the voice and other non-linguistic signs. Indeed, identifying such symptoms can be the most reliable way to understand a miserable person. I too trust it is critical to explain how the depressed person, who often goes unnoticed because of their suffering, is secretly emotional and cunningly impassioned. In a nutshell, melancholia can be represented as an unnameable and vacant caricature. It is our duty to lift it to the level of words—and of life. (Ibid, p. 80)

The appeal to the symbolic difficulties that the dejected decline to take comfort or hold to a single personality in narcissistic regression to maternal roots. The vibrant condition of deasymbolia, of the ecstasy of words, is in contrast to the state of asymbolia, a state of slowness and muteness:

A cognitive, accelerated, and creative process can be seen in the studies pertaining to the very singular and creative associations made by people who are depressed since they are provided with lists of words to study. For hyperactivity,

integrating distant semantic fields often shows itself, and it recalls the puns of hypomanics.. (BS 59)

This recovery from the depressive condition to the hypermanic state-run, from asymbolism to de-asymbolism (esthetic creations) or from selfish masochism to artistic fetishism, what precisely is the meaning of this trajectory? In *Black Sun*, creative or fetish melancholy, which is suicidal or psychiatric (hysterical) similar to submission to the mother, is called a victory of the parent. The path of melancholy is gendered. Melancholy, in the *Black Sun*, is still a prose subject. The dynamic experience of sadness and poetry is at once the most healing and often the most troublesome facet of the gendered conception of Kristeva, the renunciation of the mother or of the parent to tell a beautiful story. 26 This beauty tale, or "poetic language revolution" is the right and privilege of a male artist, not of a woman's authors, as demonstrated in Duras's.

1.4.The Melancholy Sublime in Kristeva's View:

To emphasize both transgression and systematicity of all meaningful action, Kristeva suggests switching language as a signifying operation' from the idea of language as a 'general sign method. Similarly, Kristeva's portrayal of melancholia in *Black Sun* implies a shared awareness of the mental disease, suggesting a distinct understanding of mental illness. According to Kristeva, one cannot oppose matricide without being melancholic. On the other side, symbolism and the parental thing might be the abject states that test the symbolic's boundaries. Kristeva is bringing her melancholy style to the test. Inside the symbolic paternal culture, aesthetic development enables the melancholic to start trying to transform his or her depression into a piece of art.

Black Sun's fundamental history of melancholia illustrates a certain kind of "ethical turn." Kristeva claims in her novel "Revolution in Poetic Language" that ethics is "the denial of narcissistic within a practice" (Ibid, p. 233). As Crownfield puts it, "Julia Kristeva's rethinking of ethics as a meaningful activity rather than a fundamental tenet of morality significantly contributes to the growth of

postmodern values" (Ibid, p. 92). Kristeva views ethics as a necessary practice for resolving the greedy inconsistencies inherent in sadness.

In *Black Sun*, the "dynamics of sublimation" (Ibid, p. 99) are formed by this newly started process of transformation, which ultimately leads to the "sublime sadness." Yes, Kristeva's *Black Sun* is noteworthy for her concept of sublimation and exquisite sadness. Kristeva elevates artistic production as a means of aestheticizing melancholy. In other words, her whole effort in writing about sadness is to promote the sublime melancholy's sublimatory or creative nature. In *Julia Kristeva Interviews*, Kristeva elaborates:

In my book, I assert that perfection originally comes in the land of melancholy; it offers a sense of balance that transcends despair. Depression is on the brink of igniting creative thinking. As sadness, on the other hand, takes on an imaginative feel, it has been assigned a name and thereby vanquished. Depression continues to be a secret, maybe even contemporary, aspect of sacredness. (See *ibid.*, pp. 97–84).

What precisely is the meaning of this route from distress to hypermanic condition, from asymbolism to de-asymbolism (esthetic formation), or from compulsive masochism to artistic fetishism? The parent's victory in *Black Sun* is imaginative or fetish melancholy, which is suicidal or psychiatric (hysterical) and similar to that of a mother. In the sense that melancholy as feminized asymbolism or loss of word and meaning, and melancholy writing as the retrieval of terms and meanings, are two nuanced, dialectical processes that take place under melancholy, the course of melancholy is a gendered dialectical in answer to the mother and in collusion with the father. Melancholia appears as a medical/remedial circumstance and, as a conversational rehearsal in which a particular subject, categorized or rated as melancholic, is legitimized in the depiction of his artistic trajectory, as Schiesari points out. Melancholy is the focus of literature in the *Black Light*. The most therapeutic and perhaps the most troublesome feature of the gendered reproduction of Kristeva, the renunciation of a mother or a parent to hear a story of elegance, is the dynamic experience of grief

and poetry. As Duras has illustrated, this beautiful tale, or "poetic language movement," is the right and privilege of a male artist, not a woman's writer.

Kristeva's theorization is contentious due to its collusion with colonialism, anti-feminist stance, and luxury of the supreme of sorrow. It extols sorrow and "artfully" and "beautifully" enthrone "the Man Melancholy Artist King," relegating the mother and woman artist to the Thing. Kristeva's distinction between inventive male depression and asymbolic or overly emotional female anguish shows a degree of misogyny, reinforcing established paradigms for the melancholy discussion. Kristeva's uncritical exaggeration of the generality of the symbolizing rite reveals her gendered pronouns of melancholy and rhetoric of cruelty towards the maternal. Her appropriations of contemporary psychological desperation and traditional heroic melancholy attempt to contextualize her theorization within her present concerns about the function of poetic language in signifying behaviour, the relationship of symbolic and semiotic, the inarticulation of the voice or the Thing, and the vaporization and evaporation of recovery.

CHAPTER TWO

2.1. Depression in Thomas Hardy's poetry

Poetry, wrote Thomas Hardy, "is emotion put into measure. The emotion must come by nature, but the measure can be acquired by art" (Life, p. 300). Few English writers have accomplished "recognition for being as accomplished in the areas of both novel writing and poetry as Thomas Hardy" (Gibson, 2001, p. 42). Hardy's desire for writing poetry continued the extent of his life, characterized by the truth: Hardy sustained producing "poems until the age of eighty-eight; he believed that if he liked, a man could go on writing till his physical strength gave out" (Ibid). For Hardy, the process of composing poetry had a "sustaining power", because of its capacity to convey "emotional enthusiasms" (Cox, 1997, p. 512). Such 'emotional enthusiasms' characteristically "took shape in the form of melancholia, and therefore scholars often identify Hardy as a man who suffered from depression" (Gittings 1978, p. 13).

Depending on the results of biographical research, Hardy exhibited subtle examples of enthusiasm and excitement, and these apparently happier memories have remained unobserved in Hardyian scholarship. A biographer of Hardy and an avid researcher whose name is Michael Millgate who in a few words, touches upon this "more understated facet of Hardy's personality" when he states, "His dimmest depression was [...]able not only of simultaneous with external hospitableness but also of alternating with eras of actual happiness" (Millgate, 1982, p. 381). In a similar manner, Tony Fincham commented on Hardy's poems and novels as revealing Hardy's own experiences and emotions.

If one considers Hardy's opinion that he was, first and foremost, a poet who also wrote some novels for the sake of a decent living, he or she will be surprised. When an American met Hardy at Max Gate, Dorchester around 1890 and asked him many things about fiction but nothing about his poetry, he became disconnected and told him that he was mainly a poet who had also done some work in prose. Hardy was quite happy whenever his poetry was warmly appreciated by the public. Hardy the poet, was much hurt than Hardy the novelist,

whenever critics passed severe comments on him. When Alfred Noyse picked up some lines of Hardy's poetry for reproach, Hardy was much annoyed and retorted him to be alert about such things. His main aim as mentioned by his second wife Florence Hardy was to get some of his poems published in "Golden Treasury of English Verse" (Ibid).

As is the case for many others, this therapeutic reading is entirely based on Freud's "reverting" discussion of loss in "Mourning and Melancholia" (1917). Julia Kristeva (1941) argues in her discussion of Freud's beliefs that "mourning" is for an archaic and indispensable object—and on the associated emotions as well. Mourning for things—this possibility arises by transposing, beyond loss and on an abstract or conceptual basis, the imprints of an embodied exchange with the other (p. 40). Shah Jahan Ramazani studied the "mourner's" ambiguous "ambivalence" in the "sequence to challenge Sacks' Freudian focus" on good or safe works of "mourning," mostly in twentieth-century elegies (Ramazani, 1994, p. 61). Ramazani's similarly "Freudian" interpretation of Thomas Hardy's poetry is predicated on the concept of "melancholia"; he believes that "Poems of 1912-13," while not depicting "recovery from mourning," work "therapeutically" for those who read Hardy's poems simply by surviving in a century in which mortality has been, as Philippe Aries puts it, "shameful and prohibited" (Ibid). As Aries suggests, one's approach to the elegiac series, in particular, can indicate the twentieth century's protracted attempt to suppress sorrow. In his analysis of "mourning in mid-twentieth-century England," Geoffrey Gorer found that both "a public callousness against death and parallel pornography of death" (Gorer, 1965, p. 131). Individuals he interviewed became preoccupied with preventing or seeing crime and mitigating both risks. Since the "Greif rescue parties" were not as prevalent in the United Kingdom of the 1960s as they are now in the United States, Gorer makes no mention of them, nor does he make any other reference to them. However, these parties seem to be reviving the "mourning rites" of the previous two decades, and might also include ordered scenes of the hysterical and dramatic mourning that was customary at the time. To some extent, these communities validate Gorer's approach, not just by their affirmation of the phases

of grieving and the process of operating through mourning supplies, but also through their distinct manifestations of the prohibition's dual character: exclusion and fixation.

One could surmise that the storylines of Hardy's elegies for Emma are similar. The topic of "Poems of 1912-13" and the therapeutic view of mourning "both depend on the power of language to comfort by catharsis and representation: poetry may purge sorrow and even serve as a replacement for the missing thing" (Austin, p. 3). Psychoanalysis has recently appropriated the concept of mourning's "curative path" from earlier research on "metaphysical death and rebirth." Melanie Klein dubbed the grieving phase "Paradise lost and reclaimed" in her essay on the topic (Klein, 1964, p. 328). Julia Kristeva asserts in her comments on the grieving phase that "only sublimation withstands death," and that the artist may establish a "sublimatory grip over the missing Thing" by "prosody and the polyvalent symbol" (Kristeva, p. 97). However, "Poems of 1912-13" explicitly condemn the possibility of "sublimation" by presenting an "asymbolic" language devoid of substitutive ability. This becomes apparent as one compares the poetry to the one Hardy omitted. "Under the Waterfall" is a "therapeutic elegy" in which the mourner is compensated for his suffering by figural and narrative substitutions. If "Poems of 1912-13" are melancholic in tone, "Under the Waterfall" is nostalgic.

Melancholia has historically been a strongly contemplative, and often symbolic, psychic condition in poetry. In this regard, "the ailment focuses on the elements necessary for its own treatment," and "the sufferer's creativity gradually transcends loss by the creation of figures of consolation" (Austin, p. 3). However, as "melancholia" is equated with "depression," as it was in the early years of this century, the enigmatic and protracted ailment of "medical literature" is difficult to eradicate. Without its advantageous literary association, "depression" resists both sign and plot, language's "therapeutic resources." As the reader will see as they read "Poems of 1912-13," these poems are expressions of grief for the several years of unremitting depression following Emma's death.

Although the general association between melancholia and depression is outdated, it is supported by Freud's popular article published four years after

Hardy completed his sequence. Since the etiology of melancholia has been "structural" since "Galen," "a humoral mismatch" in both philosophy and experience of medicine, and its symptoms, from "Robert Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy (1621) to the sixth edition of Emil Kraepelin's *Lehrbuch der Psychiatrie* (1899), have been comparable, if not equivalent, to such mourning" (Burton, 1932, p. 349). Even though Burton characterized the disorder as "frequently sourceless insanity," he identified a cause in a "susceptible body," especially an isolated one (p. 247). In this context, a person who is otherwise safe can experience melancholic symptoms as a result of the loss. Freud's "Mourning and Melancholia" and Klein's "Mourning and Its Relationship to the Manic-Depressive States" are also well-known symptoms of the two disorders. It has been argued that Klein had more interest in mourning, Freud in "melancholia", still, both of these two writers assume their intimate links, as well as their eventual connection with loss and death. Although it isn't all the time melancholic, sometimes, mourning becomes melancholia; in some cases, From their inception, the two nations coexist. Like Burton, Freud emphasized the ephemerality of melancholy in contrast to the strength of sorrow. Although he acknowledges that "melancholia can often be a response to the absence of a beloved possession," he points out that sometimes "one cannot see clearly what has been lost" (Freud, 1959, p. 11). He also acknowledged that the end and the onset of both conditions might be unpredictable and mysterious. Thus, in Hardy's poetry, one can easily detect the implementation of bereavement in the guise of melancholia.

In his "Under the Waterland", Hardy made it clear that he aimed to focus on the topics of memory, loss, and love. Such topics are shown in the poem through the speaker's "preoccupation with one pure, powerful memory of a simple picnic". When the reader reads the poem, they will instantaneously get a notification at the beginning of this poem that they are addressed, they are implied in the message: "This makes it clear that it is being spoken; someone is speaking aloud, relating a memory. The speaker is likely a woman, and this woman is Emma Hardy, the poet's first wife" (Pinion, 1976, p. 90). The tone of Hardy's speaker "is fairly consistent" throughout "Under the Waterfall". There are

moments in the poem in which the speaker's lover appears to "sink into melancholia" but for the most part, she is "enjoying indulging in the details of the long lost picnic and the symbolic glass" (Ibid). The poet's lover speaks regretfully about these memories and enjoys the memory of the moments in which she and her lover are emotionally and mentally taken back to the waterfall:

‘Whenever I plunge my arm, like this,
In a basin of water, I never miss
The sweet sharp sense of a fugitive day
Fetched back from its thickening shroud of gray.
Hence the only prime
And real love-rhyme
That I know by heart,
And that leaves no smart,
Is the purl of a little valley fall

The first stanza of 'Under the Waterfall' shows that the speaker of the poem starts by relating "a sensory experience". It is meant to "trigger in the reader something similar to what she was feeling at the time" (Ibid). The speaker describes sticking her arm into "a basin of water." The speeches of the lover present other emotions, exactly those related to one definite day that she remembers spending it with her love. That day was a "fugitive day," which means that the happy moments are quick to disappear. The speaker or Hardy himself recollects these memories with a sad tone.

Zietlow (1974) argues that in order to explain the basic issues in Hardy's poems, especially those related to his dead wife, it is important to distinguish between the three ways in which the mind operates on reality in his poetry, although he never makes the distinctions explicit (p. 184). These operations could be called projection, perception, and imaginative apprehension. Perception "refers to the way uninformed mind sees the external world of things and events, and even in the internal world of the consciousness, merely constant, purposeless chance, indifference, disorder, and meaningless" (Ibid, p. 185). This is the mood of the speaker in another love poem called "The Revisitation" (CP. P. 181): "Love is lame at fifty years," he says, resigning himself to the disheartening realities. The projection assumes the accuracy of mere perception but imagines the meaning

to compensate for the lack of meaning in reality. It fills the empty stage with self-projected drama. It is this operation that creates melodrama and fables, which imagines intention in the workings of the external world as an alternative to perceiving indifference, and which conceives of nature not as fact but as a symbol embodying an imagined meaning. The speaker in “My Cicely” (CP, pp. 45-48) willfully projects an illusion of the reality he experiences by insisting that the depraved barmaid is not the woman he once loved. The speaker in “God Forgotten” (CP, Pp. 112-113) imagines a successful visit to God, although at the end of the poem he sees this projection as a “childish thought”.

When one reads Hardy’s poem, he or she will immediately observe the melancholic tone of the poet. His longing for the past indicates that his past is much better than his present. It also indicates that the speaker is unhappy. However, the speaker’s emphasis on one memory proves that there were not many happy moments in his lover’s past. So, on the surface, the poem seems to be a happy one, the speaker remembers a happy moment with his lover, but when one knows that the poem comes in Hardy’s volume that was written to his dead wife, one will know that the poet is sad over his wife, his “lost object”.

To reiterate, the speaker in “Hap” (CP, p. 7), for instance, cannot sustain his projected view of himself as the central actor in a cosmic drama, for he is in reality subject to meaningless and sad change. In his personal poems, Thomas Hardy sometimes sees himself as a victim of circumstance, whereas in other poems he shows an awareness of his own responsibility for suffering and depression. It may be that his sense of victimization is a projection designed to deny the reality of his guilt. According to Freud, denial refers to the psychic reality he deemed to be within the realm of perception; such a denial would be common in children but becomes the starting point of psychosis with adults since it focuses on external reality (Kristeva, p. 44). Nevertheless, according to Kristeva, in depression, denial has greater power than perverse denial and affects subjective identity itself, not only the sexual identity called into question by inversion or perversion (p. 45). Denial, in this case, annihilates even the introjections of depressive persons and leaves them with the feeling of being

worthless and empty (Ibid). In this poem, Hardy laments the misfortune that had suffered and endured in his life. He says that he “could have lived with that” because he could attribute this suffering to a higher power. In her book *Depression and Melancholia*, Kristeva tries to interpret religion in terms of melancholia. While Kristeva’s analysis of mourning displays the way in which traditional theologies structure signify loss and death, her usage of melancholia displays that individuals and cultures “experience melancholia when religion cannot provide the framing narratives for loss” (Kristeva, p. 34).

“A Dream or No” (CP. Pp. 327-328) a poem in which Hardy recalls his meeting with Emma in Cornwell, involves all three operations of the mind. Emma died in Cornwell, and Hardy, revisiting St. Juliot where he first met her, calls into question the reality of his remembered experience with her. Mere perception yields “nought”:

But nought of that maid from Saint-Juliot I see;
Can she ever have been here,
And shed her life’s sheen here,
The woman I thought a long housemate with me?

Death—indifferent, inevitable—seems to have robbed the romance of its reality. Hardy’s memories of romantic moments on the Cornish coast now appear to be mere “dreams”. He feels that much of his life “claims the spot as its key”, yet perhaps this feeling is a delusion, produced by “some strange necromancy”. The ending of the poem even questions the reality of the landscape itself:

Does there even a place like Saint-Juliot exist?
Or a Valency Valley
With stream and leafed alley,
Or Beeny, or Bos with its flounce flinging mist?

Although uninformed, neutral perception reveals that these spots do exist, there may be no real places “like” the ones Hardy envisions, places transformed by the “life’s sheen” of a lovely girl into a countryside radiant with romance. Hardy’s life with that girl may really have formed a significant pattern that has as

its “key” the location of their first meeting, or he may merely have imagined it. Death may expose the illusion of meaning, or life may really consummate itself in an experience so glorious that it endures as long as the mind has the power to re-envision it. The fact could be blank and just a projection or Hardy's visions could be his mystical grasp on the material reality of previous knowledge.

"Poems of 1912-13" were composed "after the linguistic transition." While this adjustment "had little effect on Hardy's speech of sorrow," it could have an effect on how the elegies are interpreted. In the case of depression, it compares it with "an entirely different degree of representation; while melancholia, the emotional disturbance, was and continues to be often intertwined with the poets' pleasant sadness," "depression" has no literary equivalent" but perhaps by the usage of bathos theories that Pope and Longinus used to discover the fall of great or sublime poetry (Austin, p. 4). Depression is described medically as a lack of expression. Although depression and pathos have somewhat different consequences, they are also "antithetical to poetry." Juliana Schiesari believes that depression is described by an "inability to interpret symptoms into a language other than its own self-referentially as depression" (11). Nowadays, one of the psychiatric models for diagnosing the disorder is conceptual and language retardation: "when this surface language is used, silences become prolonged and repetitive, rhythms slow, inflections become repetitive, and the very syntactic forms... are often distinguished by irrecoverable elisions" (Kristeva, p. 34).

“At the Castle Boterel” (CP, pp. 330-331), another retrospective poem, answers affirmatively the question asked in “A Dream or No”. Hardy describes his revisiting, as an old man, a place that was significant to his early romance. The actual, concrete situation presented in the poem is an image of his spiritual condition. As he departs from the place in the rain, he looks “behind at the fading byway” just as in many of the love poems he looks back to a past that fades as his distance in time from it increases. Driving away, he sees “Distinctly yet Myself and a girlish form”. In a vision, he then re-enacts an old occurrence. The action is simple and commonplace, as is the language. He objectively describes what happened as if he is really seeing it in the present:

We climb the road
Beside a chaise. We had just alighted
To ease the sturdy pony's load
When he sighed and slowed.

This may be prose language. The words are sparse, as though they are not required to affirm or elevate the truth, any more than they are necessary to remember the words spoken previously: "what we did as we ascended, and what we spoke about, / Does not matter much, nor to what it leads." What is important is the authenticity of the encounter. Despite the fact that it lasted just a minute, it was:

Something that life will not be balked of
Without rude reason till hope is dead,
And feeling fled.

In other terms, with "rude justification," life may be "balked" with its most important moments. Uninformed logical experience would treat it as a routine occurrence in the transitory lives of two ordinary people, yet a memory informed by hope and emotion cannot deny the moment. It is not merely a neutral reality, but possesses a quality that imbues the otherwise indifferent landscape with historical significance:

But was there ever
A time of such quality, since or before
In that hill's story?
Primeval rocks from the road's steep border,
And much have they faced there, first and last,
Of the transitory in Earth's long order,
But what they record in colour and cast
Is—that we two passed.

The rocks are not symbols, nor are they transformed into symbols. They are real things, which have endured unchanging while much change has occurred

around them. But for Hardy, as for the readers of the poem, one transitory moment has become an unchangeable part of the recorded history of the scene.

Hardy's mind, re-envisioning the past, triumphs over the neutral place and destructive time:

And to me, though Time's unflinching rigour,
In mindless rote, has ruled from sight
The substance now, one phantom figure
Remains on the slope, as when that night
Saw us alight.

Rude reason or mere perception would detect only the mindless ravagings of time, but the apprehending mind sees a phantom, without substance but nevertheless real, actually there on the slope as it was in substance that night long ago. The ending of the poem is a reminder that the speaker is depressed for being subject to "the transitory in Earth's long order":

I look and see it there, shrinking, shrinking,
I look back at it amid the rain
For the very last time; for my sand is sinking,
And I shall traverse old love's domain
Never again.

He will never physically return to "love's domain" as death approaches. However, rather than becoming a projection, love's realm is a reality replicated through memory, a domain inhabited by a figure that Hardy actually sees "shrinking, shrinking," a figure substantiated in the poem by the simplicity and directness of the language. In this poem, Hardy's vision is real, the partial reincarnation of a magical moment blending hope, feeling, love, and physical actuality.

Hardy's confidence in the truth of creative apprehension is most evident in his love poetry. He repeatedly encounters genuine fantasies as he surveys the nostalgic history. Additionally, the whole past of his romantic partnership becomes true vision; he perceives form, development, and actual significance of

what would otherwise seem to be a typical teenage affair leading to a disappointing marriage. The happy moments of the past became a source of depression that traps Hardy in his future life. What happened to Hardy after Emma's death is similar to what happens to the lovers in his poems after their first meeting: the new lover is informed with imaginative apprehension and perceives the world in new ways, in which nature arranges itself into dramatic and pictorial scenes; nature and art merge, facts becomes meaning, and his life reveals a pattern. Likewise, Emma's death seems to have aroused in Hardy the kind of "hope" and "feeling" noted in "At Castle Boteler", enabling him to envision life with her as forming a meaningful pattern, to which her youthful dwelling place in Cornwall is the key.

The transformation of life into art is evidenced by figurative language. Hardy continually makes use of the vocabulary of the art form "By the Runic Stone" (CP, p. 442) for example, describes "Two who became a story". In "Ten Years Since" (CP, p. 685), Hardy laments that at Emma's death their mutual history "shut like a book". The latter description typifies what Roman Jakobson calls a "contiguity disorder"; the "depressed person" speaks an "imperial language"; it is not "highly visual", and because of this, often non-referential, "lacking clear information" not in short, "a recognizably cryptobiotic language" (12).

The metaphor of theatrical drama pervades Hardy's love poems. These theatrical metaphors, Zietlow argues, give more sense of grief or tragedy to Hardy's love poems. In "At the word 'Farewell'" (CP, pp. 405-406) a significant moment is seen as a "prelude" to a "drama". In "The Dream is—which?" (CP, P. 615), "a curtain drops between" Hardy and his vision; and in "She Charged me" (CP, P. 343), the speaker sees that a final "curtain would drop upon us two" at the end of our "our play of slave and queen" Music also plays a part. In "Lines to a Movement in Mozart's E-Flat Symphony" (CP, p. 430), Hardy attempts explicitly to accompany pantomimic scenes with musical, onomatopoeic refrains. In "The Rift" (CP, p. 589), the two lovers' affections correspond "As rhyme meets rhyme" until feeling "change its chime/From those true tones".

Portions of this story of past happiness and the present sadness seem to be written on other things, sometimes as “magic.... Liniments” (“The Change”, CP. Pp. 426-427), sometimes “scrawled/dully on days” (“A two-year Idyll”). Returning to the old places, Hardy sees a “lucid legend” “written everywhere/unto me” (“Ditty”, CP. Pp. 13-14), much as the cliffs in “At Castle Boteler” preserve a record “in colour and cast”. Messages seem to be engraved on faces as well as on the landscape. In “Your Last Drive” (CP, pp. 319-320), Hardy castigates himself for not having “read the writing upon your face”. Sometimes writing is clear: for example, the events described in “I Rose and Went Rou’tour Town” (CP, p. 486) “Wrote sorrows on my face”, and in “the frozen Greenhouse” (CP, p. 698) “Her Sacred young look” was “The Very symbol/of tragedy”, sometimes the language of the poem transforms the landscapes into scenes akin to painted and drawn pictures. Hardy notes “the fair colour of the time” of early love in “The Musical Box” (CP, pp.453-454). This same time is “Enringed With a Purple zone” in “The Change”, and appears if “drawn rose-bright” in “The phantom Horsewoman” (CP. Pp. 332-333). In young love, the lover’s “form” stands out against the “background” before “the duller/ Loomings of life” have defined themselves (“Green Slates” CP, p. 501); “life would show... no finger glow” than it did then (“Best Times”, CP, p. 447) and “Why did I Sketch?” (CP, pp. 447-448) describe actual pictures, and other poems, such as “Beeny Cliff” (CP, p. 330), with its description of the “chasmal beauty” of the cliff looming against the sky, paint pictures in words. Again and again Hardy apprehends the story of his love as it were a work of art. But in his love poems, he never ignores the point that this love is now missed and this makes him sad, makes him a “maniac person” (Zietlow, p. 192).

Austin argues the "depressive mania" transcends "linguistic solace"; it removes the "visual interest of mania" that "complements listless melancholia" in popular literature (p. 5). According to Freud, "mania may be thought of as an overactive imagination that compensates for the empty and aimless melancholic perception by excessive development" (Ibid). In a "maniac process," the mourner tries to "replace failure with a sequence of items." According to Kraepelin, "mania

is an unwillingness to direct one's train of thought—a more dangerous disorder, since it means visual incoherence" (Diefendorf, p. 388). Thus, while Freud's interpretation of mania and melancholia evokes the notion of language as unambiguously relevant and referential, the current umbrella word "manic-depression" "designates an opaque, disorganized language." As a result, Schiesari asserts, the revised nosology began to break melancholia's "long bonds" to the literary imagination.

In light of this change, the domestic and private material that Hardy's elegies readers encounter signifies sadness as a "nadir of language strength." Historically, elegists also "question[ed] the sufficiency of their own utterance," as Sacks puts it (p. 65), and "Poems of 1912-13" are unmistakably poems that undermine the concept of salutary speech. Hardy's poetry is notable for its uncomfortable simplicity and the effect of a continuing attempt to minimize an unreflective consciousness (14). It is a style tailored to the elegist's reservations regarding the language's capacity to console, in part because it obstructs the speech of a mourner's rehabilitation. This "requires a transcendent vocabulary; a language devoid of emphasis and depth refuses not only the spiritual consolation of our popular English pastoral elegies but also the symbolic resolutions of psychoanalysis" (Austin, p. 5).

However, even if "Poems of 1912-13" are not "amenable" to them, one's reading of the elegies often resorts to one of these "cures." To begin, Hardy's usage of ballad elements in the "elegiac series" demonstrates the primacy of auditory patterns over icons. In both "The Walk" and "The Voice," mourning is expressed by "depressive utterance." In "The Walk," the mourner experiences a profound and hazy bereavement. Yet it comes on nothing and eludes speech. "The misplaced entity recedes from awareness and is replaced by the fundamental sense" of "the appearance of a bed" (CP, p. 15-16). In "The Voice," the mourner's words "fall from the cadenced" lady, "much missed, how you call to me, call to me," to the fractured final lines, "Thus I; faltering forward,/ Leaves dropping around me,/ Wind oozing thin through the thorn from norward/ and the woman calling" (CP. 15-16). Perhaps the reason these poems are considered two of the

"most profound in the collection" is because they "enact in poetry the linguistic collapse that happens in severely depressed people"; the words of Kristeva's patients may be the mourner's: "I talk... as though it were on the verge of words... but the bottom of my sorrow remains unreachable" (Kristeva, p. 56).

In these love poems, the distinction between the operations of the mind is useful in understanding Hardy's imaginative grasp on the total meaning of his own love story. The poems describing the period leading up to the first meeting of the two lovers are, for the most part, projections; Hardy imagines a cosmic significance in the dramatic preface to the story. For the most part, the poems in which imaginative apprehension operates at the time being portray scenes from the period of early love in Cornwall. After the couple's meeting, love irradiates the world, which grows and sings and becomes transformed into art. The power of love, which animates imaginative apprehension, begins, however, eventually to fail. The characters fail in "reading" one another properly. They project meanings that are not actually there. Nature becomes a grim, neutral, ironic backdrop for bitter disappointment. Art and experience divide. After Emma's death, Hardy's powers are reanimated. He reaffirms his faith in the reality of those early, key moments, but it is a faith tempered by regret, guilt, and remorse at the mutual responsibility of the two lovers for the loss of that early magic. Past and present are fused in the poetry of faith and regret.

In describing the first stage of romance, the lover's meeting, Hardy presents an ironic drama of predestined love balanced by predestined separation. In poems that capture the self-dramatizing tones of a youthful, romantic lover, he imagines cosmic meaning in the moment of meeting. There are some poems of memory rather than imagination. "St. Launce's Revisited" (CP, pp. 335-336), for example, describes Hardy's actual recollection of the specific place where changed from train to horse cart for the last stage of his journey St. Juliot. The "banished/ ever into naught!" In contrast, most of the poems about the first meeting create a sense not of sadness at the passing of things, but of awe at the mysterious significance of the moment. Indeed, the meeting itself is never presented. No concrete descriptions are given, for instance, of the place where the lovers first meet, or of

their appearance as they first stand face to face. Instead, Hardy deals with the feelings of the relevant characters as they approach the meeting, and the effect of the moment on them immediately afterward. The drama lies in the contrast between before and after, intensified by a sense that the moment is the focus of energies beyond the character's control.

The most obvious evidence that this situation is one of drama, the structure primarily of Hardy's imagination rather than of his memory, is that the three main poems dealing with the event regard it from the points of view of three different people: the young man, his new lover, and his former lover. (3) The young man is speaking in "The Wind's prophecy" (CP, pp. 464-465). Moving westward across the countryside toward the coast, he thinks he is leaving his love behind, but the mysterious voice of the wind contradicts him: "Nay, toward her arms through journeyest". The young man thinks of his present lover's "ebon loops of hair" her "city home," and her place in the east; whereas the wind speaks of her "tresses flashing fair" her "sea-bord" home, and her dwelling in the west. The man's final ironic utterance is a prayer that the girl in the east should be faithful to him:

"I roam but one is safely mine"

I say, "God grant she stay my own"

Low laughs the wind as if it grinned:

"Thy love is one thou'st not yet known"

It is the young man who is destined to be the unfaithful lover.

In this poem, nature, described in vivid language, plays an active role in the drama, specifically to demonstrate the psychological state of the poet (Zietlow, p. 194). The landscape is relevant not alone as a backdrop to a significant event, like the rocks and foliage in "Under the Waterfall" which enshrine permanently the happy moment, or the sound of the waterfall, which is a "real love rhyme" as opposed to merely a symbol of love. Nature in "The Wind's prophecy" takes on an ominous, symbolic value. The wind speaks. In addition to personification, Hardy makes frequent use of metaphor and simile to heighten the violent contrasts between light and dark, dullness and color, height and depth, action and passively:

I travel on by barren farms,

And gulls glint out like silver flecks,
Against a cloud that speaks of wrecks,
And bellies down with black alarms,

The “distant verge morosely gray” is broken by “clots of flying foam” ascending foam “its muddy monochrome” while a “light blinks up faraway”. The surf at the coast sounds in “smitings like the slam of doors, /Or hammerings on hollow floors,” and while “one quick timorous transient star” appears, the waves “Huzza like a mad multitude”. Nature is animated to give warnings, to cheer ironically, to threaten, to hint at mysterious hollowness. The final image is of a “headland, vulturine,” whose “every chasm and every steep” are thrown into deeper, contrasting blackness as the pharos lights come on.

The violence and changefulness of the scene seem to help bring on the speaker’s thoughts of his absent lover. In her, there is a safe haven, a hope for stable, abiding feeling, in contrast to the ominous, ever-changing texture of the unfamiliar world into which the young man ventures. But ironically, the aspects of nature that reinforce his thoughts of her and his fears of her unfaithfulness are images suggesting characteristics of his own nature. For he, too, is about to change from dark to light, as he says, from “ebon loops at air” to “tresses flashing fair”. His affections will move sunlike cross the sky from their focus in the east to a new focus in the west. His journey into the depths is in reality an ascent to a new height, and the light of his new love will through into shadow his old. The speaker needs fear neither the ominous, mysterious violence of nature nor the inconstancy of his lover; the issue is rather the insatiability of his own heart. That the wind knows the full meaning of his journey creates an awesome sense of predestination—of foreordained union and foreordained separation. As the new lights come on shadows deepen.

The speaker in “The Shiver” (CP, p. 743), a girl whose lover is about to abandon her, lives in the country, whereas “The Wind’s Prophecy” refers to her city home. Yet there are enough similarities between the two poems to justify considering them both as treatments of the same basic situation. The girl wakens

at five in the morning, while “Stars wore west like a slow tide flowing” in order to catch a glimpse of the young man “hasting by” on his westward journey to the coast. The man’s unwillingness to “bend his track” to her window because of his haste hints at his impending unfaithfulness. The girl understands the omen:

But I wished he had tried to!—and then felt a shiver,
Corpse—cold, as he sank toward the town by the river,
And back I went sadly and slowly to bed.

She had, however, caught one glimpse of him in the distance: “A dim dumb speak, growing darker and bigger,/ Then smalling to nought.” This image suggests the pattern of their whole relationship. He approaches, but not close enough to have a full identity, then fades from her life. The very quality prevents him from awakening early enough to have the time to see her before leaving—that slight failure to consideration and faithfulness—makes him receptive to what subsequently happens to him at the seaside. He returns with cruel new:

“But I’ve seen, I have clasped, where the smart ships plough,
One of far brighter brow.
A sea-goddess. Shiver not. One far rarer
In gifts than I find thee, yea, warmer and fairer:
I seek her again; and I love you not now.”

There is no mincing of words; the blow falls hard. Her “shiver Corpse—cold” on the morning of his departure was fully justified. He has become as indifferent to her as was the march of time signaled by “Five lone clangs from the house-clock” in the first stanza, or as the distant, ever-moving stars. Austin argues that in this and other love poems, Hardy finds a source of resistance in the treatment of Emma; in Freud’s opinion “the defining symptoms of melancholia is ambivalence, and readers of Hardy’s serious who read Freud concentrate on this psychic state” (Austin, p. 6). Driven by a desire for happiness at the expense of sadness after his lover’s death, he depicts himself in these love poems as obsessed with abstraction and delusion.

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The poem is one of the most exquisitely sad and elegiac poems written by Hardy. It was written when he was visiting several places that shaped an essential part of his relationship with Emma. The relationship between them had ruined irreparably when she died- leaving him fighting a definite degree of regret and guilt. In this re-visiting of happier and old scenes he was probably trying to escape

the unhappiness of the latter years of his “marriage and recapture, earlier, more fulfilling times” (Ibid). “This device of placing a speaker in a scene to reflect- usually regretfully- on the lost moments of the past and the emptiness of the present is used often and effectively by Hardy in many of his greatest poems” (Ibid).

The mode of depression prevails Hardy’s next poem “A man Was Drawing Neat to me” (CP, p. 549), Hardy imagines the state of mind of Emma, the new lover, as the young man approaches. Her mood is a combination of indifference, complacent passively, and idle thoughtfulness. She complains that being “Apart from aught to her, to see,” she finds the world dull, nothing makes her happy. It is a “gray night of mournful drone” and outside is “the moorland dim and dun/ that travelers shun.” She has no dreams, and no one to think of, “no concern at anything,/ No sense of coming pull-heart play.” She is occupied by “trifles” only, “legends, ghosts.” Although she sees the “seaward pharos-fire” mentioned in “The Wind’s Prophecy” it is not a beacon in her life, for there is:

Nothing to let me understand
That hard at hand
By Hannett Byre
The man was getting nigh and nigher.

The last stanza describes the commonplace sounds and sights his arrival, and then the movement of meeting:

There was a rumble at the door,
A drougt disturbed the drapery,
And but a minute passed before,
With a gaze that bore,
My Destiney,
The man revealed himself to me

By focusing on the contrast between her indifference and the determining significance of his meeting for her life, as indicated by the word “destiny”, Hardy transforms a commonplace meeting into cosmic drama. While she sits in dullness and gloom, and this dullness and gloom that one sense in this poem indicates the

inner conflict in the psyche of Thomas Hardy, her fate, in the shape of the approaching man, is preparing to burst upon her consciousness, utterly unexpectedly (Zietlow, p. 198). Having posited that the unconscious is ruled by the pleasure principle, Freud very logically postulated that there is no representation of death in the unconscious, just as it is unaware of negation, the unconscious is unaware of death (Kristeva, p. 24). In the case of Hardy, in his unconscious, he is aware that Emma is no longer exists in his world but he lives in a state of denial, he is the elegist who, through memory, brings the dead back to life.

Another poem to be considered among Hardy's poems for Emma is "First Sight of Her and After" (CP, pp. 406-407):

A day is drawing to its fall
I had not dreamed to see;
The first of many to enthrall
My spirit, will it be?
Or is this Eve the end of all
Such new delight for me?
I journey home: the pattern grows
Of moon shades on the way:
"Soon the first quarter, I suppose,"
Sky-glancing travelers say;
I realize that it, for those,
Has been a common day.

The speaker, or Hardy himself afraid, he is uncertain, he is in a state of agitation and doubt: will the "new delight" cease or endure? His question sets him apart from other travelers on the road, who glance at the moon and make predictions that are certain to come true, for the new moon will wax into the first quarter. For the speaker, in contrast, the evening may be either a beginning or an end, and the future shape of his love story is unknown. On this uncommon day, he has been introduced to feeling and risk, possible loss, or gain. Counterpointed to the certainties of ordinary life and the inevitabilities of nature's processes, his life has taken on at least the potential of significant shape, and the world is different

for him. Embracing his sight and his languorous, his solitudes and his meditations, the speaker, Hardy indeed gains painful insights otherwise hidden, novel knowledge of his own self and the world. In this poem, Hardy does not “demonize melancholia”, unlike in most of his love poems, Hardy does not reduce sadness to the weakness of will or sickness indeed of a pill, he is no more tries to twist sadness into nothing but debilitating depression or manic hallucination; instead, he seeks for a sorrowful joy (Pinion, p. 78).

There is no difference between envisioning something that is not there and seeing what is there in a clearer, more harmonious way. In “After a Romantic Day” (CP, p. 607), the protagonist’s love inspires in him the ability to project. He looks out the window of a railway train and sees an earthen cutting:

The bald steep cutting, rigid, rough,
And moon—lit, was enough
For poetry of place: its weathered face
Formed a conventional sheet whereon
The visions of his mind were drawn.

Here the lover imposes the poetry on the place. In contrast, there is a little sense of projection in Hardy’s poetic descriptions of actual moments in his courtship. The excitement of love, the rush of emotion, and the keen sense of possibility seem to have resulted in Hardy in a freshening of his ability to perceive creatively the external world. The sensuous vividness of those poems that recall the early period of his romance testify to this heightened sensitivity. Ramazani (1991) argues that in this poem, “unlike many of her predecessors in the elegy, she can outlast death, not in a divine afterlife but only in human one, if the poet does or forgets his beloved, he murders her; this danger partly explains Hardy’s anxious proliferation of more than a hundred elegies for his estranged wife” (p. 957). Sounds and sights had for him real meaning as integral parts of organic experience. Furthermore, the moments described are really sad, because sadness itself was central to the primarily remembered experiences with Emma (Ibid).

“For winning love we win the risk of losing,” writes Hardy in “Revulsion” (CP, p. 11), one of his earliest poems, “And losing love is as one’s life were riven.” In “Song to Aurore” (CP, p. 845), from his last volume, *Winter Words*, he expresses the same sentiment: “We’ll not begin again to love,/ It only leads to pain.” To commit oneself through love is to make oneself vulnerable to suffering, for the magic fails as mysteriously as it comes into being. In Hardy’s poems describing the harsh period of the division with Emma, he shows how this magic fails. When lovers cease to love, they lose their power to identify sympathetically with one another. As a result, nature, art, and vision pull in different directions, and life falls short of its potential for fulfillment.

“Once at Swanage” (CP, p. 745) depicts the precariousness of love:

The spray sprang up across the cusps of the moon,
And all its light loomed green
As a witch –flame’s wearisome sheen
At the minute of an incantation scene;
And it greened our gaze—that night at Demilune.
Roaring high and roaring low was the sea
Behind the headland shores:
It symbolled the slamming of doors,
Or regiment hurrying over hollow floors...
And there we two stood, hands clasped, I and she!

The two lovers, hand in hand, face the mystery and ominousness of the external world, whose threatening indifference suggests the threat of their own possible indifference to one another. He is a pessimist, although they are together he thinks that their hands may part, and either may become for the other a figure in the dangerous world they look at now with a new vision, a world “greened” by the moon so that it seems weird and unnatural. Rather than being a part of the picture, as they were in the poems of early romance, they stand in contrast to it. And the scene seems not in itself to have inherent meaning for it “symbols” ominously, portentously. Most of those who discussed this poem has come to the result that Hardy remembers the feeling of love from his very young age, and in his following years, he lived with the feeling of nameless hopeful nostalgia that is

depicted in this and other love poems (Zietlow, p. 208). However, regardless of how happy he pretends to be when remembers his moments with Emma, he had undergone this struggle, this tension between his dark, bitter feelings and the grating call of the bright, shiny, happy previous experiments. In his discussion about melancholia, Wilson (1967) argues that one grows weary of the guilt he or she feels over his or her melancholic soul, one needs to be left alone so that he or she can brood for as long as he or she wants; when people are left alone and remember their past, they only remember the happy moments because this makes them feel alive, most vital when they suffer this rich confusion over the things of the universe (p. 42).

In “Beeny Cliff” the “irised sun”, a “less thing,” bathes the scene in tender radiance, and in “The Figure in the Scene” Emma sits in the rain until Hardy finishes his sketch, and the water blot on the picture signals a blending of nature and art, and the past and the present. Yet, in “We Sat at the Window” (CP, pp. 402-403), the rain is blank and meaningless, it makes the speaker depressed:

And the rain came down like silken strings
That Swithin’s day. Each gutter and spout
Babbled unchecked in the busy way
Of witless things:
Nothing to read, nothing to see
Seemed in that room for her and me
On Swithin’s day.
We were irked by the scene, by our own selves.

The lovers have somehow lost their power to apprehend imaginatively, so that nature appears neutral and indifferent, an arena of “witless things.” Their inability to blend vision and reality, to transform the scene into meaning, is related to their failure to read one another:

For I did not know, nor did she infer
How much there was to read and guess
By her in me, and to see and crown
By me in her.

To quote again from Hardy's *The Science of Fiction*, both miss "sympathetic appreciativeness to creation in all its forms," the intuitive ability "to see the entire scene in half and quarter perspectives, to capture the whole tune from a few bars." 210 (Zietlow). At this point in Hardy's career, he began to recount the good times he had with Emma in order to narrate the painful times he had with his deceased wife. According to Julia Kristeva, sadness is the central mood of depression, and even though manic euphoria coexists with it in psychotic manifestations of the illness, sorrow is the primary external indication that the individual is desperate (p. 20). Sadness takes one beyond the world of "enigmatic" effects—anguish, tear, or joy (Kristeva, p. 20). Sadness, like other effects, is irreducible to verbal or semiological manifestations. It is the psychological embodiment of force displacements induced by external or internal traumas (Ibid). Although Emma's death induced Hardy's trauma, in his situation, the grief mood is activated by stimulation, tension, or energy conflict within a psychosomatic organism. According to Kristeva, the mood is a "generalized transference" that imprints all behaviors and sign systems (from motor processes to speech processing and idealization) without identifying with or disorganizing them (p. 24).

Zietlow argues that the result of the division between the speaker (Hardy) and his lover (Emma) in "Beeny Cliff" is desolation:

Wasted were two souls in their prime,
And great was the waste, that July time
When the rain came down.

J. Hillis Miller developed the view that in Hardy's world love must inevitably fail. As love grows, the loved one becomes the ordering center of a chaotic, indifferent world. When union occurs, Miller argues, the two lovers stand together looking outward into the same chaos and indifference; neither has the focus of vision formerly provided by the other at a distance. When the two coincide, there is nowhere to look except out again. "We sat at the window" would be an exception to the general applicability of Miller's thesis. Although the two lovers look outward into an apparently indifferent world, their failure is not

inevitable. Rain can be imaginatively apprehended as an integral part of a unified experience. The unchecked babbling of gutter and spout could be heard as a “real love-rhyme” if the lovers were actually united. But in this poem, they are not united, as they were in the moments of early romance, because they fail to envision one another. Each has much more to give than the other sees. In “His Heart” (CP, pp. 432-433), a woman “reads” her husband’s heart only after his death, when it is too late: “Yes, there, at last, eyes opened, did I see/ His whole sincere, symmetric history,” his “daily deeds” done in “good faith,” and his “regrets”:

There were old hours all figured down as bliss
Those spent with me—how little and I thought this!
There those when, at my absence, whether he slept or waked
Though I knew not was so!—his spirit ached.

Clearly, had the wife read his heart while her husband still lived, she would have loved him more, and her life would have had more meaning. Likewise, the lovers in “We sat at the Window” could save their lives from waste by knowing one another better—by being really unified. Their lives fail precisely because they do not stand in the same place. Why they do not is the mystery. Pinion (1976) maintains that why they lack the vision or the desire, the energy or the skill, or whatever is necessary for them to read one another clearly and fully is an unanswered question (p. 111). In the poems about meeting and early romance, Hardy shows what this mysterious power of love can do and dramatizes his faith in its reality and goodness; and in the poems describing the period of the division he shows how the power can fail and what the effects can be, but he does not explain the causes (Zietlow, p. 213). One of these causes that Zietlow argues is the death of stimulation, the loss of the energy to speak, to communicate because of the meaningless of life that centered the lives of the lovers. Julia Kristeva maintained that the spectacular collapse of meaning with depressive persons—and, at the limit, the meaning of life—allows us to assume that they experience difficulty integrating the universal signifying sequence that is language (p. 52).

The words that Hardy uses in this poem like “spent”, “absence” “slept”, “spirit” are all indications that the speaker has lost the meaning of life (Zietlow, p. 213). In the best of cases, speaking beings and their language is like one: is not speech our “Second nature?” Kristeva argues. In contrast, the speech of the depressed is to them like an alien skin; melancholy persons are foreigners in their material tongue (Kristeva, p. 53).

Returning to the causes, Zietlow argues that whatever the cause, the failure of sympathetic vision results in serious wounds for both lovers, as in “The Rift”. The break here occurs at a specific time and place, “just at gnat and cobweb-time,/ When yellow begins to show in the leaf.” For some reason, at this moment of frustration and uncertainty, the woman’s “old gamut changes its chime” but the speaker fails to recognize the cause: “never I knew or guessed my crime.” Nor does she seem to have any more insight into the rift than he. The speaker in “When Oats Were Reaped” (CP, p. 734), musing near his lover’s grave, says “I wounded her;/ But, ah, she does not know that she wounded me!” In any case, according to “The man with a past” (CP, p. 478), “the first dart fell,” and “that is why and how/ Two lives were so/ Were so.” Thus, there is a “thwart thing betwixt us twain,” like that described in “The Division” (CP, p. 205), a poem which refers to Emma—a thing causing infinitely greater separation than any geographical distance. The hurt endures, as in “The Wound” (CP, p. 436), where the wounded man (Hardy), suffers in blank, bewildered silence, “For I’d given no sign/ That it pierced me through.” The wound also never heals in “I Thought, My Heart”:

I thought, my Heart, that you had healed
Of those sore smartings of the past
But closely scanning in the night
I saw them standing crimson—bright
Just as she made them:
Nothing could fade them

The experiences of the meeting and the division are the most profound ones that Hardy imagines—they suggest that he is deeply vital when he realizes that joy and sorrow go together, that one cannot exist without the other. Therefore the

happiness that the meeting caused is opposed by the depression that the division caused.

Certain poems hint at the causes of the division. From the beginning, both lovers seem to have had a morbid penchant to fear the worst. A foreshadowing of what is to happen appears in a poem describing the period of courtship, “Near Lanivet, 1872,” (CP, pp. 409-410). The two lovers, who have been walking, stop to rest at a “crossways” where Emma leans against a “stunted handpost”. In this poem, Hardy employs the prosaic style found in “At Castle Brothel” and “Under the Waterfall”, giving the moment the concreteness of reality. The tone is objective, and the scene and events are described with neutral precision. It is perfectly natural that the lovers should stop to rest as they do, and Emma’s posture is quite ordinary. This all actually happened, as the factual title indicates, near Lanivet 1872, it cannot be denied. When reading this poem, Austin argues, “One could assume that the landscape of the poem holds a therapeutic symbolics. When read as depressive utterance, the words of the poem echo those of ‘The Walk’” (p. 8).

“Had you Wept” (CP, pp. 357-358), might refer to Florence, Hardy’s second wife, but the behavior of the woman and Hardy’s sad tone dramatized is consistent with Hardy’s presentation of Emma in the poems about division. The moment occurs in a period of “storms” and sufferings (Zietlow, p. 216). Hardy is stubborn—“I bade me not absolve you on that evening or the morrow”—but at least he puts his unforgiving attitude into words. The woman refuses to join the encounter, “to make war... with those who weep like rain.” She is too strong and too self-contained, and her apparent invulnerability is in reality a weakness: “the weak one is strong.” In a section entitled “A past that does not pass by” in the *Black sun: depression and melancholia* (1941), Kristeva claims that since the moment in which we exist is the time of our conversation, the strange, retarded, or disappearing expression of melancholy citizens causes them to live in a twisted view of time; it does not move by, the before/after concept does not govern it, and it does not steer it from past to future (p. 60). Massive, weighty, and undoubtedly traumatic as a result of an excess of grief or pleasure, a moment blocks the

horizon of suicidal temporality or, more precisely, eliminates that horizon, any insight. Riveted to the past, regressing to the heaven or inferno of an unsurpassed experience, melancholy individuals exhibit an odd memory: "All has passed," they seem to suggest, "yet I am faithful to those bygone days, I am nailed to them, no transformation is conceivable, there is no future.... A hyperbolic, exaggerated history pervades all facets of psychic continuity" (Kristeva, p. 61). In this regard, Thomas Hardy is depressed caught by his Emma experience; despite the fact that he wrote "Had You Wept" when married to Florence, he remained true to "those bygone days." If she had wept, the matter would have been resolved: "They might have returned all the joys that the tidings had slain that day,/ And a fresh beginning gone awry." Other than that, she is unwilling to express her anguish, resulting in their mutual agony: "You felt so much, and thus received no balm for all your torrid sorrow,/ And thus our profound separation, and our dark undying pain."

"Had you Wept" dramatizes a moment of agonizing perplexity, of mutual failure and shared guilt. Just as the poems of early love reveal the romantic significance in minor, commonplace events—a picnic, a walk along the seashore, a duet played at the piano—the poems of division reveal the painful tragedy in trivial words spoken and gestures made at apparently insignificant moments. An example is "That moment" (CP, p. 778):

The tragedy of that moment
Was deeper than the sea;
When I came at that moment
And heard you speak to me!
When I could not help seeing
Covered life as a blot;
Yes, that which I was seeing,
And knew that you were not.

The poem attempts to formulate tragedy in its simplest everyday terms. The poet enters. The woman speaks. He grasps a meaning so obvious that he "could not help seeing" it even if he had attempted willfully not to. What makes it worse is his awareness that she does not see the painful meaning for her words. The

triteness of the figures (“deeper than the sea,” “covered life as a blot”), the repetitions of keywords (“that moment,” “seeing”), and the metrical regularity of the brief lines turn the poem into a paradigm for tragic misunderstanding. There is no indication even that the actors are men and women; they could be any people who fail in their relationship with one another. Again and again, commonplace events deepen into tragedy and suffering. Each moment demands from those who experience it an imaginative apprehension and compassionate responsiveness. Mistakes are easy to make. “Words inept” so easily fall. Only constant awareness, constant effort, constant love can prevent the common tragedies of daily life.

In “That moment” it seems to be the woman who fails; the speaker, at any rate, is in the right. In other poems, the failure is Hardy’s. the love poems resonate with his own guilt, and nothing makes him feel more guilty than his stubborn unwillingness to respond to Emma’s half-inept gestures toward him. Sometimes, as in “The End of the Episode” (CP, p.211), he congratulates himself for his forbearance and dramatizes himself as the persecuted, mute sufferer:

Ache deep; but makes no moans,
Smile out; but stilly suffer:
The paths of love are rougher
Than thoroughfares of stones.

In “Tolerance” (CP, p. 313), he expresses bitterness that his quit, long-suffering forbearance was not properly valued, but finds out ironic consolation in his sense of rectitude. Not his only happiness:

Is to remember I refrained
From masteries I might have gained,
And for my tolerance was disdained.

But he also sees the self-protectiveness of mere tolerance, which often masks a refusal to communicate. Just as he castigates the woman in “Had You Wept” for her inability to respond, he also berates himself for his stubbornness and feels agonizing guilt for his inflexibility. As production of maniac

complications and depression, the series of love poems fails to “compensate the loss with reversals or substitutions” (Austin, p. 12).

To conclude, Hardy’s poetry can often be seen as melancholic. His use of imagery, such as in the poems examine above, appeals to the passing of the seasons and a deadness in the landscape to evoke a sense of sadness and melancholy. Meanwhile, in some other poems, this melancholy is a more intimate and personal one, as Hardy’s speaker reflects on his own sense of nostalgia and alienation in a world of technological advancement. Yet in this nostalgia, Hardy is able to recover a sense of joy, one that is considered in ‘The Darkling Thrush’ as poetry and art becomes an escape from melancholy.

CHAPTER THREE

3.1. Depression in E. A. Robinson's Poetry

Arlington, Edwin Robinson is an outstanding poet between Emily Dickenson and the literary renaissance preceding the First World War. While this decade was one of the least effective in American poetry, Robinson's difference is more constructive. Along with Robert Frost, he has a preeminent place in the first half of the twentieth century, and he will continue to rank alongside Frost as one of the greatest American poets. (Harrex, 1961, p. 4). Robinson's poetry still receives some attention today, his poems continue to appear in the textbook and commercial anthologies, and he is still granted the rank of a major American poet by professional students of American literature. However, Robinson has not compelled attention for some time. He sensed in his life that he was not commanding attention, and on occasion, misunderstood or despairing of an audience, he found consolation in believing that he would have more to say when he was dead (Ibid, p.5).

E.A. Robinson once replied to a graduate student's inquiry about his "philosophy" by saying "I wish you were writing about my poetry, of which my so-called philosophy is only a small part, and probably the least important (Neff, 1920, p. 3). He might well have addressed this remark to most of those who have written about his work, for they, like the graduate student, have been interested mainly in his "so-called philosophy". They have sought to analyze his vision, the career of his mind, or aspects of his thought; to identify him with such philosophical positions as idealism, skepticism, and transcendentalism; and to explain his views on such matters of science, evolution, freedom, and fate (Ibid, p. 10). Although few of them would commit themselves as enthusiastically as did Henry Steele Commager when he called Robinson "the most profound of American poets of the twentieth century" (Ibid, p. 3). They substantially agree with the characterization of Robinson's work implied in this phrase that the most

interesting elements in his poetry are the ideas it implicitly, if not explicitly contains.

It is a mistake, in any case, to assume that a poet's objective is to formulate ideas or a logical system of belief. In Robinson's case, this is an especially naïve assumption, as he made quite clear when irritated by the tendency to read his poetry for its so-called philosophy, he bluntly asserted, "I am not a philosopher. I don't intend to be one" (Franchere, 1968, p. 4). When he said this he was not trying to draw attention away from the content of his poetry to his technical virtuosity, nor was he merely making the obvious point that he wrote poems instead of philosophical tracts. For him, a clear-cut disjunction existed between philosophy as a rational, and poetry as an aesthetic, mode of apprehension, and he was insisting that as a poet he had no interest in the former.

For some critics, Robinson's poetic career was extremely affected by outside circumstances. In 1892 he lost his father, and he had to live in a family with very serious financial issues. Four years later his mother died, which is the same year when he published his first volume of poetry (Ibid, p. 5). Only three years later, Dean, Robinson's older brother died. Thus, Robinson had to live alone with a hard financial situation. Observers of Robinson the man have unfailingly acknowledged his acute reticence and noted that he lived in an inner reality wherein the analytical poet brooded, alone over his poetic lucubration concerning what went on the dark house of man (Ibid). Robinson's reclusive personality drew him into the domain of contemplation and private feeling, where his primary interest is the psychic universe and its worth rather than the overt environment, the catastrophe of introversion and loneliness rather than extroversion and heroism. He used compelling symbols to symbolize the collapse, studied the psychology of disintegration, and prioritized the nuanced personal with its drama, Eros, and soul struggle.

Robinson's life and personality are unquestionably introspective and conducive to psychiatric speculation. His mentation was shaped by several influences, including an awareness of his inherent self; a reserved temperament;

intellectual assimilation of human experience; and psychology inspired by major immediate encounters (environment). "I suppose I was born with my skin on the inside," Robinson said (Hagedorn, 1938, p. 196). Robinson was acutely aware of an unconscious preference for contemplation and an almost innate failure to find a place in the practical world. His private evaluations invariably reverted to his "dream" of fiction, which he had had when he "was old enough to lay a blueprint for an air castle" (Torrance, 1940, p. 9). His credo was poetry. "I am unable to do anything other than compose poems, and maybe I am incapable of doing even that, however, I will attempt; there is nothing more I might do; I had to explain my existence" (Hagedorn, p.118). Poems were culled from "the dark and terrible anarchy of the night." And it is for this reason that Robinson's poems generate a variety of literary melancholic 'symptoms' that aestheticize the melancholy experience, thus influencing how melancholy is evaluated culturally.

Robinson was a lens from which to see human incongruity and duality, the contrast between delusion and truth, outside and inside, awareness and soul-obscurity, which one critic characterized as "the measureless difference between existence lived and life desired." In which "chilling cause" and "alert confidence" are "both incapable of conquering holly" or "total surrender" (Redman, 1926, p. 17). His own harrowing experience taught him that, as he said, "the true art of life is to endure in silence" (Mason, 1938, p. 127). Robinson's personal feelings of difference and alienation formed through his inferiority-forming years and excessively shy youth, and this aspect is likely not due to the frequency of which his works deal with the love-frustration theme. His sister-in-law remembers that "at the age of eight or ten, he knew he was different from the boys who were only interested in sports and ball play, and sometimes wished he had not been born" (Ibid, p. 128). According to Julia Kristeva (1941), existence is the pinnacle of reality; when this meaning is lost, life is lost; and when meaning is lost, life ceases to matter (p. 3). In this way, when Robinson was eight or ten years old, he lost his sense of purpose in life and wished he had never been born, a sentiment echoed later in his poetry.

Robinson's boyhood reveals that he sometimes suffered from an intense feeling of impotence at home and was prone to make unfavorable comparisons to his talented children. Incapable of mingling with the crowd and inspired by a timid mistrust of the opposite sex, he seems to have been an isolated schoolmate whose social happiness was given by a small group of mates. Robinson's relationship with his relatives was almost certainly a factor in the poet's loneliness. He felt suffocated by his father, especially during the parent's exhausting march toward death, notwithstanding the experience's psychological significance. Over this time period, some biographical specifics suggest that the poet's home life affirmed, rather than altered, his introspective, reticent, and celibate existence. Furthermore, when Dean and his father fell apart and Robinson suffered from an infected ear, Robinson grew increasingly isolated by emotional pain and an intense sense of guilt. His mother embodied unshareable pain and unattainable passion, concepts that pervade a sizable portion of his poetry. According to Hagedorn (1938), "his mother and he were as open to one another as two wires drawn to the same pitch were, and in the same way." Both in pain, there was something New England in them that decreed they could not share their anguish; and their anguish spread like a scream in a chasm". (143 p.)

It is not surprising, therefore, that some of Robinson's most memorable poems, for example, "The Gift of God", "For a Dead Lady", "The Poor Relation", "The Voice of Age"- celebrate the mother image. In these poems, the reader of Robinson's poetry feels the voice of the grieving son who lost his mother. Such poems exemplify the process of poetic self-constitution through melancholy and grief as well as family and social ties, therefore demonstrating a relational-melancholic self. The images that he recurrently uses are concerning death and the defeat of beauty: "The breast where roses could not live- Has done with rising and with falling" (Ibid, p. 355). Sometimes he uses images that indicate death, loneliness, emptiness, or depression that the absence of his mother caused: "Her truant from a tomb of years- Her power of youth so early taken" (Ibid, p. 46). In her book *Black sun: depression and melancholia* (1941), Julia Kristeva argues that depression, like mourning, conceals an aggressiveness toward the lost object,

therefore revealing the ambivalence of the depressed person with respect to the object of mourning (p. 11). "I love that object", is what that person seems to say about the lost object. Robinson's mother is his lost object, and in such poems, Robinson's melancholy and grief are fully revealed.

Returning to the biographical narrative, it is worth noting that the personal underpinnings of such subjects such as alienation, disappointed brotherhood, despair, and sexual loneliness were almost certainly derived from his own life experiences. Hagedorn observed that "the mates who had provided him with solace during his boyhood had vanished or withdrew.." (p. 36). Robinson's long poems in *Avon's Harvest*, for example, and short poems such as "Fleming Helphenstine", "Cassandra", "A Song at Shannon's", "Reunion", "Afterthoughts", "The Wandering Jew", and "Tasker Norcross" both address the concept of disappointed brotherhood (Harrex, 1961, p. 41). These poems demonstrate the author's introspective ability and natural reserve, as well as his dark spirit and depression; and they are illuminated by Hagedorn's study, which shows paranoid and melancholic instincts, as well as disappointed brotherhood:

He was a highly impressionable person. "Do you know," he said one day to Torrance, "one of the most terrifying aspects is to walk alone and sound as though you're suffering fatal wounds. It is to walk down the street and look into the eyes of passing strangers, hoping to catch a glimpse of acknowledgment, knowing that you will never see them again" (Torrance, p. 37).

So strong was the unconscious guilt of conscious alienation that in "Luke Havergal" manifested in the idea of death. Most of those who discussed this poem agreed that it is an exceptionally fine poem, despite their inability to identify the speaker and the two characters and their inability to fix upon motifs. The American poet himself never said anything to clear up this critical confusion, but the sad tone vividly prevails in the poem. "Luke Havergal" is an address from the speaker to Luke himself. It is clear that Luke has lost a person (love, wife, or mother) through death and presently is a living kind of death in life. The poet

instructs Luke to "go to the Western exit," and the remainder of the poem uses symbols to persuade Luke of the need for him to commit suicide in order to rejoin his loved ones. The western gate is a representation of death; the sun falls in the west, just as Luke's life would come to an end. The speaker instructs Luke in the third line of the poem to wait in the sunset "for what will arrive." By the end of the day, it is only natural to say that this could be synonymous with the end of existence as we know it. While the poem continues, the theme of mortality is reinforced. According to Richard P. Adams, "the clearest interpretation is that "Luke Havergal" is an elegy, a poem about death, or, more specifically, our feelings toward death" (Adams, 1961, p. 132).

All elegies share a definite tendency to melancholy, elegy provides an opportunity for poets to cope with the limits of melancholy experience (Blackmore, 2013, p. 176). Elegies consequently generate poetic selves that vacillate between melancholy and mourning, a melancholy for which the poet's elegy effectively rejects consolation. The second stanza continues with an emphatic "No," as though the speaker were confronted by Luke. From this point on, it seems as if the speaker is responding to concerns Luke has about his case. The "No" is most likely prompted by Luke's implied question: "Is there nothing else worth living for?" The speaker replies, "there is no sunrise in eastern skies—to rift the fiery night in your sight," implying that Luke would never find harmony on earth. The speaker adds, "but there, where western glooms congregate—the dark can, if anything, end the dark." The term "gloom" and the suggestive repetition of the word "black" signify more than just the death theme. Ellsworth Bernard has this to say about the final line quoted: "Here is a second-degree metaphor: "dark" implies death, but the first death is that of the body (via suicide), which in the bereaved lover's disordered mind promises to end his deathlike isolation" (Bernard, 1907, p. 39).

The reader is exposed to the Christian case of self-destruction in the fifth and sixth lines of the second stanza: "God slays Himself for any leaf that flies—and hell is more than half heaven." Luke has almost certainly presented the

Christian case against suicide. The speaker is implying that God made everything, including the leaves, and that any natural event is, in a sense, a part of God; as a result, God is constantly committing suicide. According to Kristeva (1941), a suicidal moment is one in which "all is disappearing, God is dying" (p. 132). In addition to displaying a dramatic diachrony, the death of the Christ offers imaginary support to the non-representable catastrophic anguish distinguish distinctive of melancholy persons (Kristeva, 1941, p. 134). It is obvious that what we call the "depressive" stage is crucial to the child's access to the realm of linguistic signs and symbols. Such a depression, leaving sorrow as the essential condition for the depiction of an absent thing, returns to and accompanies human's symbolic actions unless exaltation, its opposite, re-appropriates them. However, in Robinson's poem, God is continually killing himself and not just one time, and this indicates the fact that the poet in a feeling of deep sorrow.

The life that Luke is compelled to live is much greater than what the speaker promises in what he claims is the afterlife. Suicide, according to the mainstream Christian religion, is punishable by an eternity in hell. The speaker responds that either hell is not as horrible as it is portrayed or that hell is at least greater than Luke's current state of existence. The third stanza starts with the speaker announcing that he has emerged from a grave to chat with Luke: "The burns with a light upon your forehead- That blinds you to the direction that you must go." This establishes Luke's second implicit dilemma on suicide: "If I commit suicide, I would lose all sensual encounters and pleasures of this life." Luke is urged to commit suicide, and the poem is structured around Luke's implicit opposition to suicide. The speaker substitutes being with a woman for every sexual gratification Luke might have on earth: "Yes, there is only one way to get to where she is." The "yes" suggests once more Luke's implicit answer to another implied question: "Is there some chance that I can be with her?" The following line raises a major interpretive issue: "Bitter, but one that faith can never overlook." While the suicide act is painful, the speaker adds that this is one way that "faith," referring to Christianity, does not regret eliminating; this is most likely what the cryptic line says. The speaker's ironic speech lends credibility to his case against popular

wisdom. The concluding stanza is the final stage in the argument for suicide against any objections that Luke might have to go kill himself. The speaker tells Luke:

This is the western gate, Luke Havergal,
There are the crimson leaves upon the wall.
Go, for the winds are tearing them away,
Nor think to riddle the dead words they say,
Nor any more to feel them as they fall;
But go, and if you trust her she will call.
There is the western gate, Luke Havergal
Luke Havergal.

The speaker is attempting to entice Luke into action here by alluding to the winds tearing away the leaves and by instructing him not to attempt to figure out the sense of death or to feel the physical feeling of leaves falling on his person. Luke seems to be on the verge of death, and the speaker is afraid that if he does not act soon, he may never do so. He fears that Luke will intellectualize his condition (i.e., Christianity condemns suicide) or that he will take pleasure in the physical (the speaker tries to dissuade Luke from this at the begging of the third stanza). He also appeals to Luke's sense of commitment by the use of the term "confidence."

Perhaps the author, who is clearly associated with death and most likely with the demon of hell, is really the poet's subconscious mind, Robinson's, and perhaps the poem's tension is within Robinson's mind. His Christian upbringing and commitment to the physical reality of being are at odds with his urge to commit suicide, a desire precipitated by the immense sadness and despair he experiences over the death of a woman. Robinson once confided in a buddy called Gledhill that "my life has not been as fun as other men's seem to be" (Hagedorn, p. 86). Although he exhibited such wisdom as an author, he suffered from grief, grief, doubting, recriminating, and guilt-invoking voices as an individual. The

death that took his father, mother, and brother also took his older brother Dean, but in such a slow, insidious, and degrading manner that the Robinson pondered it as an all-masterful, unconscious instinct, or a diabolical wish of some unseen self. Dean was once defined as "one whose profession was to die" by Robinson (Moran, 1966, p. 45). According to Mathilde Parlett (1945), Luke Havergal is an elegy for a friend who, through his opposition to dogmatic, bureaucratic Christianity, found assurance in Christ's example and instruction. In the memory, the friend speaks "out of the grave" (p. 57). Elegy undertook a process in which it was advanced to the masculine manner of the elegiac, but at the same time degraded as a feminized, personal, and amateur poetic form. Both the elegy and the elegiac mode were considered as appropriate vehicles for melancholy (Blackmore, 2013, p. 186).

Robinson had become fascinated with loss in his lonely life, which welcomed others and, hysteria expressed itself in his heart. His intuition attracted him inwardly to a deeper examination of the resident unconscious's chaos. Robinson assembled psychology of fundamental dilemma, essentially twofold, from his interpretations of his experiences: beyond and beyond, superego and id, awareness and unconsciousness, light and darkness, heaven and hell. It entails two steps: first, objectifying the psychological crash, or alienation; and second, subjectifying personal existence, agonized awareness, and psychic malady (Moran, p.47).

Depression, sorrow, alienation, death drive, suicide images and more, are themes that the reader of Robinson's poetry feels the most, and all of these themes are based upon Robinson's experience of isolation (Ibid, p.48). Failure, for instance, Robinson was well knowledgeable in this condition. He had lived through the financial disaster he depicted in "Bewick Finzer," the neurotic tortures and hallucinations his imagination conjured up in the minds of Avon and Fernando Nash. Exposure of the incompetence of societal standards in determining beliefs and judgments, as in "Zola" and "Verlaine"; sexual recluse as

in "The Tree in Pamela's Garden"; physical unattractiveness as in "Vain Gratuities" and "The Rodent".

When Robinson arrived in New York with gruesome memories of death and loss, he was armed with the material for poetry on paper and in his head. His father died surrounded by unexplained levitations in the building. His mother had died of black diphtheria, a feared, abrupt, and ostracizing disease that terrified the town and left her sons in charge of medical and burial duties (Ibid, p. 49). According to Robinson, "what inexorable reason causes time to be so brutal in his raping" (Ibid). Thus, Robinson was vulnerable to the commonality and loneliness of the particular situation but was reassured by his inner fortitude and belief that death must be seen as a deliverance and progression.

Robinson's depression and feeling of isolation were mostly depicted in the theme of death that appears in most of his poems: "when reading some of his poems, one feels like he is reading an elegy from the Renaissance, even for the most optimistic critics, Robinson's fondness in the pictures of death is noticeable" (Ibid, p.134). Robinson's protagonists exemplify the fundamental tension as it manifests in various manifestations of psychological ambivalence. In the most primitive, biological, and sub-conscious levels of perception, Freud's instinctual duality of Eros and death is well recognized as the source of confrontation and the origin of neurosis. The Robinson character tries to alleviate his neurosis and sense of alienation by relieving the anxiety of instinctual ambivalence and then synthesizing the antagonists into a single unity of peace and recognition or by displacing destruction. "There is no such thing as tranquillity in life," Robinson once said. (Ibid, p. 142).

"The Whip" (1910), shows how Robinson views death as better than life. This poem appeared in Robinson's volume *The Town Down the River*, which contains four short poems. In 1923 Robinson wrote a statement about "The Whip":

I hardly know what to say about “The Whip”, except that it is supposed to be a literal and not figurative argument. In this poem--- not to mention a few others--- I may have gone a little too far and given the reader too much to carry. If he refuses to carry it, perhaps I have only myself to blame. (Torrance, p. 54).

Identification of the characters mentioned by the speaker and the basic nature of which the conflict arises have been the chief object of interpretation. The poem is told by a speaker who has no obvious connection with the drama in which the characters are involved. The reader learns that in the first stanza that he is addressing a man who is in the coffin and who is soon to be buried. The first four lines of the poem consist of a catalogue of the injustices that the man had suffered. However, there is no explicit reference given at this point about the reason for his suffering:

The doubt that you fought so long,
The cynic net you cast,
The tyranny, the wrong,
The ruin, they are passed.

The remainder of the first stanza informs the reader of the man’s present condition. One line suggests, this torment was caused by his relationship with a woman: “your blood no longer vexed”.

In the second stanza, the speaker tells the man not to fear the clod or “even doubt the grave”. The implication here is that in death the man will certainly have more peace than was his lot in life. This point is picked up in the following two lines, in which, also, the first hint of means of his death is given: “The roses and the sod-Will not forswear the wave”. In the following two lines the speaker gives some of the indications of his depression by using the word “gift” as a replacement for death as he feels that death was the most favorable solution to the man’s problem: “The gift the river gave- Is now but theirs to cover”. One feels that the speaker has given up his life, he lost the sense in life. The speaker was afflicted with melancholia. Julia Kristeva argues that a melancholy moment

indicated in actual and imaginary loss of meaning, and imaginary or actual despair, an imaginary or actual razing of symbolic values, including the value of life (Kristeva, 1941, p.128). Kristeva proposes that man subject to death, man embracing death, absorbing it into his very being, integrating it not as a condition of glory or a consequence of a sinful nature but the ultimate essence of his desacralized reality, which is the foundation of new dignity (p. 118).

The pronoun “theirs” refers back to “the roses and the sod”. In the last two lines of the second stanza, the other characters in this drama are introduced and the situation leading to death is given minimal elucidation: “The mistress and the slave- are gone now and the lover”. Questions arise here which demand investigation: who is the mistress, the slave, and the love, and what was the relationship between these three people to each other? If the syntax of the last two lines is read in conjunction with that of the first two lines of the third stanza: “you left the two to find- their own way to the brink”. Then linking the mistress and the slave together seems inevitable. Consequently, the lover must be the man awaiting burial. The point is never settled whether the lover and the mistress were married. The speaker’s opening remarks in the poem indicate that the lover had, for a long time, is subject to doubt, tyranny, and so forth.

Robinson’s choice of labels—the mistress, the slave, and the lover—may seem, at first, to be curious and arbitrary. However, if the reader bears in mind that the word “tyranny” is used to describe one of the pressures at work on the lover, Robinson’s choice becomes easily understandable. Any man under this particular woman’s spell, so to speak, according to this observation of the speaker, is under tyrannical rule. This explains why the man with whom the woman left is called the slave and why the woman is called the mistress; she is the mistress of body and soul over her man, whoever he may be, whenever it may be. The speaker believes that only misfortune can come from association with love. The speaker prefers isolation on a love that does not last. In this respect, one may assume that Robinson might be referring to his isolation, which he preferred after the death of his mother. Naming pain, exalting it, dissecting it into the smallest

components—all of these are undoubtedly routes to Robinson's grief. To show in it at times, but also to transcend it, going on to a less scorching and increasingly perfunctory shape. Julia Kristeva made a pivotal observation regarding how unhappy people felt about love: "how long will this continue, this delightful, smug incarceration by the pain of being single, the anguish of not being?" It is permanent for an individual until the person ceases to exist" (Kristeva, 1941, p.90). It continues until the woman's child no longer requires her, has properly matured, and departs; they then find themselves discarded once more, this time without the option of another childbirth (Kristeva, 1941, p. 90). This can be said of the speaker in "The Whip," who believes that the lover's suicide and "their own descent into madness" testify to this.

So far in the poem, the reader can only conclude that the lover has committed suicide; there has been no suggestion of any other means of death. And the speaker states, "You left....", which can only be interpreted as an act of volition on the part of the lover. This point is given further validity in the fourth line of the third stanza: "You choose to plunge and sink". However, in the preceding line, the speaker introduces a new attitude: he questions the value of the husband's suicide by stating, "Then—shall I call you blind?" the speaker here seems to be contradicting the attitude he expresses in the second stanza. The remaining lines of the third stanza serve to reinforce the new attitude:

God knows the gall we drink
Is not the mead we cry for,
Nor was it, I should think—
For you –a thing to die for.

This apparent contradiction can be cleared up fairly easily. The attitude that the speaker expresses in the second stanza is, in reality, the one he projects into a lover; that is the way the lover must feel about his death.

In the fourth stanza, the speaker uses the collective "we" so as to universalize his pain: "could we have done the same"- had we been in your

place?” The question involves just a willful act of death with no extenuating circumstances. Gaylin (1968) argues that in the case of depressive people everything tends to the negation of life, to death. In the depressive state, man allows himself to be weighed down by his complex, and sees no other way of his misery but death; “if there is no way to achieve death, he will then projects” (Gaylin, 1968, p. 40). The references of death continue: “this funeral of your name- throws no light on the case”. The word “case” introduces a new element into the drama, and the speaker picks this up immediately “Could we have made this chase- And felt then as you felt”. So now we have a chase of some sort related to the triangle of mistress, slave, and lover. The word “felt” with “chase” indicates that there is a feeling toward someone or something, and this person, the thing is unattainable now. In one set of cases, it is evident that melancholia may be a reaction to the loss of a loved object (Ibid, p. 52).

The fifth and the sixth lines solve the mystery of the triangle: “And she— she struck the blow- You but a neck behind”. The chase involves the lover in pursuit on one horse and the mistress and the slave, either on one horse or on separate ones, fleeing from him. The poem ends with a reiteration of the question: “Still, shall I call you blind?” this indicates that the speaker has come to the realization that the lover’s suicide was not as simply motivated as it seemed. In this case, suicide came as a result of not only the inability of facing a terrible reality, but it came at the extreme moment of both emotional and physical frenzy (Moran, p. 70). This knowledge finally clear, or at least clearer, to the speaker, his attitude undergoes somewhat of metamorphoses. He is no longer is as certain as he appears to be in the third stanza when he questions the appropriateness of the lover’s death.

It is to Robinson’s credit that he has both the speaker and the reader realize what happened to the lover at about the same time. From the very beginning of the poem, the reader is shocked by harsh words such as “doubt”, “cynic”, “wrong”, “ruin”, “vexed”, and “coffin”. Bernard argues that such words that the reader face when reading Robinson’s “The Whip” gives him/her the impression that it is

going to be a serious poem with some serious issues (Moran, p. 71). Another of his chain of poems dealing with suicide, “The Whip” works within a typical Robinson thematic concern: the difficulty that people have in knowing accurately the minds of other people (Ibid). To achieve this end, Robinson has both the speaker and the reader learn at approximately the same time circumstances surrounding the lover’s suicide. By doing so, the reader not only comprehends the situation, but he also learns that the speaker at the end is not totally aware; consequently, the motif of “The Whip” is given two-fold force. Moran thinks that in his “The Whip”, Robinson advocating suicide as a valid means of escape from inexorable problems, depression, and unattainable needs (Ibid). Julia Kristeva (1941) argues that the tendency to suicide makes melancholia so interesting and so dangerous at the same time; in some cases, the depressive man would be driven to suicide, when he attempts to finish his life, he appears to be acting under the strong illusion that his supreme depression will reconcile (p. 98).

The next poem to be considered is Robinson’s “For a Dead Lady” (1910). This poem has attracted considerable attention for its melancholic tone and sad images. The poem is an elegy about a woman who lived in sadness, a woman who kept her innermost feelings secret, and who remained unknown, isolated in the world in which she lived. By doing so, she achieves exquisite individuality. This motif is introduced once the opening two lines of the poem establish her death and let the reader know the speaker’s attitude towards her:

No more with overflowing light
Shall fill the eyes that now are faded,
Nor shall another's fringe with night
Their woman-hidden world as they did.

To the speaker, the way in which the lady hid her personality can never be equaled by any other woman. In the next two lines of the poem, the speaker’s tone changes, he laments that no more will days witness “The following wonder of her ways”. Some investigators of Robinson's poetry claimed that the lady in this poem is Robinson’s mother. Still, what is commonly considered as most innovative in

the poet's way of handling this traditional theme is the unusual imagery drawing out the beauties of the lady's character, person, and manner. The pessimistic tone of the speaker continues, and the first stanza concludes by the statement that no words can make up for "The Shifting and the many-shaded" eyes of the dead lady, by implication, for the lady itself.

What is known by the speaker about the dead lady is voiced in the second stanza, "Her grace" is described as "divine" and "definitive"; her "laugh" is referred to by the curious terminology of one "what love could not forgive" This line has been the subject for critics who discussed this poem. R.H. Super thinks that the line should be read as a manifestation of the woman's flirtatious nature (Super, 1945, p. 60). Edwin S. Fussell believes that "the reference here is probably to that slight aspect of possessiveness, coupled with the desire always to be taken seriously, which forms a part of any strong emotional" (Fussell, 1951, p. IX).

Returning to the view that says Robinson's lady in this poem is his mother. W.H. French comments "If we assume that the affection was hers (Robinson's mother's), so all makes sense, and the line implies that the woman, despite herself, was sometimes moved to laughter at her relatives. During those moments, her devotion to them will prevent her from forgiving herself" (French, 1952, p. 51). The conflict in the depressive speaker is centered then around his mother. Robinson was very close to his mother, and many of his poems were celebrating the images of the dead mother (Hagedorn, p. 118).

In the fifth line of the second stanza "is hushed, and answers to no calling" perhaps indicates means a calling down, a censure of her behavior. In any event, all the speaker knows is what he can observe from her behavior—from that which is physically demonstrated. For example, he talks of her "forehead" and "her little ears" that "have gone where Saturn keeps the years." In his discussion of Robinson's "For a Dead Lady", Grimm (1967) stated that the references for death and his dead mother made Robinson's poem an elegy (p. 4). Elegy "pictures mourning as a healing process and melancholy as an unabated "open wound"

(Blackmore, 2013, p.180). Julia Kristeva (1941) referred to Freud's distinction between melancholy and mourning. Both melancholia and mourning process lies like loss, "loss pertaining to melancholia is related to an object-loss which is withdrawn from consciousness, in contradistinction to mourning, in which there is nothing about the loss that is unconscious."(Ibid, p. 42). The melancholic then undergoes the same process that the mourner pass, but in melancholy, there is internalization and identification of the lost object. Then, the lost object that Robinson laments (and the speaker in the poem) is his mother.

The final stanza of "For a Dead Lady" into two parts, the first four lines concerned with her beauty and the transitory nature of life, the last four with universalizing the transitory motif:

The beauty, shattered by the laws
That have creation in their keeping,
No longer trembles at applause,
Or over children that are sleeping;
And we who delve in beauty's lore
Know all that we have known before
Of what inexorable cause
Makes time so vicious in his reaping.

Adams argues that all the images in these lines and their qualities are summed up in the word "beauty" which is immediately opposed to the mechanistic image of impersonal "laws" (p. 143). These laws, closely associated or even identified with time, as well as with the "inexorable cause" of the next to the last line, have destroyed all the lady beauty and its responses to emotional relationships with children; and no explanation can satisfactorily account for the loss or reconcile lovers and students of beauty to the destruction (Ibid).

Moran argues that "For a Dead Lady" must be read on two levels: on one hand as an elegy for Robinson's mother, inscrutable lady blessed with much but

also deprived of love; and on another hand as a commentary on the demands that time exacts (p. 88). These two meanings are unified by the first suggesting to the speaker the second. The poem begins properly with elaboration on whatever details of the lady are available to the speaker in memory, and it ends with the generalized statement suggested by the state of the lady. It is important to note that Robinson's choice of words reflects the inscrutable nature of the lady. Words like "faded", "fringe", "night" "hidden", "shaded" indicate that the speaker is in deep sorrow, and he laments someone or something (Ibid).

When Robinson was asked "why does the poet write poetry", he replied, "I would never have composed poems if I could have achieved something else on God's green planet. I had no other choice, and I needed to explain my life" (Bernard, 1952, p. 8). Like most of the poets, Robinson's life attests to the truth of his assertion. For him, no more poetry comes from pain and sorrow (Ibid). To understand Robinson's poetry, one must consider Robinson's decades of disappointment, and a life that made him believe that the world, in general, is judged to be aimless and worthless (Ibid). The substance of Robinson's poems is by its nature difficult to grasp; that He had an unusual sensitivity to the social undercurrents and overtones in the lives of those he knew or imagined. (Ibid, p. 26).

Hopelessness and helplessness, emptiness, nothingness, death drive, and violence are the most common features of Robinson's poetry; most, or maybe even all these features can be seen in his masterpiece "Eros Turannos" (Coxe, 1969, p. 148). This poem ranges from Smith's biographical understanding to ambiguously overall statements about the heartbreaking nature of the poem. Smith believes that this poem describes the disastrous situation of Emma and Herman Robinson, Edwin's brother, and sister-in-law (Edwards, 1984, p. 47). The couple had marital problems because of Herman's alcoholism. Smith describes the poem as the poet's statement of "compassion for Emma and as perhaps an oblique statement of his love for her" (Ibid). William Robinson (1967) has another view

of the poem. He thinks that the poem is a product of Robinson's inner external and inner worlds; in such poems, Robinson could have fallen into despair (p.123).

To Adams, whose study of the poem is one of the most complete to date, "Eros Turannos" reflects the major purposes of poetry in romantic tradition: "to affirm, demonstrate, and embody in concrete symbolic emotional terms the value of life and the reality of immediate personal experience (p. 151). The identity of the speaker in the poem is unknown; all the reader knows is that he is from the harbor community in which the protagonist of the poem lives. The poem is about a woman who, fearful of living alone, remains with a man who has treated her badly. The nature of his offenses is never made explicitly clear. In the first stanza, the speaker tells why the woman will never give up the man:

SHE fears him, and will always ask
What fated her to choose him;
She meets in his engaging mask
All reasons to refuse him;
But what she meets and what she fears
Are less than are the downward years
Drown slowly to the foamless weirs
Of age, were she lose him.

It seems reasonable to assume that the man and the woman in the poem are married. It appears that there is a discrepancy between the appearance the man gives to her and his behavior toward or at least regarding her. Already in the poem, the reader is led to believe that the woman is insecure; whether this insecurity has been caused by her husband or whether it is a product of her youth is unknown. The poem begins with "she fears" which indicates the mental situation of the woman. Julia Kristeva argues that the extreme painfulness of depression may in part be explained by the fact that in his dependent craving, the depressive person is torn between rage and submissive fear (Gaylin, 1968, p. 100). The struggle between fear and rage underlines the clinical distinction between

retarded depression and agitated depression (Ibid). To the woman, the prospect of facing old experiences is worse than living with this man (Moran, p. 117). Kristeva has also highlighted such conditions “I have assumed that depressed persons to be atheistic—deprived of meaning, deprived of values. For them, to fear or to ignore the beyond would be self-deprecating” (Kristeva, p. 14). “The formless years of age” is a “curious but appropriate image, I take it to mean that when a person is old he is no longer able to obstruct and divert the steams of experience that flows him up.” (Moran, p. 117). The entity of old age is so ineffectual that it is even unable to create a foam; in a steady, unrelenting steam, the water moves upon and over the old.

The second stanza begins with the speaker’s observation that the wife once could understand her husband; she was once able to see beneath his mask. However, the speaker calls attention to her “blurred sagacity”, which perhaps suggests that she is not particularly intelligent. The word “love” appears in an unusual context in the third line of the stanza:

Between a blurred sagacity
That once had power to sound him,
And love, that will not let him be
The Judas that she found him.

When she first met him, she must have been aware of his shortcomings and probably tried to change him into someone else. Caught between her “blurred sagacity” and the force of her love to him, both of which have been and now are failing her, she turns to her pride: “her pride assuages her almost- As if it were alone the cost”. She will not let him go, not only because she fears the “downward years” but also because of her pride. The line “as if it were alone the cost” seems to be an ironic appraisal by the speaker. She may be fooling herself. The woman seems to be in a situation of denial, she knows that he will never change and will never love her, but she keeps denying this reality. In her book (1941), Julia

Kristeva refers to Freud's theory of psychology. She argues that the analysis of a depressive person shows that the depressive's fears of his superego, as a rule, are not entirely overcome; unconsciously they still effective, and the depressive person suffers from them but succeeds in applying, against them, the defense mechanism of denial by overcompensation (Kristeva, p. 18). The husband is aware of his wife's emotions he knows "he will not be lost" he knows that she will not leave whatever harm he causes to her.

The third stanza concludes with these lines:

And all her doubts of what he says

Are dimmed what she knows of days

Till even prejudice delays

And fades, and she secures him

The wife does not believe what her husband with his "engaging mask" tells her; however, what she knows of loneliness forbids her from leaving him, the sad tone in these lines obliges the reader to sympathize with the woman. The loneliness that she experiences in her life before marriage is much worse than his state with her husband. In the first three stanzas, despite her insecurity, the speaker talks of her as being somewhat rational; however, in the first four lines of the fourth stanza, the reader meets her this way: "The falling leaf inaugurates- The reign of her confusion". The time of the year is autumn (symbolically, perhaps the wife is either in, or rapidly approaching, old age), and she is suffering from some kind of collapse in her mental faculties. The "pounding wave" repeats the same song: "the dirge of her husband". The word "illusion" refers to the speaker's conception of the light in which the wife regarded her husband. He is now dead, and her fears of the "drowned years" have materialized. Of course, the husband simply could have left; but Moran believes that the finality of the third stanza gives a strong indication that he is dead (p. 120). It is altogether possible, and even probable; that her breakdown was caused by her husband's passing away;

the speaker makes it fairly clear at the beginning of the poem that the woman is insecure and dependent on her husband for emotional sustenance, despite his falling (Ibid).

The last four lines of the same stanza suggest that the husband is dead: “at home, where passion lived and died- becomes a place where she can hide”. The two other lines introduce actively into the poem the people of the community “While all the town and harbor side-vibrate with the seclusion”. The wife, living alone and hiding from the world, has become an object of curiosity. At the beginning of the fifth stanza, the speaker, who is typically Robinson way identifies himself with the collective entity of the town, ironically comments on the inability of people to know other people and on the penchant that people share for gossiping: “We tell you, tapping on our brows- The story as it should be,” “As if the story of a house- Were told or ever could be”. The speaker continues in this same vein of irony for the last four lines of the stanza: “We’ll have no kindly veil between-Her visions and those we have seen”. The use of “veil” and “visions” reinforces the illusionary nature of the wife’s image of her husband. In the same way, perhaps, that she sees him, the people in the town are mistaken in their appraisal of the “home, where passion lived and died” and in their conjectures of the characters who enacted the drama. In his comments on the poem, Perrine (1949) states that “the town’s people stories show incomplete understanding of psychological subtleties and incomplete passion for human frailty.”

The poem ends with a brilliant imagistic portrayal of just “what the god has given”:

Though like waves breaking it may be,
Or like a changed familiar tree,
Or like a stairway to the sea
Where down the blind are driven.

By the very fact that “it” has several possible referents, the speaker is admitting that it is impossible for anyone to know exactly what the woman’s emotional reactions are, but he is making an effort to go inside her mind, so to speak so to discover them. Perrine argues that “the three last images in the poem

characterize the life that love has brought: it is mournful, melancholic, monotonous, and destructive, like the sea; it has changed for her all the scenes of her earlier happiness; it is despotic and cruel and whips her like a slave toward death and destruction (p. 143). Julia Kristeva argues that female depression and melancholy are more common than male; in some instances, it is even more difficult to treat the depression because of the woman's attachment to the "lost thing" (p. 102). In the case of the lady in Robinson's poem, the lost thing is her husband, although he treats her very badly, for her, it is better than the feeling of loneliness.

Adam has a different view about the conclusion of the poem "the images of blindness and downward progress and forces beyond human power to resist or control are there, in the final position, and they may well be regarded as conclusive..... "The downward years" and "what she knows of days" are the alternative to her defeat and enslavement by the god of love, and she does not unreasonably prefer to be overcome by the ecstasy of passion rather than mere attrition (p. 148).

For Moran in the last four lines, the speaker is sincerely trying to understand the woman, even though, as is often the case in Robinson, he identifies himself with townspeople (p. 125). The last three images are symbolic of death; that is, God has given this woman death, though the speaker realizes that he is unable to interpret exactly the way in which his death is being manifested to her (Ibid). At the beginning of the fourth stanza, the time of the year suggested by the "falling leaf" is autumn, so "a changed familiar tree" is a tree in autumn when the leaves have fallen again is the symbolic representation of the cessation of life. The "stairway to the sea/Where down the blind are driven" suggests the "downward years" of the first stanza and should be read once more as a symbol of death (Ibid). Blindly driven by the god of love, the woman herself is being driven to death.

Edwards (1984) stated that "Eros Turannos" involves a "high tragedy", the poem is a "classical representation of tragedy (p. 47). Edward demonstrates that Robinson's poem makes some definite allusions to classical tragedies; the woman

finds a solution to her dilemma consonant with that found by most of Robinson's other characters who explore themselves in painful situations (Ibid). Being stated in Greek, the title forces the reader to think of Greek drama, the husband who is "engaging mask" seems like Oedipus, and the woman seems like Jocasta (she is fated to marry him); the woman is Just like Jocasta, both lost their desire in the future and decided to suicide (Ibid, p.48).

Griffin (1971) suggested that besides the miseries of her previous life, the woman in Robinson's poem hoped to change her husband's situation, she wished to be loved by him and when she lost hope in achieving this aim she decided to end her life (p. 39). Julia Kristeva claims that depressive persons who react to disappointments in love with severe depressions are always persons to whom the love experience meant not only sexual gratification but narcissistic gratification as well (Kristeva, p.118). With their love, they lose their very existence, depressive persons in this manner grow a motivation for death.

Appropriately for a man whose imagination was grounded in realism and committed to truth, Robinson did not passively lament the ravages of time but changed as his understating in reality changed, meeting the new on its terms, accepting it a creative challenge (Robinson, 1967, p. 145). The predominant feeling of his poetry derives from his passion to see life with absolute clarity for what it is and to confirm he is intellectually and morally to its reality. As a consequence, Robinson wrote poetry that in a deeply valid sense reflects life as bleak as it is (Ibid, p. 146). In the poetry of Robinson, Emmanuel M.G. argues "we found the mixture of pessimism, gloom, and somberness counterpointed by the passive optimism that the children of the night are not empty of the promise of the light" (Emmanuel, 2004, p. 16). Robinson's famous comparison of human beings to muddled children endeavoring to spell the word "God" with the wrong chunks demonstrates the main tone of Robinson's "Weltanschauung". The theme of "The children of the night" is common to Robinson, and it is the significance of this terrible vision of life that Robinson displays in his "The Man Against the Sky," which presents a man climbing a steep gradient silhouetted alongside the setting sun.

This ascent of the darkening hill exemplifies the most primitive mode of human life. The journey demonstrates in vibrant terms that life seeks fulfillment in the pursuit of 'light'—light that can emancipate people from their perplexed state and help them to spell the correct phrase. As Joseph states, "Robinson's view of life as an ill-equipped quest for an undefinable light finds an apt metaphor in the picture of the "black hill to ascend" that pervades his poetry" (p. 178). Robinson wrote the following to Emmy Lowell in response to this poem:

Nothing could be farther removed from my thoughts as I wrote "The Guy" than any emissary of doom or misery. In the concluding chapters, I intended merely to bring materialism to its logical conclusion and to demonstrate its futility as an excuse or rationale for creation by what I assumed to be an evidently satirical medium. (1966, Kaplan, p. 15).

"The Man Against the Sky" is about the two characteristics of light—the dawn and the sunset, depending on the perspective of the lonely man against the sky; the man is not a solitary person but an illustrative of the whole humanity. Not fully aware of their destination "of our transience here make an offering to an orient Word." The man needs not suppose that he is facing the sunset, but he could sensibly sacrifice himself to the dawn, if he does so, he will be yielding his transience (Emmanuel, p.17). Being short-lived, as a replacement for striving for happiness, the man is sacrificing himself because he hopes that he will be a rising light to the future. Kaplan suggests that "Time it is, therefore, a sacrifice to infinity. The actual point is that to see or understand what is beyond the sunset is not inevitably an illusion. We do not need to think that the man's death is the end; rather his life, with its death, maybe a contribution to a later dawn—a light for the future, but not for himself" (p. 57).

In this poem, the rapid vanishing of the man behind the hill shows his tryst with spiritual realities. It is a significant moment of spiritual enlightenment, "when a sure music fills him and he knows what he may say thereafter to few men." Unlike "The Valley of the Shadow" which contains those who have previously arrived at the valley, the poem is about those who are just about to arrive at it (Emmanuel, p. 18). One could take the suggestion that "The Man

Against the Sky” is an introduction to a song of death. The poem portrays the man’s different attitudes in fronting the end, he stands for any other man. Each man confronts an aloneness and alienation since, as each one of them ascents on alone, he grasps a flame bright that kills the man who is:

. . . Alone up there
To loom before the chaos and the glare
As if he were the last god going home
Unto his last desire.

Each man goes on his way, moves to his own grave, yet unconsciously they go. “There is a possibility that he has taken the bread that each of the men has to eat alone, or he went as one forsaken; or he went on steadily where others had fallen; maybe he attempted to stand higher than others had mounted before him; or, he could have gone down easily and with sure footing” (Ibid). Not pessimistically but indifferently speaking, the man could have been a viewer watching life from a distance; or he could be a pessimist who sees little reality in a world where all things are meant to doom; or as a one who regards "life a lighted highway to the tomb." He goes up the hill so uncaringly that ambition "his hopes to chaos led."(Ibid). Without a doubt, the man is grieved to see his dreams, hopes, wishes smashed by the flame; his leaving is made all the more confusing and difficult by the sorrows of his friends. Since he is unable to overpower his memories, the man "may struggle to the tomb unreconciled." At times he favors carrying the pain of staying on the hill:

Or, seeing in death too small a thing to fear,
He may go forward like a stoic Roman
Where pangs and terrors in his pathway lie,
Or, seizing the swift logic of a woman,
Curse God and die.

Robinson once said that “no man is able to change the world, although, a few, by destiny's economy shall appear to change the world “(Kaplan, p. 61). Still, Robinson is sure about the point that one cannot change his fate, and rarely is our destination our destiny.

Emmanuel claims that the First World War offered the immediate impetus for "The Man Against the Sky" (p. 19). After finishing the poem Robinson said "The world has been made what it is by upheavals, whether we like them or not. I've always told you it's a hell of a place. That's why I insist that it must mean something. My July work was a poem on this theme and I call it "The Man Against the Sky." (Hagedorn: p. 302). The man, as most of the characters the reader see in Robinson's works, is reflected Robinson's apparent pessimism. Some critics referred to the pessimist Robinson. Horn (1987) argues that the end of "The Man Against the Sky" shows the pessimist view that Robinson had towards life, Robinson displays the despair of humanity, in man's journey in life, he is unaware of his future and such a thing frightens Robinson (p. 25). Harry Thurston was another critic among those who referred to Robinson's pessimism:

A true fire The singing and the swing of wave and wind and the passion of human emotion and the cry of a yearning spirit. But Robinson's limitations, he went on, were 'vital'. His humor is of a grim sort, and for him, the world is without beauty, but a prison- house. In the night time there is sorrow and weeping, and joy that does not come in the morning (Hagedorn, pp. 111-112).

This comment could be the most widely quoted one about Robinson. Moreover, those who studied Robinson's life and poetry have described his writings with words such as "decay", "gloomy", "dark", "defeat", "waste", "failure" and "despair" (Bernard, p. 198). Horn comments that the reason behind calling Robinson as a pessimist poet derived from the fact that his characters were basically from the "lower reaches of humanity" (p. 26). His characters are looked upon as failures, they are in deep despair, and they are overwhelmed by different problems. When one takes a quick look at Robinson's characters he sees that Bewick Finzer is ruined by Wall Street, Eben Flood left alone to drink, Bokardo continually tries to suicide but repeatedly fails, and Richard Cory, ironically, succeeded. Therefore, Robinson's characters reflect his unhappiness and depression (Kreymborg, 299). Maybe, the best, and the most important example of Robinson's characters who are captured by depression can be seen in his poem "Richard Cory" (1879).

Robinson's poem is quite ordered in its form. It involves ten syllables in every single line. Robinson is well-organized about creating a poem that adheres to a firm shape. Robinson tells a minor story about a man whose name is Richard Cory. He is portrayed as being wealthy. He is described as "glitters" when he walks. In the first stanza of the poem, Richard Cory is described as an exalted figure, who is rich, he is like a king who wears a "crown", which is combined with the word "imperial, and that gives the indication that people are looking at him as if they were looking at a king:

Whenever Richard Cory went down town,
We people on the pavement looked at him:
He was a gentleman from sole to crown,
Clean favored, and imperially slim.

In the second stanza, Robinson presents a very charged contrapuntal theme:

And he was always quietly arrayed,
And he was always human when he talked;
But still he fluttered pulses when he said,
"Good-morning," and he glittered when he walked.

The intense difference between Richard Cory as a restrained speaker who gives favors upon his lowly associates, the townspeople, and his regal self-image. Kafka (1975) comments on the second stanza "we get the impression of attractive impulse control in Robinson's character, but with an admixture of anxiety as if there were something fragile or synthetic about the psychic state in Richard Cory" (p. 3). The type of Cory's communication with townspeople provokes anxiety in the recipient pulses whose concern stays fixed, "In my opinion looking at Richard Cory resembles the experience of watching narcissistic creatures" (Ibid). Julia Kristeva argues that melancholia borrows some of its features from mourning, and the other from the process of regression from narcissistic object-choice of narcissism, thus in regression from narcissistic object-choice, the object has been got rid of, but it has been nevertheless proving more powerful than the ego itself (pp. 60-62). Gaylin (1968) states that the favorite method employed by depressive narcissist persons is increasing their self-respect in which attracting to themselves narcissistic gratifications from without (p.72). Their libidinal disposition is easy to

comprehend; the instinctual energies which they direct towards objects retain strong narcissistic elements, and therefore passive narcissistic aims prevail in their object-relations (Ibid). Freud postulated that the “melancholia’s object-choice conforms to the narcissistic type” (Ibid). In this respect, Richard Cory is a narcissistic person who communicates with the townspeople, but inside, he lives in a state of depression, which he later ends by killing himself.

In the third stanza, Richard Cory is described as a grandiose person, who is isolated by his bizarre greatness from his neighbors:

And he was rich-yes, richer than a king
And admirably schooled in every grace:
In fine, we thought that he was everything
To make us wish that we were in his place.

In his past, he was raised by someone special from his family, who schooled him well, and maybe he went to admirable schools, and all that because he was incredibly rich. The tone of the unknown speaker of the poem seems to come with an undertone of envy, yet he describes Cory with respect. Then comes the last stanza, in which the reader surprisingly discovers that Richard Cory decides to end his life:

So on we worked, and waited for the light,
And went without the meat, and cursed the bread;
And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,
Went home and put a bullet through his head.

The observer, unpleasantly reconciled to his humbler life with its deprivations and limitations of which he complains, stays hopeful of some final understanding of an ideal life. And while all are externally and temporarily undisturbed, a stunning and sharp end awaits the idealized individual, Richard Cory by an act of self-destruction. When the poem begins, Cory's regal mannerisms and formality are somewhat out of place in which he lives, and such contrast illustrates an ultimate clash. Sweet (1972) explains that Cory's suicide resulted from a response to group pressure, “becomes regicide in his forced oedipal interpretation” (p.588).

Kavka sees that Richard Cory is unrelated to work, family, or peers, as his self-projection onto the townspeople instead of simply their idealism of Cory

(p.6). When Robinson describes the act of descent, he indicates the starts of the main drop in self-esteem. This makes the last act of Cory more meaningful as a more complex and deeply private act than just the effect of a regicidal struggle. Gaylin proposes that the statement that consciousness seems to be either abandoned or very limited in its effectiveness has the same meaning, because “feeling of confidence” and “decrease in self-esteem” are essentially identical; all problems of the depressive person can be attacked from the point of view of this increase of this self-esteem (p. 140). To have a desire to live means to feel certain self-esteem, to feel supported by the protective forces of the superego (Ibid).

Sweet says “the end is not hoped for, since the response of the townspeople is neither depressed not triumphant, but rather dumbfounded-more and stunned of a sense of meaningfulness and emptiness” (p.581). Richard Cory does not suffer from the usual 'arrows and slings' of common men, briefly described by Edwin Robinson as the "curse," "the bread," and "the light,", indicates that not only Richard Cory dies in a way that is odd to normal people, but that he lived extraordinarily (Kavka, p. 6). Cory lacks a usual intimacy with others from whom he sensed different and perhaps superior.

Robinson describes Richard Cory as a loner who is a narcissist. The poem becomes a reduced portrait of an insecure individual with grand concepts about himself, a person with regal delusions, and even his death is not to be judged by normal standards. At best, Cory upholds a very susceptible degree of psychological balance, adequate to avoid fragmentation until his last day. In the brief sketch of this character, Robinson alludes to etiological aspects. The royal education is not just an advantage of material prosperity, but a shape of mental splendor which known to be tenable even by a poor kid who is emotionally failed, which means; one who thus fails to considerably enlarge the usual megalomania of infancy and whose concluding maturational version of reality is therefore prevented. The significant irony that Robinson alludes to is thus a psychological one; the normal man caught up in the course of his greed cannot appreciate the narcissist's greed of those normal souls who are capable to wait and work and curse while they bear the lacks of reality.

Kavka proposes that what Robinson wanted to present through the character of Richard Cory is that when life progresses, the environment does not yield expected emotional materials anymore, persons like Richard are victims of intense rages and personality fragmentation, sometimes leading to self-destruction (p. 9). These persons vary from fearful depressives in the fact that the suicidal acts do not result from the effect of an immense association with a hated disturbing object but rather due to the necessity to eliminate any error in their self-esteem (Ibid). In this respect, Richard Cory looks like the accurately psychotic person who has removed his emotional belief in the external world completely, yet he varies in that such removals are temporary and might be returned by an empathic reply from the surroundings.

In his comments on Cory's inner, private issues, Franchere (1968) suggested that "Cory's suicide was motivated by a private feeling of disappointment, personal knowledge of his inadequacy, or a latent unsatisfied desire. Robinson does not say;... the reader is left with an acute feeling of emptiness, of a lost childhood, of failure—and of Cory's silent anguish." (p. 86). Therefore, Cory's baffling behavior as the result of regression that comes after backward to those fixation stands in emotional advancement where there is a slight distinction between self and non-self and that suggests a blurring between thought, impulse, and action. These regressions set to infantile manners of behavior ordered as narcissistic waves of anger, insecurely speaking a kind of temper outburst, which frequently leads to suicidal or homicidal acts. In her discussion about Freud's theory, Julia Kristeva stated that the emergence of suicidal psychoses is distinct; in this situation, suppression is accompanied by a mechanism of projection that is common to those familiar with the psychogenesis of specific psychiatric disorders (p. 23). The depressive episode begins as repression becomes incapable of resisting the assaults of repressed impulses. In this situation, Cory has reverted to a time where his instincts were not suppressed and he has no inkling of the impending confrontation.

Kohut illuminated Cory's meaningless act in his examinations in narcissistic behaviors throughout close psychological investigation (Kuh, 1971, p. 81). In

such persons, the act of suicide is not provoked by definite struggles but by a break-up of the physical self which became an unbearable load and must be eliminated. Such individuals are usually shame-prone and exhibitionistic and motivated by their drives yet not holding strong ideals. After being overpowered in the search of their exhibitionistic aims and ambitions; at first, such persons experience intense shame and then often, they compare themselves with successful rivals, strong envy. The state of envy and shame could be followed by self-destructive desires. The self-destructive desires are understood not as if the ego is under attack by the superego, but they might be considered as attempts of the grieving ego to do away with the self to remove the disappointing, offending reality of failure (Ibid). To say it in another way, the self-destructive desires are to be comprehended here not as equivalent to the suicidal compulsions of the depressed person, but as the manifestation of narcissistic fury (Ibid). Kohut concludes, "When there is narcissistic vulnerability otherness is an offense, and the opponent is a fault in a narcissistically perceived reality" (Ibid, p. 87). According to Julia Kristeva, in melancholic depression the depressive's narcissism is "severely harmed"; as a result, the primary characteristics of melancholic depression are a lack of self-esteem and the resulting "growth of self-hatred and self-accusations as a result of feelings of remorse and inferiority, regardless of the specific source of those feelings" (p. 32). Richard Cory seems to have demanded emotional agreement from the townspeople, a kind of sympathetic reflection of his splendor necessitated by the arrogant's low self-esteem and loss of trust. "His inability to secure such vital sustenance plunged him into a state of acute emotional despair." (Kavka, p.11).

In this poem, as in most of his poems, Robinson displays his realist version of human life. He always tends to project the dimness of human realities in a more characteristically and realistic way. The literal death of Robinson converted to the symbolic metaphorical death of a condition for his poetry. The depression in his poetry arises from the external and internal forces of his life. The disappointments, ironies, and disillusionments of human life are the chief threads from which his poems are worked. His poetry moves to the place of desolation, he went on saying

that life might conquer us with the feel of futility, which is occupied with failure, and this failure is hardly compensated for.

in conclusion, it is worth mentioning that Robinson's poetry is often characterized as melancholy. When he employs imagery, like in the poems discussed above, he draws on themes of the passage of time and a mood of desolation in the environment in order to elicit feelings of sorrow and depression.

Conclusion

This study has been an attempt to analyze the poetry of Thomas Hardy and Edwin Arlington Robinson in respect to the principles of “Melancholy” and “depression” that appear in Julia Kristeva's book *Depression and Melancholia*.

Julia Kristeva had explored the connection between "depression" and the past of melancholy in a psychoanalytic, literary, and artistic sense. Melancholic conveys the dynamic of the emotions or effects of the tone, modulation, and voice gestures at infra-verbal or semiotic levels. Melancholia stems from a rejection of detachment from the mother, a fear of the "matricide," which is our essential need. The melancholia of the institutional and recurrent form is a severe sickness marked by more regular depressive/manic changes, contrasted with depression, which is of lower severity and regularity. The viler melancholia and milder sadness of Kristeva, therefore, recall the traditional psychoanalytic differentiation between hysteria and neurosis. However, after finding out the shared ground common by the two, "the equal unbearable mourning for the material object".

Kristeva draws on Freud's principle of melancholy, claiming that sadness is mostly caused by the loss of the infant's symbiotic relationship with the mother (the semiotic). Sadness is unresolved grief for the pre-objective mother—the parental Thing. For Kristeva, sorrow comes down to a choice of "dying or not trying to kill": being a mother-killer or a melancholy, choosing suicide or matricide. Matricide is the first phase toward autonomy and healing; the mother must be "killed" in order to become an autonomous and psychologically sound subject. Matricide is a form of suicide for a melancholy female because she takes the mother or the parent thing with her to the vault of her essence. In heterosexual culture, too, a melancholy woman may not have a mother-substitute as an object of desire in the way that a melancholy male does. This means that because it is basically gay and must be kept hidden within a heterosexual society, feminine sexuality is melancholy.

The second chapter of the thesis dealt with the poetry of Thomas Hardy. Hardy exhibited subtle examples of enthusiasm and excitement, and these apparently happier memories have remained unobserved in Hardyan scholarship. Hardy the poet, was much hurt than Hardy the novelist, whenever critics passed severe comments on him. When his wife, Emma died, his poetry became darker, and the sense of melancholia becomes clearer. Hardy had composed something like twenty-one poems as responses to the death of Emma in *Satires* entitled "Poems of 1912-13". The group of poems "excludes pieces remembering Emma that he wrote at the same time.

One may assume that there is a homology in the narratives of Hardy's elegies for Emma. The discussions of "Poems of 1912-13" and the therapeutic view of mourning both depend on the power of words to console through catharsis and representation: poetry can purge grief and also substitute figures for the object lost. Hardy made it clear that he aimed to focus on the topics of memory, loss, and love. There are moments in the poems of Hardy in which the poet's lover appears to "sink into melancholia". When one reads Hardy's poem, he or she will immediately observe the melancholic tone of the poet. His longing for the past indicates that his past is much better than his present. It also indicates that the poet is unhappy.

On the other hand, Robinson's poetic career was extremely affected by outside circumstances. In 1892 he lost his father, and he had to live in a family with very serious financial issues. Four years later his mother died, which is the same year when he published his first volume of poetry, three years after that he lost his younger brother. Such conditions were devastating on Robinson, and they have a major effect on his poetry. Robinson's reticent nature directed him into the realm of thought and private emotion so that his primo concern became the psychic world and its value rather than the overt world, the tragedy of introversion and depression rather than of extroversion and heroism. His own painful experience taught him that, as he stated "the great art of life is to suffer without worrying".

Some of Robinson's most memorable poems, for example, "The Gift of God", "For a Dead Lady", "The Poor Relation", "The Voice of Age"- celebrate the mother image. In these poems, the reader of Robinson's poetry feels the voice of the grieving son who lost his mother. Such poems exemplify the process of poetic self-constitution through melancholy and grief as well as family and social ties, therefore demonstrating a relational-melancholic self. Sometimes he uses images that indicate death, loneliness, emptiness, or depression that the absence of his mother caused.

The reader of Robinson's poetry can feel depression, sorrow, alienation, death drive, suicide image themes more than the other themes because this is what Robinson's experience of isolation is based on. Depression and isolation were depicted in the theme of death that appears in most of Robinson's poems.

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