

PSYCHOANALYZING SYLVIA PLATH'S “LITTLE FUGUE”: THE SUFFOCATING GYRE OF A MOURNING DAUGHTER TRAPPED WITHIN HER ELECTRA COMPLEX AND MELANCHOLIA¹

SYLVIA PLATH'IN “KÜÇÜK FÜG” ADLI ŞİİRİNE PSİKANALİTİK BİR BAKIŞ: ELECTRA KOMPLEKSİ VE MELANKOLİYE HAPSOLMUŞ YAS TUTAN BİR KIZ ÇOCUĞUNUN BOĞUCU GİRDABI

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Abstract

It is an undeniable fact that the loss of the father at an early age is an indispensable poetical pattern for Sylvia Plath's confessional and suicidal poetry wherein an ambivalent paternal love and hate relationship surfaces. Her obsession with paternal absence and her dedication to committing suicide lead her to describe death as 'an art' in “Lady Lazarus” (1962) and later cause her to utter the desire to kill her father in the poem, “Daddy” (1962). Most interestingly, within her overall poetry, the ambivalent attitude of Plath's poetic persona towards both death and the paternal figure casts parallels and often overlaps since Plath's poetic persona reflects a Freudian melancholic and an interrupted mourner with an unaccomplished Electra complex. This paper aims to discuss Plath's associated dominant poetical ambivalence towards the father figure and her relational death-oriented and self-destructive poetic tone within the Freudian psychoanalytical frameworks of Electra complex and mourning and melancholia. Thus, elaborating on these crucial Freudian insights, Plath's monumental poem “Little Fugue” (1962) will be psychoanalyzed.

Keywords: Psychoanalysis, Freud, Electra Complex, Mourning, Melancholia, Sylvia Plath, Poetry.

Öz

Henüz çocukken babasını kaybetmesi Sylvia Plath'ın giz dökümcü ve özkıymcı şiir tekniği için vazgeçilmez bir şiirsel ögesi olmuştur. Bu karamsar şiir evreninde Plath okuyucusuna baba figürüyle arasında geçen ikircikli bir sevgi ve nefret ilişkisi sunar. Öyle ki, şairin baba yokluğuna olan takıntısı ve intihara olan adanmışlığı “Lady Lazarus” şiirinde ölümü ‘bir sanat’ olarak betimlemesine ve daha sonra “Babacığım” (1962) şiirinde ise babasını öldürme arzusunu dile getirmesine yol açar. Daha da ilginç olanı, Plath'ın şiir kişinin hem ölüme hem de baba figürüne karşı sergilediği ikircikli ve kararsız tavrı çoğu zaman paralellikler gösterir, çünkü Plath'ın şiir kişisi aslında, Freudyen bir terminolojiyle, Elektra kompleksini sağlıklıla tamamlayamamış ve yas süreci sekteye uğramış bir melankoliği yansıtır. Bu çalışma, Plath'ın şiirlerindeki baba figürüne yönelik baskın duygu karmaşasını ve bununla paralel olarak gelişen ölüm odaklı ve özkıymcı şiirsel tonunu, Sigmund Freud'un Elektra Kompleksi ile yas ve melankoli psikanaliz kuramları çerçevesinde tartışmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu bağlamda, Plath'ın “Küçük Füg” (1962) adlı şiiri psikanalitik edebiyat kuramı ekseninde incelenecektir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Psikanaliz, Freud, Elektra Kompleksi, Yas, Melankoli, Sylvia Plath, Şiir.

¹ This paper is partially produced from the following PhD dissertation of the author: Şenel, N. (2020). “A Comparative Analysis of Death and Suicide within Poetry of Sylvia Plath and Nilgün Marmara”, Pamukkale University, PhD Thesis.

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For the poetry of Sylvia Plath, the leading American confessional poet who committed suicide in 1963, it is almost impossible to think of a confessional poetical canvas without the portrayal of a daughter's ambivalent relationship with a father figure. Obviously, the paternal figure and the related paternal loss constitute the backbone of the poetical creativity of Plath. In "All the Dead Dears", she outcries, "How they grip us through thin and thick,/These barnacle dead!" (Plath, lines 13-14). Apparently, among her dead dears, it was her father that gripped and absorbed Sylvia throughout her poetry. As Rietz asserted, "Plath's relationship with her father has proven to be one of the more troublesome of her recurrent themes" within her poetry (417). The father figure in most of Plath's poetry overshadows the poetic persona's subconscious through several emotions ranging from commitment, admiration, anger, resentment, terror to abhorrence. Accordingly, father figure as a motive is often claimed to be a muse for the poetry of Sylvia Plath by many scholars (Marsack 36; Wurst, *Voice* 202; Rees-Jones 276-77; Rietz 418), and even Plath herself discloses that the father figure was a stimulus for her art as she refers to him as "buried male muse and god-creator" (*Journals* 223) or "father-sea-god muse" in her journals, wherein she asserted that "I am rejecting more and more poems from my book which is now titled after what I consider one of my best & curiously moving poems about my father-sea-god muse: Full Fathom Five" (*The Unabridged Journals* 244).

Plath in her poems reflects the father figure as the clash of love and hatred at the same time; in her childhood memories, this father figure usually connotes love, affection and confidence, while the absence of this figure is closely associated with death. However, the absence of a father figure and the related aspiration turn into a kind of hatred. This poetic ambivalence towards the paternal figure is also interestingly correspondent with the declaration of Shneidman, as the founder of psychiatric suicidology, that "the common cognitive state in suicide is ambivalence" (43). Similarly, the common attitude of Plath's poetry towards the paternal figure is its harsh ambivalence during her poetical mourning phase for a dead parent, which is constituted around such varying emotions as anger, abhorrence, hatred and love. Even Plath reveals in her journals that poetry is a medium to expose her rage creatively and it is this "fury that flows into the figure of the letters" (*Journals* 256). It is the power of such a harsh ambivalent tone of her poetic attitude towards the father figure that makes Sylvia label him at its extremism as "a danger, a barnyard, a barbarous butcher and as Plath writes in her final assault, a Fascist, a devil, a vampire, and a bastard" (Ramazani 1143). Most interestingly, the ambivalent attitude of Plath's poetic persona towards both death and the paternal figure within her overall poetry casts parallels and often overlaps since Plath's poetic persona reflects a Freudian melancholiac and an interrupted mourner with an unaccomplished Electra complex. This paper aims to discuss Plath's associated dominant poetical ambivalence towards the father figure and her relational death-oriented and self-destructive poetic tone within the Freudian psychoanalytical frameworks of Electra complex and mourning and melancholia. Thus, elaborating on these crucial Freudian insights, Plath's monumental poem "Little

Fugue” will be psychoanalyzed.

Electra complex is a psychoanalytical concept which was coined by Carl Gustav Jung in his *The Theory of Psychoanalysis* (69); however, this Jungian proposal takes its origins from Freudian theory of same-sex, feminine indications of Oedipus complex or simply as negative Oedipus complex. That is why it is essential to dive into Freud’s original theorization to reflect upon the fundamentals of Electra complex as proposed by Jung. While discussing the psychosexual developmental stages of a child in Freudian aspect, the term Oedipus or Oedipal complex mainly concerns the child’s attitude of desire towards the opposite-sex parent and the associated hatred and resentment felt for the same-sex parent, the theory of which is developed by Freud specifically in his “Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality” and “Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis”. The term Oedipus complex was firstly mentioned in Freud’s *The Interpretation of Dreams* and was originally based on Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex*. Oedipus complex was later conceptualized by Freud within the context of his theorization on psychosexual developmental stages of children. According to Freud, there are psychosexual overlapping phases of oral, anal, phallic, latency and genital stages which the child is expected to respectively experience. Freud contends that each of these stages points at a conflict that the child is to experience, all of which play a crucial role in the individual’s personality development. If these stages are negotiated successfully and the conflicts get resolved, it would help produce a healthy and balanced future self. However, if the stages are not successfully negotiated, the self would develop fixation and may stuck at any of these psychosexual phases until the problematic conflict gets resolved. Any dysfunction in one of these stages results in neurosis on the personality of the child in his/her adulthood when the self dreadfully seeks to make up for the unresolved conflict on a psychological level. Phallic stage specifically becomes prominent in constructing sexual development of the self. This stage is also the phase when the boys go through Oedipal period when they unconsciously and sexually become attached to the mother. During the same phallic stage, the girls also develop sexual desire for the father figure.

As for the girls’ Oedipal period, Freudian theory asserts that while the only known sexual organ of the boy is the penis, the clitoris functions as a kind of penis substitute for the girl (*On Sexuality* 195). The little girl, jealous of the boy’s penis and disappointed by the mother’s inability to give her one, turns away from her towards the father, the authority and the power-owner. Freud conceptualizes the sexual attitude of the daughter towards the father as negative Oedipus complex, the term which Carl Jung later depicted as Electra Complex to adapt the famous Oedipus complex to women (Jung, *The Theory of Psychoanalysis* 69). He conceptualized the Freudian theory of Oedipus Complex as follows:

The conflict takes on a more masculine and therefore more typical form in a son, whereas a daughter develops a specific liking for the father, with a correspondingly jealous attitude towards the mother. We could call this the Electra

complex. As everyone knows, Electra took vengeance on her mother Clytemnestra for murdering her husband Agamemnon and thus robbing her—Electra—of her beloved father. Both these fantasy complexes become more pronounced with increasing maturity, and reach a new stage only in the post-pubertal period, when the problem arises of detachment from the parents.... If he does not succeed in this, the Oedipus (or Electra) complex will precipitate a conflict, and then there is the possibility of neurotic disturbances. The libido, already sexually developed, pours into the Oedipal "mould" and gives rise to feelings and fantasies which prove beyond doubt the effectiveness of the complex, which till then had been unconscious and more or less inoperative. (Jung, *Jung Contra Freud* 72).

Even though the Oedipus complex and the Electra complex may appear similar due to the parallelism between their reasoning, they are essentially different from each other. While the Oedipus complex refers to this love or perhaps this fixation that boys feel for their mothers, the Electra complex indicates the same love that girls feel for their fathers. Freud contends that depending on how we control our sexual drives during childhood and how we suppress them, we may or may not have psychological problems as adults. Thus, for Freudian psychoanalysis, this complex exists but it may also be the cause of many apparently inexplicable ills of adulthood and neurosis. When Jung focused on the Oedipus complex to discover his daughter-father variant of the theorization, he also originated it back to the Greek myth of Electra, which was also the main topic of the tragedies of the same title "Electra" by both Sophocles (around 420 BC) and Euripides (around 410 BC). According to the Greek myth, Electra was the daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra. Her mother and her mother's lover were believed to have killed her father when he returned from the war in Troy. When Electra learned about it, she collaborated with her brother in order to take Agamemnon's revenge by killing both the mother and the lover (Grimal 134-135). In this ancient mythic story, Electra's matricidal obsession in fighting against her mother to take revenge at the expense of being a slave, thus, becomes crucial for Jung in voicing the 'neglected' feminized dimension of Freudian theory of Oedipus complex. In this way, Jung coined the term the Electra Complex in his *Jung Contra Freud* (72), which was previously theorized by Freud as negative Oedipus complex or feminine Oedipus approach (Scott 8-10). Accordingly, psychoanalytically speaking, Electra complex is constructed by the girls' attitude of rivalry with and hatred against the mother, and the girls' love and obsession with the father, which is also a process triggered by the Freudian concept of penis envy. As in the Oedipus complex, if the healthy resolution is not achieved by identification with the same-sex parent, the daughters may develop fixation dilemmas and neurosis in the adulthood.

The Freudian concepts of Oedipus complex and Electra complex find their echoes and manifestations in numerous literary works. The themes of love of the opposite sex parent, and hatred against the same-sex parent, and the eventual patricidal or matricidal tendency are handled a lot both by the authors and the literary critics. The patricidal attitude in many of the literary works has attracted psychoanalytical attention and they have been analysed

from the Freudian perspective of Oedipus complex or Electra complex. Sylvia Plath's poetry is composed of such themes and is quite viable to examine the Electra complex within Freudian framework. In Plath's poems, the suicidal revelation of her poetic persona corresponds to a daughter who has an unresolved Electra complex. However, what challenges her Electra complex further and causes additional interruptions can be openly connected to the death of her father during her childhood. From the Freudian perspective, the loss of the father at a young age causes the daughter to develop an unresolved Electra complex during the psychosexual stages of her early childhood, which may cause fixation and neurosis in the adulthood. The related paternal loss also causes further psychological problems, even suicidal tendencies, when the healthy mourning process cannot be experienced by the daughter. Eventually, the loss of the father would worsen the neurosis and the relational suicidal tendency, which is caused by the unresolved Electra complex and interrupted mourning process. In his famous theoretical text, "Mourning and Melancholia" in 1917, Freud associates the self-destructive behaviour directly to the processes of mourning and melancholia through the concepts of ego-identification, object-cathexis and libido-cathexis (152-70). Freud's initial approach to suicide, as manifested within the context of melancholia, basically conveys that when a loved object is lost, the person directs and relocates the energy that initially was directed to the loved object to his or her own ego. Herein, as the energy once directed to the loved object is now reserved in the ego, the lost object of desire is now recreated within the self, which is what Freud means for the ego-identification, and Litman refers as ego-splitting (Litman 330). This introjected desire of the loved object is recreated within and directed towards the self when the loved object is lost. This ambivalent process may eventually lead to self-destruction "when the person also harbours hostile wishes toward the lost object, for now one can turn this anger toward that part of one's mind that is modelled upon and symbolizes the lost object" (Lester 856).

During the process of mourning and grief, as the loved object no longer exists, "all the libido shall be withdrawn from its attachments to this object" (Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia" 154). Yet, this would create a new struggle of libido-position, which could tensely further cause "hallucinatory wish-psychosis" (154). The process keeps on as time passes and the reality is gained through the "expense of time and cathectic energy" while the existence of the lost object is still maintained in the mind (154). The libido is finally detached from the object after any memory or hope that binds the libido to the object is revealed and revived. According to Freud, when this seemingly natural painful process of mourning is accomplished, "the ego becomes free and uninhibited again" (154). That is, "the self-reproaches are reproaches against a loved object which have been shifted on to the patient's own ego" (158). Thus, instead of a new object-cathexis, which is the process of withdrawing the libido from the lost object and investing mental or emotional energy in a new one, the free libido is withdrawn within the ego, and it helps the narcissistic "identification of the ego with the abandoned object" (159). Freud metaphorically calls this process as "the shadow of the object fell upon the ego" (159). Relatedly, the narcissistic

identification with an object and the associated erotic cathexis, the awareness of the loss of the object, the insufficient process of object cathexis and identification with the lost object further lead the person to melancholia. Since the initial narcissistic identification with an object is an ambivalent love-hate relationship in Freudian terminology, the same ambivalence of love and hate is also observed within the ego-identification; therefore, the hatred and sadistic feelings felt for the lost-object would also be extremely directed to the ego (Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia" 161-62).

The overall poetry of Sylvia Plath also echoes and manifests the interrupted mourning process and later develops melancholia and the related self-destructive poetical desire as theorized by Freud. Within this context, the poetic persona of Plath casts the loss of the father as a recurring motif in her poetry, which can indeed be interpreted as the loss of the loved object. As the father is lost during the early stages of childhood, the persona directs and relocates the energy that initially was directed to the loved object during childhood memories against her own ego. Ego-identification with the father image is now reserved within the ego of Plath's poetical speaker and the lost object of desire is now recreated within the self. Inevitably, the introjected desire and the energy for the loved object, the father figure, are directed towards the self, as revealed through Plath's radical "I" reminiscing memories and traumas in a self-destructive tone. After losing the father figure, unable to accomplish a natural painful process of mourning and create a new object-cathexis, the poetical persona of Plath reflects an ego which is not "free and uninhibited" (Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia" 154). In this way, the shadow of the father figure falls upon her speaker in the poems, and in Freudian perspective, her self-reproaches become the reproaches against the father figure now shifted upon the speaker's ego. Accordingly, since the initial narcissistic identification with an object is, in Freudian terminology, an ambivalent love-hate relationship, the same ambivalence of love and hatred is also observed within the ego-identification process of Sylvia Plath's poetic persona; therefore, the hatred and sadistic feelings felt for the lost-object of desire, that is the father figure, are directed against the ego of the speaker of the poems, which is how the self-destructive tone takes hold of Plath's most poetry (Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia" 161-62).

Freudian melancholia also serves as a key concept in analysing and determining the daughter's sadomasochistic process of mourning for a dead father and an abhorrence against a mother in Plath's poetry. Upon being informed by Freud's ground-breaking work, "Mourning and Melancholia" in 1958, Sylvia Plath noted in her journal about the role of Freudian concept about her first suicide attempts:

...an almost exact description of my feelings and reasons for suicide: a transferred murderous impulse from my mother onto myself: the "vampire" metaphor Freud uses, "draining the ego": that is exactly the feeling I have been getting in the way of my writing: Mother's clutch. I mask my self-abasement (a transferred hate of her) and weave it with my own real dissatisfactions in myself. (Plath, *Journals* 280).

Following the self-adaptation of this Freudian description, Plath portrayed this Freudian observation of her life “as both a source of depression and ‘a changeable liability’” (Wurst, “Words to ‘Patch the Hovac’” 7). Plath obviously acquired the depths of her process of mourning and melancholia, and sought the self-improvement as a resolution by “talking and becoming aware of what is what and studying it as a help” (*Journals* 280). With the impulse of a similar redemptive effort, she made use of Freud’s highly emphasized metaphor of vampire in “Daddy” by calling her father and husband as vampires metaphorically draining her blood, yet figuratively draining her ego:

If I’ve killed one man, I’ve killed two-
The vampire who said he was you
And drank my blood for a year,
Seven years, if you want to know.
Daddy, you can lie back now.
(Plath, “Daddy” lines 76-80)

While Freud asserted that the state of ambivalence is inherent in all interactions of love and the processes of mourning, he also reasoned that an imbalanced distribution of destructive feelings causes the situation of melancholia or a pathological and disrupted mourning. For Freud, this is the exact process when “self-reproaches” become self-destructive “to the effect that the mourner himself is to blame the loss of the loved object, i.e. that he has willed it” (“Mourning and Melancholia” 161):

Ambivalence gives a pathological cast to mourning and forces it to express itself in the form of self-reproaches to the effect that the mourner himself is to blame for the loss of the loved object, i.e., that he has willed it... If the love for the object – a love which cannot be given up though the object itself is given up – takes refuge in narcissistic identification, then the hate comes into operation on this substitutive object, abusing it, debasing it, making it suffer and deriving sadistic satisfaction from its suffering... It is sadism alone that solves the riddle of the tendency to suicide, which makes the melancholic so interesting – and so dangerous. (Freud, “Mourning and Melancholia” 161-62).

In accordance with this Freudian formulation, the self-reproach of the mourner becomes subordinate as it is caused by the main antagonism towards the loss of the loved object. In the process of melancholia, the feelings of hatred and sadism for the lost object of love become a satisfaction for the melancholiac when they “have been turned round upon the subject’s own self” in such a pathological way that the subject avenges by the “circuitous path of self-punishment” (“Mourning and Melancholia” 162). Similarly, the Kleinian psychoanalysis dictates that upon the loss of a loved object, during the process of melancholia when the lost object is internalized within the ego, it may lead “to an excess of cannibalistic impulses in the subject, this introjection miscarries, and the consequence is illness.” (Klein 148). However, she also contends that “while in committing suicide the ego intends to murder its bad objects at the same time it also always aims at saving its loved objects, internal or external” (160). For Klein, apart from simply being an act of

assault and compliance caused by libidinal urges, the reason for self-destruction would be the subject's goal of preserving and getting unified with the good objects. Therefore, like many other psychoanalysts such as Lindemann and Bowlby, Klein also emphasizes the notion that during the process of mourning the feelings of rage and guiltiness are not supposed to be compulsive or pathological (Klein 160). It is such a Freudian influence that would appropriately place the ambivalent and altering degrees of rage found in most poems of Sylvia Plath, which mark her earlier poetry with a masochistic self-punishing tone and spots her later poetry with prevailing overt sadistic and destructive anguish that was already covert initially.

Eventually, the ambivalent attitude of Plath's poetic persona towards both death and the paternal figure obviously casts parallel and often overlaps. Her poetic persona's dominant poetical ambivalence towards the father figure and her relational death-oriented and self-destructive poetic tone can psychoanalytically be interpreted as the reflection of her as a Freudian melancholiac and an interrupted mourner with an unaccomplished Electra complex. The suicidal and confessional "I" of Sylvia Plath reveals a melancholiac who generally feeds upon her psychological scars, and she experiences an unaccomplished Electra Complex and an interrupted mourning process. Within the psychic world of Plath's poetic persona, the ambivalent love and hatred felt against the father as a lost and then introjected object of desire and the antagonism against the mother further intensify the suicidality of her "I". Specifically, both the introjected lost father and the introjection of the paternal hatred lead her to direct the sadistic violence against her own self. Therefore, in the poetry of Plath, a sexual implication can be attributed to death. Her poetical "I" either wants to get united with the lost and loved father figure through death or she simply wishes to destroy the introjected paternal figure. In this way, through self-directing the violence and hatred, she becomes self-destructive. In a way, Plath's narcissism interacts with her unaccomplished Electra complex, and interrupted mourning; thus, with an over-emphasized Thanatos and self-reflectivity, the poet directs her sadistic and destructive anger against both her own self and the outer world. Therefore, the fascination with death and self-destruction within Plath's poetry can mostly be associated with her interrupted process of Electra complex, which reaches the peak when this unresolved complex is combined with the mourning process of the melancholia.

Essentially, the very unresolved Electra complex which is heightened by melancholia constructs the vicious cycle that inevitably cultivates the suicidal persona of Plath. It is not surprising that such a self-penetrating vicious cycle dominant within her poetry discloses a speaker who usually signals death-in-life. "Little Fugue", which is written in 1962 and accepted as "the beginning of Plath's late work" is a specific poem that harbours the theme of death-in-life in such a vicious cycle (Kroll 113). Though a musical term³, fugue describes

³ Giraud et al. describe the musical term as is follows: "A fugue is a polyphonic musical piece built on several melodic themes that consist of a subject and, in most cases, one or more countersubjects. The Italian word *fuga* is related to the Latin words *fugere* (to flee) and *fugare* (to chase): The patterns are played by each voice, one following the other in succession. They occur either in their initial form or, more often, altered or transposed, building a complex harmonic texture" (Giraud et al. 77).

the life of the poetic persona in the poem. Kroll asserts that the main theme of the poem is “her dead father, a death never fully comprehended, outgrown, or successfully mourned” (113). In this sense, with a life marked under the shadow of the death of her father, the speaker also exposes a life which also has the pattern of a fugue. Obviously, her life is also repetitive and recurring around the main theme of loss of the father and the disturbed mourning. It is such a motif that just like the technical application of fugue, this motif is “altered or transposed, building a complex harmonic texture” through her poetry both for the life and poetic persona of Plath (Giraud et al. 77). As Kroll states further, in contrast to Beethoven’s “Grosse Fugue”, Plath’s “Little Fugue”, can be perceived as “a kind of torture, the claustrophobic, circular entrapment in a drama whose outcome is foreclosed, yet feared” (113). Plath seems to outcry the inevitable reality of her life and poetry by employing this motif. The paternal figure is everywhere, haunting the poet, and all other aspects which seem to be secondary and far-fetched also gain their significance in relation to the central father image. This poetical fact within “Little Fugue” can be comprehended once it is detected that all the symbols such as the black yew tree, black fingers, clouds and the blind pianist, principally represent a deceased god controlling the life of the poetic persona. However, with the appearance of the father in the sixth stanza, the connotations of these symbols are transferred in their relation to the paternal figure and are constantly repeated in the rest of the poem with their paternal connotations. For Kroll, this specific fugue technique clearly demonstrates that these symbols retrospectively “have all along encoded his ghostly presence” (113). Accordingly, as an eternal Freudian melancholiac within the symbolic order under the ghostly presence of the father, the speaker once again pertains to the ‘little fugue’ of her poetry when she clearly associates the cause of her upsetting marriage with her loss of the paternal figure:

There was a silence!
Great silence of another order.
I was seven, I knew nothing.
The world occurred.
You had one leg, and a Prussian mind.
Now similar clouds
Are spreading their vacuous sheets.
Do you say nothing?
I am lame in the memory.

I remember a blue eye,
A briefcase of tangerines.
This was a man, then!
Death opened, like a black tee, blackly.
(Plath, “Little Fugue”, lines 36-48)

The poem repeatedly proposes that the loss of the father has become a repetitive motif,

a primary reason and cause, simply a fugue, in the life of the poetic persona haunting her here and there. There are perpetual phases death she is destined to face as the recurring and re-haunting patterns of her life. The concept of fugue, apart from its musical reference, also has a psychological indication, which is directly related to the appearance of the paternal figure within the poem. In this sense, 'fugue', as in the form of a post-traumatic amnesia, enlightens the impacts of the loss of the father figure and its incessant existence within her life:

... a state of psychological amnesia during which a patient seems to behave in a conscious and rational way, although upon return to normal consciousness he cannot remember the period of the time nor what he did during it; temporary flight from reality. (Capps 19)

The amnesiac impact of the fugue becomes much more evident in the last stanza of the poem: "I survive the while,/Arranging my morning./These are my fingers, this my baby./The clouds are a marriage dress, of that pallor." (Plath, "Little Fugue" lines 49-52). The complexities and the self-delusion of the fugue in this specific morning when the speaker takes care of her baby, and the other mornings of her whole life are the direct results of a single source: the death of her father. Consequently, contrary to any patient with a fugue symptom, the speaker of the poem is always exempt from experiencing the times of full revival from her trauma of loss and related mourning and the state of consciousness. She is fated for a deep-rooted amnesia caused by a traumatic scar left deep down in her past; moreover, she is unable to cure her non-relationality to her dead father:

What she lacks, what she 'forgets' is in effect her true self: rather than complete (though temporary) amnesia, she suffers partial (though chronic) fugue. She can attend to her daily life, minding her baby, and so on, but she always remains 'lame in the memory,' broken where she should be whole. (Kroll 113)

Attempting to thrive under the symbolic order of her father with a 'little fugue' of amnesia caused by her failed mourning, the speaker, thus, disperses the recurring images of the father throughout the poem. In this way, her morning and life are obstructed due to her establishing a connection to the paternal figure through her physical senses. Her inability to foster interaction and relation with him makes her either block or juxtapose all the senses and their functions throughout the poem, creating a situation which equals to death:

Cold clouds go over.
So the deaf and the numb
Signal the blind, and are ignored.
I like black statements.
The featurelessness of that cloud, now!
White as an eye all over!
The eye of the blind pianist

...
 Empty and silly as plates,
 So the blind smile.
 ...
 Deafness is something else.
 Such a dark funnel, my father!
 I see your voice
 Black and leafy, as in my childhood,
 ...
 Lopping the sausages!
 They color my sleep,
 Red, mottled, like cut necks.
 There was a silence!
 ...
 Do you say nothing?
 I am lame in the memory.
 ...
 Death opened, like a black tree, blackly.
 (Plath, "Little Fugue" lines 2-48)

From this perspective, the speaker of the poem echoes the Kohutian tragic wo/man who carries the tragedy of poorly established self that cannot sufficiently develop a healthy emphatic self-selfobject relationing to fatherly images within her memory due to the fugue (Kohut 243). Now, she is so much occupied with "a deep sense of uncared-for worthlessness and rejection, an incessant hunger for response, a yearning for reassurance" that she has already have "a feeling of inner deadness" (Kohut 5), which is depicted as blossoming "like a black tree, blackly" (Plath, "Little Fugue" line 48). Prevented from aural and visual interaction with the father, the speaker simply confuses all her senses. The blocked senses of deafness, blindness and dumbness, therefore, are attributed both to the mourner-speaker and to the mourned-dead-father although she effutely endeavours to destroy all the blockage in which she is constrained. Motivated by her melancholia, the speaker still retains the dead-father alive even within his deadliness. Now, the smiles become 'blind'; the noises become 'big', she 'sees' his 'voice to be black and leafy' as in her childhood. Her melancholia also plays a central role in her attempt to keep his normally-unattainable father alive only through juxtaposing the aural and visual senses, which seems for her to be the only way to reach to her dead father. This misconnection of the communicative senses can also be interpreted with the daughter's entrapment within the symbolic order:

The poem's pattern of black and white represents in part the symbolic order that entraps the daughter. Her father's voice is paradoxically dumb yet loud, its "big noises" like a "grosse Fugue," its clamor like the cries of "dead men." Because the father seems alive but dead, accessible but inaccessible, the lines of communication misconnect. The blind pianist figures a criss-crossing not only of

sight and hearing but of the other senses as well... The melancholic daughter looks uncontrollably at the pianist, even though neither he nor the dead gather whom he represents can return her gaze. (Ramazani 1149)

Ironically enough, the poetic persona's endeavour in connecting with the memory of the paternal figure clashes with her anxiety of being successful in accessing to the father. Whether it is her inability to recall the father, or to recall anything except for the father, it is certain that the poetic persona in part remembers the paternal figure; however, she also has the liability to constantly suppress the image of the lost father. In a way, she desires to see and hear the paternal figure, yet at the same time she obstructs and mutes him. Even in "Little Fugue", when the poetic persona reaches into a memorial glimpse of his voice or image ("I see your voice"), she demonstrates a self-defence against its articulated indictments: "Dead men cry from it. /I am guilty of nothing" (Plath, lines 27-28). In the poem, the defense mechanism causes the speaker to turn her self-reproaches and self-accusations against the lost-paternal figure through portraying him with violent and bloody motifs: "Lopping the sausages!/ They color my sleep,/ Red, mottled, like cut necks./There was a silence!" (lines 33-36). By directing the self-punishment and accusations against the father, the speaker transforms her outward-reproaches into self-accusations. Now, the accusations against the paternal figure with his butchery images deepen when the speaker portrays the father with his castrated images: "You had one leg and a Prussian mind" (line 40). Moreover, the castrative function is not only applied to his image, but it is also implemented through her memorization of the dead father: "I am lame in the memory" (line 44). While his death causes "a great silence of another order" (line 37), this over-all blankness is also intentionally created by the daughter-speaker through her self-protective response to his fierce distraction of her life. Moreover, the seemingly optimistic ending of the poem, with its stress upon the present "morning" with a "new borne-baby" (lines 51-52), does not seem to compensate for the intense vicious images of the father depicted in the previous stanzas. The speaker cannot easily 'survive' in the 'present' due to the brutal burden of the 'past', which is full of her memory and obsession with the loss of the father. Therefore, her mornings seem to be re-arranged with a perpetual suppression of an intimidating past, with a constant pain, and with a stark and ambivalent love-hate pattern arising from the memory of the father.

As a conclusion, it is important to state that Plath's poetic persona's dominant ambivalence towards the father figure and her relational death-oriented and self-destructive poetic tone in "Little Fugue" can be psychoanalytically interpreted as the reflection of her as a Freudian melancholiac and an interrupted mourner with an unaccomplished Electra complex. The analysis of Plath's "Little Fugue" has demonstrated that the poem echoes and manifests the interrupted mourning process of the melancholic daughter with a self-destructive poetical desire upon the loss of the father. Within this context, it is uncovered that the poetic persona of Plath casts the loss of the father as a recurring motif, which can be interpreted as the loss of the loved object. As the father is

lost during the early stages of childhood, the persona directs and relocates the energy that initially was directed to the loved object during childhood memories against her own ego. Ego-identification with the father image is now reserved within the ego of Plath's poetical speaker and the lost object of desire is now recreated within the self. Unavoidably, the introjected desire and the energy for the lost and loved object of the father figure are directed towards the self. In the poem, these are reflected as the self-reproaches of Plath's poetical "I", who is recalling memories and traumas in a self-destructive tone. After losing the father figure, unable to accomplish a natural painful process of mourning and create a new object-cathexis, the poetical persona of Plath reflects an ego which is not "free and uninhibited again" (Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia" 154). In this way, the shadow of the father figure falls upon her speaker. Hence, the father becomes a central, repetitive image encapsulating the psyche of the daughter-speaker just like a fugue which turns out to be a suffocating gyre, tormenting and circulating the poetic persona. The poem "Little Fugue" ultimately becomes a confessional canvas just like many other poems of Plath, wherein the loss of the father haunts the poetic persona. The father image is casted everywhere in the poem and it becomes the central focus for the haunted speaker. All other poetic images and aspects which seem to be secondary and far-fetched in the poem also gain their significance in relation to their association to the central image of the father.

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