

## **Alienation, Modern Realism, and Metonymy in Sylvia Plath's "Ariel"**

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### **Abstract**

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This paper examines the symbolic implications of Sylvia Plath's "Ariel" (1962). Plath is mostly recognized for her symbolic realistic techniques. As such, the study will introduce her writing techniques to have a comprehensive understanding of her writing manners. Realism is a common writing mode during the last phases of modernism. Therefore, Plath utilizes literary symbolic devices within expressionism in realistic techniques because she had been influenced by contemporary realistic poets. Being so, Plath wrote in the form of expressionism had not any concern with the state of individuals. They depended on expressionism to condemn complicated contemporary issues regarding industrialism and capitalism as products of systems not individuals. Being a realistic poet, similarly, Plath uses symbolic realistic verse and conversations in some of her poems. Thus, the study will focus on the metonymic symbolism in the poem as an expression of her reality around her.

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**Keywords:** Alienation, Metonymy, Modernism, Plath, Symbolism

### **1. Introduction**

Sylvia Plath (1932 - 1963) was a distinguished American poet. Her poetry tackles diverse literary topics. Consequently, her contribution to the American poetry is enormous. She was one of the first poets who introduced realism technique within the context of the American poetry (Pearce 90). She is universally acknowledged to a unique practitioner of the realist technique in poetic structure. The poetic devices in her poems exhibit the identical personalities of American communities of the time. She also proposes solutions to American problems during the first decades of the second part of the twentieth century (90). Her poems are considered poetic miniatures of American reality reproduced in poetry al poetry. On the grounds of this claim, Plath's poetry delivers subtle breathtaking archetypes of American individuality at turbulent ages (125). Correspondingly, she grasps the reality of the American people and transposes them in her poetic plots.

Gregory Alexander argues that Plath was suffering from a painful feeling of homelessness and isolation that effected on her life and it was difficult healed. Thus later on as a poet, he reflected it in a lot of her poetry. In fact, Plath's harsh experience of her life has a twofold effect on her works and left her with a deep spirituality, as she expressed in this state when said that behind all the smaller themes in her poetry, there is a larger theme, that mean the ailment of today which is caused by person's loss of religion and his desire to find some substitute for it (66). Plath was prone to write about contemporary life and her life was the best life to write. She faced difficult conflicts in her life and her inner self, and her suffering leads her to write poetry on the conflicts of all men in her milieu (Abu Jweid and Termizi 131).

As an autobiographical poet, Plath's main aim was to depict these conflicts in his poems. So that she tried to ease her inner pressures and storms, to justify herself to herself, not to the world through her writings, and from her experiences, she also tried to depict the conflicts of her age (Alexander 66). Plath earned an immense reputation by examining contemporary themes and existing problems, especially the alienation of the modern individuality (Sheaffer 47). In the modern epoch, alienation refers to the state of tragedy founded in human culture and literature. This easy will discuss the Plath as symbolic writer. I will refer to her poem "Ariel" (1962) in the course of the discussion.

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## 2. Plath's Poetic Style

Plath uses symbolic expressionist poetry to expose the complexities of her age. In *Surveyors of Customs: American Literature As Cultural Analysis*, Joel Pfister says that these complexities are underscored in terms of poetic structures (41). People who suffer from social and economic dilemmas are restricted severely (42). They develop psychic problems as they lead their habitual life. There are various problems, including economic crises that leave their apparent impact upon people's behavioural attitudes (42-54). One aspect of these behaviours is psychic alienation. Here, the psychic complexities, together with realism, are another obvious style of Plath's writing (Abu Jweid, Termizi, and Majeed 74). As a matter of fact, the psychic problems emanate from the most common encounters through which people meet or face dilemmas that make them psychically disordered. Both harsh life and psychic disorders lead to alienation in different ways (Abu Jweid, 2016: 41).

Plath's writing has a profound sense of individuality. She treats the lives of people within the limits of family and kinship (Pfister 98). The bulk of her poems, consequently, parade a wide variety of the everyday life of the American people on the verge of family disintegration. Hence, the idea of disintegration had become of the most ideational tokens of her poetry. It is commonly connected with Plath since there is a link between her poetry and the American people. More precisely, these people are often described as "individuals" who represent the family portion of American nationhood (89).

Plath mixes the reality of people with the essence of her symbolic poetic plots. That is, there is a conspicuous affinity between the reality of American life and his poetic personae (Pfister 103). People from different social backgrounds are depicted in terms of psychological manners. Plath delves into the deep-seated traits of American individuals' psychic qualities (12). Some of her personas, such as that of her "Ariel" (1962), undergo psychic complexities that make them alienated. Therefore, the psychological features are so common in Plath's writing style. She always refers to some psychological elements in her poems. That is, her poems reflect her psychic states, especially when she treats things related to her family life. There is a conspicuous psychological token in her poems that refer directly to her life with family. In so doing, she exposes the feminist issues in relations to her patriarchal milieus. A number of critics claim that she uses some themes to tackle patriarchy in her poetry. She is deeply concerned with the position of women in her society (12). But feminism is approached from a symbolical perspective. She uses symbolical statements to tackle feminist complications of the time (Abu Jweid and Termizi, 2015, 20).

In her poetry, Plath delves into the psyches of the poetic personas to tell us about their inner reactions. She depicts her real people in her poetry. Yet, symbolism is the most vital vehicle used in her poetry to convey these psychic messages (Pfister 13). Furthermore, Plath appropriates the American individuality within the context of modern conceptualization of technology. Here, she puts forward the technological premise for the American individuality and how it changed in the course scientific boom. Technology had rapidly improved which results in new, and unprecedented, the kind of interaction among people (Abu Jweid and Termizi, 2014, 180). The advent of technology offered different interlocutory situations that govern the interaction of people with other people from different regions (Bloom 111). Another discernible aspect of Plath's poetry is the diversity of regional backgrounds that expose the poetic actions in several places (Pearce 2). Most importantly, this setting is a supreme example of Plath's appropriation of the sense of place. The sense place is initially needed for refuge. It is depicted as a home for the personas (Pearce 16). Yet, the symbol of this region changes because the personas make it a place for comfort and solace of mind. This is because they suffer from some psychic complication as will be argued in the chapter five that will tackle the development of alienation (Abu Jweid and Sasa 62).

The sense of place, thereupon, changes in Plath's poems. The change takes place according to the extent to which it is significant for the personas. The sense of place has literary implications. One of these implications is the issue of globalization. The poetic text might parade many cultural dimensions that simulate the real existence of culture within a certain society (Pearce 8). This society plays an integral role in discerning the spread of globalization with its poetic demarcations. The place has different citizens of different and various civilizations that come together and mingle in one united location. These civilizations are characterized by their cultural and social backgrounds (Pfister 40). They are inherently different from each other. But they mix and intermingle within one society. Therefore, they share a common ground in the new inhabited place (61). Their new community is the all-inclusive site of their cultural diversity.

Globalization, therefore, comes to be known and defined as the comprehensive conceptualization of different cultures and traditions which is a symbolic feature of Plath's poetry. The most conspicuous token of this cultural diversity is the ability of different civilizations to comprehend and appreciate each other on the ground of common understandings and respect (Pfister 70). That is, one cultural manner might not be accepted by certain cultures, but is regarded as normal in the host culture. In this context, the host culture provides a facilitative unification of different culture in one place (Abu Jweid and Kaur 3). This place pertains to the host culture. However, this place undergoes radical changes because it loses its national and inherited significance to some extent. The original place undergoes inherent changes since it receives different cultural diversities (92). The new arrived people are completely different from the host socio-cultural places. As such, globalization includes both the original host culture and the foreign cultures (232). The purpose of this study is to explore the symbolic poetic attributes Plath's "Ariel" (1962). The textual analysis, therefore, will refer to reader-response theory. Wolfgang Iser's concept of metonymy will be applied to discuss some relevant points.

### 3. Textual Analysis

Symbolism encompasses a different representation of literary forms. These forms can be exhibited in multiple ways of textual devices. Indeed, apart from the written aspect of literary texts, poetic forms can find their path within the confines of avant-garde experimentation (Abu Jweid and Termizi, 2015, 1072). Within the limits of reception experimental poetry is the appropriation of self-consciousness, or as widely accredited "reflexivity." This textual device allows a space for authors to comment on their works. It breaks the traditional poetic structure and alludes to the authorial voice in the poem. In "Ariel," Plath uses these poetic features in the following line: "Stasis in darkness" (2971). Her she is concerned with darkness as a symbol of her ensuing gloomy atmosphere of people in her contemporary society.

In essence, the symbolic repudiation with modern literary forms results in experimental peculiarity within reception literary techniques which exhibit the "avant-garde" poetry al forms as opposed to modern ones. The conspicuous reception feature is the artistic experimentation with the techniques of literary works. Such technical experimentation is dubbed as the reception literary avant-gardism. In *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (1997), Iser says that poetry symbolic avant-gardism is obtained by metonymy (42).

Second, science poetry is the central elements of the selected works. It will be studied by utilizing the poetic symbolism. The symbolic factor is studied in reader-response theory as the "telling voice" in the poetic events. It is a part of the "subversive" poetic techniques in poetic texts which are analyzed in terms of the poetic stance in the poetry al contexts. In the general sense of the focalization factor, the poetic function is recounted through "the vision" by which the poem is told. Patrick O'Neill defines the symbolic factor as "the inherent dividedness of the poetic voice" (83). The symbolic factor, therefore, is the potential poetic voice. The poetic voice, however, is the persona who could be the poetry al personas or the authorial voice. In "Ariel" (1962), for example, Plath's persona sympathizes with negroes: "Nigger-eye" (2972).

The metonymy is a matter of the crucial distinction between the poetic perspective and the poetic events. More importantly, the metonymy is credited the function of how the poem is told in; as Mieke Bal expounds poetic "the insight that the agent that sees must be given a status other that of the agent that narrates" (101). Being so, metonymy becomes a vehicle or "mediation" between the poetic events and the perspective which perceives those events. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan construes metonymy in terms of "mediation"; whereby "the poem is presented in the text through the mediation of some 'prism, 'perspective, 'angle of vision,' verbalized by the persona though not necessarily his" (71). Consequently, metonymy ranges between the poetic voice and vision.

To sum up, Rimmon-Kenan's definition of metonymy leads us to the double mediation. This is found in Plath's symbolic poetry. The plot "is presented-transformed into the poetic text through a double mediation, namely 'a 'voice' that 'speaks' and 'eyes' that 'see'" (O'Neill 85). The voice, argues O'Neill, belongs to the persona; and 'eyes' belong to the "focalizer" (86). Thus, the focalizer is the poetic vision or "perspective." O'Neill distinguishes three aspects or degrees of symbolism—zero, internal and external—and explains his typology by relating it to metronomic symbols. These poetic features intermingle in Plath's "Ariel" (1962).

Politics another poetic aspect of the poem. Politics, especially during in World War II, was a crucial factor in shaping the contemporary status of the world. It had influenced, and still influencing, the status quo of countries all over the world. As such, it is a thematic appropriation of the reality of war and its destructive sequences upon the live of people not only in America but also in Europe and the other world countries.

It inherently features the authorial discontent with the political practices during the war. Furthermore, the most proper manifestation of politics in poetry could be expressed through reception science poetry. Accordingly, politics is the authors' tool to criticize destructive politics by the use of science poetry in reception style. In "Ariel" (1962), political notions could be inferred in the symbolical implication of the word "dark" in the fourth stanza: "Berries cast dark" (2972).

There has been a common reception assent on the relative nature of reality. Insisting on the discursive ambivalence and emphasizing the deconstructive potential at the expense of radical ontological differences between "signs" and reality, O'Neill arouses a question of substituting the signs of the real (2). As a mode of generic transgression simultaneously foregrounding realist poetics and elements of theology, for example, poetry al realism is particularly apt to articulate ideological and cultural dissent; and many reception writers have relied on its defamiliarizing mechanisms to affect "real reflections" of the dominant power system (5). As such, symbolism is against modern "grand poetic." Plath seems to emphasize the issue of automation in reception patterns. Consequently, she exemplifies postmodernism's realism grand poetics manipulated by symbolism interest in science poetry to a great extent.

Additionally, the symbolic poetic novelty throughout poetic works consistently highlights the intrinsic relationship between texts and reality in symbolism. Plath advocates this symbolic novelty in her poetry. The personas' characteristics make much sense of that. The plot and other literary elements undergo real representation within experimental novelty. In this way, they commonly create a poetry al depiction which is different from modernism depiction of reality (81). David Tracy, another reception critic, simply discusses an alternative but equally univocal 'truth' onto textual events. He employs the concept of "present time" model both to exemplify and question his anti-modern position, whilst producing an interrogatory and plural account of modern illusion (15). This anti-modern concept works to critique modern reality as the origin of truth, bringing "unreal" discourse into dialogue with other voices drawn from contemporary literature. This promiscuity serves to intimate a profound poetic vision of Plath's poetry.

These variations bring the reader relentlessly back to the poetic textuality; whereby eschewing any pretence at the sense of realism. In addition, Plath uses several instances of textual usage of real poetic expressions to provide a "replacement," there is a "communal" and the final "non-presence" initiated by the author and revealing his/her control over the work's textual construction (Tracy 11). This is revealed by the changes that occur in literary developments. As a text exemplifies certain social or linguistic distinctive reality in reception literary texts, its sense of identity likewise gradually changes and disappears away (17). In "Ariel" (1962), this textuality could be perceived by the phrase "God's lioness" (2972) as an indication of Plath's symbolic artifice.

These symbolic ideas about reality have been played out in reception text, and they reflect shifting poetic concerns towards experimental poetic genres. However, in symbolism, traditional literary techniques and styles were characteristic of reality in poetry al texts. However, symbolism celebrates literary departure towards technical experimentation. Stuart Sim, in *The Routledge Companion to Symbolism*, discusses the experimental strategies utilized by reception authors to break away with the conventional construction of literary texts (127). Thus, symbolic literary modes are challenged in reception poetry. This reception poetic experimentation results in avant-garde genres, such as reception science poetry. In so doing, similarly, Plath conveys the disappearance of literary realism perpetuates the artistic quality of experimental poetic in reception style. This experimentation is touted as the reception avant-garde. The author (Plath) can enter the poetic world of his/her poem through reception poetic experimentation. Plath, in like manner, enters his poetic lines through the science of poetry. In "Ariel" (1962), the impossible imagery is a representative example of that symbolism. The impossible imagery occurs when the persona could not catch a neck though the neck is a tangible entity: "Of the neck I cannot catch" (2972). Here, the sense of touch becomes impossible.

Plath's poetic symbolism is conspicuous in her poetic lines. In symbolism, furthermore, reality is often reflected through poetry al discourse. Plath relates to this kind of reality. In many recent reception theories, there has been a shift of emphasis towards poetic discourse.

The conventions of discourse play an important role in the construction and representation of poetry al poetic in reception texts. Much has been written on the complex relationships between discourse and poetry. In *Postmodernism: A Very short Introduction*, Christopher Butler argues how discourse raises much interest in treating the cultural aspects concerning reality.

Plath depicts reality in fragmented symbolism in her poetry. This is because she writes in the second phase of the twentieth century that witnessed the appearance of postmodern literature. Furthermore, Julian Wolfreys *et al*, in *Key Concepts in literary Theory*, (2016) approach the stylistic nature of metonymic discourse. Metonymy involves the authorial voice in the text. This voice could be indirectly expressed by the author's poetic insights in the text. On the other hand, it can be directly expressed in the poetry al works through the personas' discourse. Here, the core implementation of the authoritative poetry al voice is uttered by the poetry al personas who actually execute the metonymic discourse. By the same token, Plath's authorial voice is uttered by his poetry al personas. In "Ariel" (1962), she uses the qualities of birds that fly. These qualities are given to the "dew" which cannot fly: "The Dew that flies" (2972). In essence, postmodern metonymy is the artistic feature that enables Plath to write in such symbolic structure.

Another characteristic of reception reality is the discourse by which the author's revelation of his/her "identity" as the creator of the work. In the course of events, the author appears on the poetic level. The author appearance is manifested in the discourse initiated by the poetic personas he/she creates. In addition, he/she uses his own works implicitly through the personas' discourse and interlocations. In this way, the discourse reveals the authorial identity as the writer of the poem. Another remark on the poetic feature of discourse is the author as a mediator between poetry and reality. The author's role in reception works is vital because it imitates the "figurative" aspects of the poem which is conveyed to the reader by the work's "spatial" or "temporal" forms (Waugh 44). Plath attends to such writing style via her symbolic expressions.

Iser argues that metonymy is basically defined as an authentic theory of authorial poetic stance (53). It is carried through the poetic discourse. Discourse itself literally means "multi-voicedness" in poetry al writings. Metonymy appears in poetry when the private position of the author grants a distinguishable interaction with the poetry al personas. Therefore, the personas in a metonymic poem are given ultimate capacity so that they could interact with each other and even with their real author (Bakhtin 279). That is, in metonymic poems a number of poetic centers provide poetry al consciousness which incarnate the scheme of the literary work. In "Ariel" (1962), Plath uses discourses in the light of the persona which uses the pronoun "I": "And I am the arrow" (2972).

This kind of protagonist is characterized by metonymy in reception reality modes. Metonymic symbols, consequently, is another aspect of poetic discourse tackled in reception reality. Metonymy is studied in poetic theory as the "telling voice" in the poetic events. It is a part of the "subversive" poetic techniques in literary texts which are analyzed in terms of the poetic stance in the poetry al contexts. In the general sense of metonymic implications, the poetic function is recounted through "the vision" by which the poem is told (O'Neill 83). The metonymic symbolism, therefore, is the potential poetic voice. The poetic voice, however, is the persona who could be the poetry al personas or the authorial voice. The metonymic symbolism, in "Ariel" (1962), for example, conveys the persona's voice: "And now I foam to wheat, a glitter of seas. The child's cry" (2792). In these lines, Plath tells us about the position of poor children by using the persona's poetic voice. The persona uses the pronoun "I" as a direct reference to the speaking subject in the poem. Being so, Plath utilizes symbolism meticulously.

Iser contends that metonymy, furthermore, is a matter of the crucial distinction between the poetic perspective and the poetic events. More importantly, metonymy is credited the function of how the poem is told in (101). These personas tell the poem's events and are not interrupted by other personas in the course of the plots. The events are produced by the personas in the poem and the reader perceives them through understanding the poems poetic world. These poetic events are told by the persona that sheds light on one of the poem's main themes. Similarly, the author's (Plath's) reality is projected through his poetic novelty that imitates the reality of children in "Ariel" (1962): "Hauls me through air" (2792). Through the poem, Plath symbolically describes the position of children who suffer a lot. The person, accordingly, is mainly used as the vehicle of describing such sufferings to the reader.

Iser contends that metonymy pertains to science (56). Science poetry relates to literature and science in different ways. In science, it refers to the scientific advancement and the possibility of creating new scientific methods to improve human life (Burns 56). In literature, it indicates the scientific qualities projected in literary works. In this research the focus on science poetry will be limited to the literary aspects of science poetry (p.57).

However, it will briefly write on science poetry in order to present the evolution of science poetry and its progression in the twentieth century. Plath, in the bulk of her poetry, uses scientific qualities.

The scientific advancement began clearly in the Renaissance. Science was the most vital tool to elevate the lives of human being at that time (Asimov 85). Then, science spread thorough the world in various shapes. These shapes take the forms of philosophy, logic, and reason (86). Science could produce in technological steps that improved the quality of life and the good living aspired by people (87). By time, science began to be the inseparable parts of human life. Moreover, people began to feel the need of continuous improvement. Plath indirectly refers to scientific issues in "Ariel" (1962): "Melts in the wall"; which is a symbolical allusion to the technological advancement in the fields of transpiration.

Science, therefore, was the most attainable tool to improve the easiness of life via continuous inventions. Literature, consequently, was one of those tools utilized to elevate life easiness in poetic models (James 123). Literature, especially, in the mid nineteenth century started to be more serious and interested in science. Bit science was being expanded, and still produced, through literature (124). Plath deals with the relationship between science and literature. As such, the relationship between science and literature came to be known as science poetry. That is, science and scientific predictions were conveyed in literary modes. Here, science and poetry are two concomitant words representing the literary manner of science poetry in its generic sense (125). To explain, science poetry became a literary genre. In the last phases of the nineteenth century, science poetry took the form of literature in order to cope with the new changes that had been taking place the world.

In the first phases of the twentieth century, or modernism, science poetry gradually was assessed in literature to represent the reality of everyday life. Science was an appropriate answer to the new scientific theories (Asimov 72). For example, the quantum physics was still taking its precise scientific peculiarities. The quantum physics was of utmost importance of literary figures for the sake of treating science in poetry al registers (73). Being so, literature was used as a vehicle of simplification through poetry. In "Ariel" (1962), uses scientific qualities by pointing out the growth of humanity from childhood: "How one we grow, pivot of heels and knees! – The furrow" (2972). This notion is basically in the quantum science. Yet, Plath tackles it from a symbolic angle.

Literature was simplifying the new scientific discoveries and inventions that had been already came into being. The prominent scientific discoveries, like discovering the south and north poles were tackled in literature in order to simplify these regional landscapes of these discoveries in as simple way (Karen 12-13). People at that time did not have the suitable academic supplies to understand the image of new discoveries. This is due to the lack of technological advancement and easiness as it is now (13). Accordingly, literature was a message between the literary authors and their reading audience. At these events took place during Plath's life time which immensely influenced her poetic symbolism.

This scientific imagination was handed down from generation to another through poetry (Conte 68). Poetry had been the tangible means of simplifying scientific advancement in an easy manner. People from differ cultural and age backgrounds were able to understand and grasp the scientific imagination in the future (69). Yet science poetry is always connected with the sense of place. The issue of the sense of belonging has become an integral part of literary discussion since then (69). That is because science makes radical changes to the geographical places.

The sense of belonging started off as a theoretical term which is commonly applied with other interdisciplinary fields of study. It sets forth the study of the natural scenes or phenomena in relation to other critical approaches. It is, therefore, an "interface" theoretical approach (Tiffin 187). The other studies may include structural or thematic interpretations of literary works. In addition, the application of the sense of belonging is not specified to a certain literary genre. It is applied to all literary genres depicting the relationship between nature and literature (187). In other words, it studies the reflection of human beings' relationship with their environmental circumferences in literary works. This sense of belonging is evident in the lines of Plath's poetry. However, in "Ariel" (1962), she places the sense of belonging between the persona and other suffering children:

Black sweet blood mouthfuls,  
Shadows.  
Something else. (2972)

Plath seems to be concerned with the children's suffering. The persona shares these sufferings and tells the reception reader about these sufferings. Tom Lynch and et al., in *The Bioregional Imagination: Literature, Ecology, and Place*, claim that the sense of belonging could be connected with other critical approaches to study the relationship between nature and human beings (32). For this reason, literary works highlight the interaction between nature and human beings in poetic genres (32).

Such genres are constantly shifting in terms of natural peripheral phenomena in their contexts. Lynch *et al.* further maintain that the depiction of humans' relations in poetry carries out the representation of nature in poetry (32). So, the sense of belonging is associated with the natural scenes in literary works. Again, Plath projects the sense of belonging in her "Ariel" (1962) when the persona empathies with other children:

White  
Godiva, I unpeel—  
Dead hands, dead stringencies. (2972)

The persona feels that he/she has belongs to the suffering children. Iser argues that the concept of metonymy involves technology-driven careers that are another issue of the sense of belonging. Technology brings about new challenges to the lives of human beings. They become a subject to the technological advancement. To illustrate, they undergo radical changes because they meet new technology that results in the limitation of the ability of human beings to work further than before. Technology limits the number of workers (Tiffin 92). In is this case, workers do not find proper opportunities to cope with the need of their life essential requirements. This is because technology replaces the presence of human beings in their societies. They become disabled to meet the most critical needs of their everyday life (93). In the bulk of her poetry, Plath exposes the defects of technological advancement. In "Ariel" (1962), for example, she tackles the motives that make some persons commit suicide as they undergo sufferings. These sufferings as symbolically caused by technological advancement of the time:

Suicidal, at one with the drive  
Into the red  
Eye, the cauldron of morning. (2972)

Technology is, therefore, a significant factor in changing the perception of poor people to their life. Plath depicts them as they become thinking of their ability to compensate the lack of their needs. Technology, furthermore, belittles labor opportunities. Workers find themselves in need of work. Here, the sense of belonging changes because of the technological advancement. The technological advancement results in building factories and work places are previously exploited by people. In this situation, technology occupies a vast space on land which used to be harnessed by people before the advent of technology. The sense of belonging, therefore, confronts new challenge. When people recognize that their lands are filled with technological places, like factories, they consequently become aware of the technological ability to limit their labor opportunities. Yet, suh kind of technology could devastate the lives of human beings as symbolically described in the first stanza of Plath's "Ariel" (1962):

Stasis in darkness.  
Then the substanceless blue  
Pour of tor and distances. (2971)

As I have argued in the previous section, Plath writes in the mode of reception science poetry. His poems represent the first phases of symbolical poetry. She approaches the science poetic qualities in her poems intentionally. Again, in the previous sections, it has been stated that reception poetry does not predict future scientific inventions of discoveries. Time travel is traced in several poems by Plath. There is an obvious and direct allusion to scientific elements in his poems. The scientific features in his poems are inspired by his comprehensive knowledge of scientific discoveries in at his time. Time is argued intensively in the contemporary physics (Pesic 126). Plath was aware of the scientific appropriation of time within astrophysics in the first part of the twentieth century. Time has been tackled in the field of relativity (126). Albert Einstein' physical argumentations about time and its relativity in the universe resulted in groundbreaking and unprecedented visualization of the universe. But the physical treatise is what concerns this research. Time, in the light of astrophysics, could transform in different dimensions (127). Accordingly, time could affect the physical entities. Plath is influenced by the notion of time travel in "Ariel" (1962). In the following lines, Plath's persona tells us of the by which time splits and passes among tangible places:

Splits and passes, sister to

The brown arc. (2972)

Time travel could transport people or places from one place to another. More surprisingly, time could transport people or place from one time era to another one (Jenkins 211). People who believe in this time visualization could rarely persuade the public of their opinions (211). Plath was one of those people who intimately believed in such physical theories. He already knows about science and its miracles (212).

Therefore, he projects some of these ideas in his poems. She could formulate initial and primary notions about time travel and its ability to transport people from one time or place to another time or place (213). This physical correspondence is called displacement i.e., to talk about things or persons who are displaced far away in time and place. Plath was indulged in this deep conceptualization of time travel. As such, Plath treats this idea symbolically in her poetry.

Technology is deemed another discernable trait of Plath's science poetic issue. She tackles technology in the reception sense. To clarify, in symbolism, the technological advancement was not in perfect completion (Thurschwell 164). They were still being produced. The invention of airplanes and automobile, for example, were still in their preliminary production (164). The new inventions, furthermore, did not have the opportunity to benefit from experimental science (167). This is because scientific experimentation was not available in its broadest sense as in reception technological progress. In symbolism, technology has aspired to result in beneficial productions for economic boom (167). But it assisted human beings and has made the lives of human beings super easy simultaneously. Here, technology has been a great factor of human development (168). Symbolism depended on high-tech growth. It depends on the artistic devices that could provide various meanings about reality and how people live together. In "Ariel" (1962), Plath describes the common living among people through the persona's sharing of other children their lives:

Thighs, hair;  
Flakes from my heels. (2972)

In this way, "Ariel" (1962) portrays the issue of common living. Yet, it partially refers to technology that makes people live in fragmentation and undergo sufferings. It refers to this technology in terms of dystopia. That is, technology could not only bring about scientific welfare, but also disasters. The utilization of technology to make the life of human people easy and to increase the production amounts is similarly paralleled to its unfavorable productions. The creation of the atomic bombs and heavy weapons could be classified in the mass destruction military arsenal. This destruction lies at the heart of dystopian notions in the poem. The poem also celebrates the idea of technological destruction. Technological destruction provides control systems that might devastate the human lives; this is portrayed in the opening of Plath's "Ariel" (1962): "Dead hands, dead stringencies" (2971).

#### 4. Conclusion

This essay has studied the symbolical attributes of Plath's "Ariel" (1962). The study has focused on the authorial devices to write in symbolical techniques. The poem has several symbolic peculiarities. It deals with dystopian, scientific, and military issues within a poetic composition. Therefore, the study has utilized reader-response theory in order to explore the hidden symbolic layers of the poem and how it contributes to the author's (Plath's) poetic potentials as an experienced poet. This is because the poem celebrates diverse issues. The poem's title suggests implicit contemporary events and the experiences undergone by the poet herself. There is an indirect allusion to the political and technological advancement in the poem that are used by the poet to give us a vivid picture of how life was there.

Plath's is, above all, a poet of symbolic fashion. She uses allegorical and symbolic expressions to convey specific messages about her contemporary life. Her poetic insights are expressed through meticulous expressions and statements that could be rendered as classic of the American poetry. She is a practitioner of symbolism in all its aspects. She utilizes live words in an artistic diction; whereby she could tell the reader of the purpose of her poem at large extents. Accordingly, her poem might be perceived as a symbolic call for decoding the implicit façade of her life and the events taking place. Other than the biographical attributes of her poem, Plath projects some hidden meanings left for the reader's judgment. Therefore, this study has concentrated on the poetic thematic elements inserted in "Ariel" (1962) as an utterly symbolic poem.



The theory used for the analysis has been largely argued by using reader-response argumentations. As matter of fact, reader-response theory as sometimes called reception theory. The reason behind describing it as reception lies in its emphasis on the reader's reception of literary works within the broad scope of historical and cultural backgrounds. Consequently, this study has used the theory in order to scrutinize Plath's contemporary scientific and cultural advancement. For this reason, the analysis has used Iser's concept of metonymy to explore the symbolic nuances in the course of the poetic diction in Plath's "Ariel" (1962). This concept has contiguous affinity with reader-response critical arguments. It is used to argue the symbolical senses of literary works.

The significance of applying such concept is to give the poem a comprehensive analysis from symbolical perspective. Thus, the poem could be interpreted as a fine example of Plath's poetic symbolism in universal contexts.

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