




**La revue *Aleph. langues, médias et sociétés* est approuvée par ERIHPLUS. Elle est classée à la catégorie B.**

“Dying is an Art”: Sylvia Plath’s Poetics and Creativity

“الموت فن”: شعر سيلفيا بلاث والابداع

« Mourir est un Art » : La poétique de Sylvia Plath et la Créativité

Raja Rezzag Bara et Hanane Saihi - University of Mohamed Khider Biskra

	Soumission	Publication numérique	Publication Asjp
	30-12-2021	31-03-2023	15-12-2024

**Éditeur :** Edile (Edition et diffusion de l’écrit scientifique)

**Dépôt légal :** 6109-2014

**Edition numérique :** <https://aleph.edinum.org>

**Date de publication :** 15 janvier 2024

**ISSN :** 2437-1076

**(Edition ASJP) :** <https://www.asjp.cerist.dz/en/PresentationRevue/226>

**Date de publication :** 15 décembre 2023

Pagination : 289-300

**ISSN :** 2437-0274

**Référence électronique**

Raja Rezzag Bara et Hanane Saihi, « “Dying is an Art”: Sylvia Plath’s Poetics and Creativity », *Aleph* [En ligne], 11(5-2) | 2025, mis en ligne le 31 mars 2023. URL : <https://aleph.edinum.org/10047>

**Référence papier**

Raja Rezzag Bara et Hanane Saihi, « “Dying is an Art”: Sylvia Plath’s Poetics and Creativity », *Aleph*, 11(5-2) | 2025, 288-300.



## “Dying is an Art”: Sylvia Plath’s Poetics and Creativity

“الموت فن”: شعر سيلفيا بلاث و الإبداع

### « Mourir est un Art » : La poétique de Sylvia Plath et la Créativité

RAJA REZZAG BARA ET HANANE SAIHI  
UNIVERSITY OF MOHAMED KHIDER BISKRA

#### Introduction

Sylvia Plath is the embodiment of creativity and madness; she is so because she lives on through her literature, and she is still very much relevant in many critical studies. Almost a decade after her death, she became the first person to win a posthumous Pulitzer Prize. At a time when it was taboo to talk about feminist issues, suicide, and mental illness, Plath advanced the genre of confessional poetry and expressed her deepest and most disturbing thoughts through literature. Her poetics not only talk about her struggles with clinical depression, but they also relate to other readers’ unspoken inner feelings. Her creativity portrays her deteriorating mental health in an elevated, beautiful manner, making her poetry very relatable to her readers. Although the themes carried are sad and, for some, morbid; however, they are captivating and relatable.

Plath is known for her creative process in writing intense themes in an artistic way, which made her a target for a lot of critiques. In revealing intense topics like suicide and self-harm in an aesthetical tone and in a poetic context, critics could not help but wonder if her writings are still just therapeutic or self-destructing. In an attempt to elaborate on James C. Kaufman’s ‘Sylvia Plath’ effect theory, we will study a confessional poem by Plath, and we will examine the poet’s tendency to put negative spins on traumatic life events. The poem under study is “Lady Lazarus,” which was published in *Ariel* (1965). This poem is chosen for its dark themes that have evoked mixed feelings among reviewers.

## 1. Sylvia Plath

### 1.1. Creativity and Madness: the ‘Sylvia Plath’ Effect

Creativity and madness are often linked together by researchers because it is so common for creative writers to suffer from some form of mental illness. Albert Rothenberg, M.D., a Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, conducted a study about the psychiatric and psychological bases of creativity in literature. The study included Nobel Laureates, Pulitzer Prize

winners, and other highly creative individuals. The outcome of his study is that creative people in artistic professions are more susceptible to mental illnesses as opposed to people with professions far from artistry (Bailey 42). Furthermore, this commonality among creative writers was even more pronounced specifically in female poets. James C. Kaufman, an American psychologist, published an article in 2001 entitled: "The Sylvia Plath Effect: Mental Illness in Eminent Creative Writers." The 'Sylvia Plath effect' is a term he coined to refer to the phenomenon of female poets being significantly more prone to mental disorders. He suggested that the reason behind the 'Sylvia Plath' effect is that poets tend to put a negative spin on traumatic life events to make them more dramatic and artistic, as opposed to non-fiction writers who put a positive one (46). Some of the well-known female poets that suffered mentally, other than Sylvia Plath, were Emily Dickinson, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and Anne Sexton, just to mention a few.

Plath's mental health issues were both her muse to write and her worst enemy. In the four months before her death, she wrote her most widely read poetry. Her earlier poems did not get as much recognition and popularity as her posthumous works. In an interview with Peter Orr on BBC, she said: "My first book, *The Colossus*, I can't read any of the poems aloud now. I didn't write them to be read aloud. In fact, they quite privately bore me" (Axelrod and Dorsey 76). It is the poems that she wrote in the last months of her life that made her name. She wrote extensively every day, completing at least one poem a day. She sent a letter to her mother, writing: "I am writing the best poems of my life; they will make my name" (qtd. in Bloom 13). A major part of those poems she is referring to is included in *Ariel*. Most of her poems are reflections of events in her life; for that matter, she became a pioneer of confessional poetry.

## **1.2. Sylvia Plath's life Reflections on Poetry: Confessionalism**

Confessionalism, also referred to as confessional poetry or poetry of the 'I', is a new genre of poetry that rose to popularity in the 1960s after the publication of Robert Lowell's *Life Studies* (1959) (Bloom 7). Plath was among the poets who popularized this genre and redefined mid-twentieth-century American literature. She fictionalized some personal events and included a lot of her own personal and deep thoughts in her writings, especially in her later works such as *Ariel* (1965) and *The Bell Jar* (1963).

A lot of events in her life were reflected in her poems. She wrote *Ariel* at a really difficult time in her life. It was the time when she found out about

her husband's love affair and decided to move out and live alone with the kids in a new apartment. It was also the time when she suffered from the uncertainty of what is coming, the responsibility of living alone and taking care of her kids by herself, and she also had a strong urge for success to redeem her mediocre career. These were all reasons that further deteriorated her mental health but also motivated her to write extensively. Since the summer of 1962, when she found out about her husband's love affair, until her death in February of the next year, she completed at least one poem a day. She left a script entitled "Ariel" on her desk. It was published two years after her death. Her husband, Ted Hughes, had edited and reorganized the order of the poems before he published it, which harnessed a lot of critiques and hate towards him. It was only in 2004 that her original manuscript, *Ariel: The Restored Edition* (2004), was published with no changes by her daughter Frieda Hughes, bringing back to life the book as Plath intended it to be read.

The fact that most of her subjects in her poems, if not all, are about herself and her experiences makes us question whether her readers are drawn to her poetry for its literary merit, or they are just curious about her life. Many critics considered Plath's success was due to her tragic death. She successfully overcame her mediocre career, but that happened only after her death.

For readers that have read her biography, her death does set a realistic gloomy nuance to her poetry and makes it more sympathetic. There is something about reading confessional poetry. It has a similar effect to having the phrase "true story" at the beginning of a movie, or any artistic creation for that matter. Although it is a fictionalized story, it still harnesses more sympathy for its confessional style. It resonates more with a large audience, and attracts a lot of interest not only to her literature but to her biography.

Her tragic death might have brought attention to her poetry, but her literary genius made people still remember her and read her writings for decades after her death. We cannot overlook her artistic creativity and her literary genius. Her life may be the center of her writing content, but her confessional style has garnered attention in discussing the subject of mental illness. Her writings about the sufferings and emotions of a mentally disturbed person going through suicidal tendencies have given light to the topic of mental illness, which has always been considered taboo.

Often viewed as a biographical transcript, her poetry nevertheless is still art that should be regarded for its literary merit. It is agreed that her poetry is something that cannot be separated from her biography; therefore, it helps with the understanding of Plath's intentions and meanings she had in mind

when she wrote; nevertheless, art exists for the interpretation of the viewer. Her readers can interpret and relate to her art as they wish. Although the subject of her writings is her own life, she wrote about common things that common people go through that are not talked about much. Writing about mental illness not only opened the discussion for such a topic but also raised a lot of eyebrows on the morbid depictions and imageries that Plath has created in her poetry, and she was often accused of romanticizing depression.

## **2. Lady Lazarus**

### **2.1. “Lady Lazarus”: Romanticizing Depression**

“Dying is an art” is a quote taken from a poem entitled “Lady Lazarus,” which is included in *Ariel* (1965). The poem represents perfectly her artistic taste and captures well her poetic creativity. It is considered semi-autobiographical for containing Plath’s suicide attempts. Like the character in the poem, Plath attempted suicide at every turn of a decade in her life. “I have done it again. / One year in every ten/ I manage it” (Plath, lines 1-3). The poem mentions an accident that almost took the speaker’s life at the age of ten and two failed attempts of suicide at the ages of twenty and thirty. As a comparison to her biography, Plath did have a near-death experience at the age of ten. She purposefully overdosed on pills at the age of twenty. And in another attempt at suicide, she drove her car off the road at the age of thirty; fortunately, she survived. Sadly, her fourth attempt was the last and successful one. In the morning of February 11, 1963, she was found dead in her London apartment. While her two kids slept in another room, she managed to place towels on their door, lock herself in the kitchen and place her head in the oven. She died of carbon monoxide poisoning.

The speaker of “Lady Lazarus” asserts that after each time she was brought back to life, she is still “the same, identical woman” (Plath, line 34). After being rescued, nothing really changed about her and her mental health. She will probably commit suicide again. Her surroundings expect her to progress to a healthier state since she is given a second chance at life, but what she sees is a vicious circle because being brought back to life will only be followed by wanting to die again. She is brought back “to the same place, the same face, the same brute” (Plath, line 53). Her problems and mental issues are still unsolved. This mirrors society’s perspective on mental illness, and how we deal with it. It is a topic that has been brushed off as something not so serious, and suicide has been looked at as a shameful act instead of looking at it as one of many symptoms of mental illness.

Plath had been often accused of romanticizing depression and self-harm due to the dark nature of some of her poems. Her mental illness did inspire her to write, but it was not what fueled her creativity. In his book: *Creativity and Madness: New Findings and Old Stereotypes* (1990), Rothenberg suggests that when medically treated, highly creative people function better (qtd. in Bailey 2003). Therefore, mental illness is not the source of creativity, but a suppressor for their creative mind. Plath is not popular because of her mental illness but despite it.

The words she used in a poem entitled “Cut” to describe accidentally cutting a piece of her thumb while cooking is an example of putting a negative spin on a simple accident that can happen to anyone: “What a thrill -/ My thumb instead of an onion. / The top quite gone/ Except for a sort of hinge// Of skin, / A flap like a hat” (Plath, lines 1-6). It is literature that you relate to even if you did not experience the events that have unfolded in the text. The reason why someone would relate to the previous quote is that the description is so explicit that one imagines vividly every line as if it actually happened. One would not think much about a minor cut, but for Plath, she dramatizes it in a way that intrigues the audience. Is she thrilled to have injured herself or shocked? So many interpretations of the poem and analyses, but her word choice points to a fascination with self-harm as a prominent theme, and that is one of the reasons people get intrigued to read her poetry.

Given the fact that she suffered severely from mental illness, and she deliberately shared personal matters in her writings, she is letting us readers into the mind of a clinically depressed and suicidal person. It is only natural that the topics would be dark and morbid. In effect, her poetry seems to celebrate suicide and self-harm. What is viewed as romanticizing self-harm is just a thought process of a mentally ill person. She is narrating what goes around in the mind of a troubled person.

Suicide and self-harm are not topics to romanticize, but topics to discuss. We as humans are not wired to kill ourselves or harm our bodies, or aspire to or romanticize such horrible acts. It is not something normal, nor is it an easy choice. For someone to contemplate suicide means they are going through severe mental health issues. Plath got popular because she represented a lot of people that felt they were alone in battling depression. Although it is a hard topic to navigate through, for Plath writing poetry was a great way of sharing her experience, and most likely very therapeutic for her. She created personas to distance herself and protect herself from people’s judgments.

Some readers may find her writing morbid; others would find solace in it. In the end, she brought awareness to a subject that has been taboo for so long, and now is finally discussed without being censored or shamed.

She did not romanticize depression but rather showed the thought process of an ill person going through hard times. Her word choice is artistic and aesthetically pleasing and comes across as sympathetic. She had to create an aesthetical tone to grab the reader's attention. And to be even more sympathetic and relatable, she dramatized the emotions of the speaker by comparing her struggles to atrocities of the Holocaust and other several references.

## **2.2. Dramatization of Emotions : Holocaust and Other References**

All kinds of fiction in literature is, in one way or another, a dramatization of events, whether it is based on real events or totally a product of imagination. This is not to be confused with dramatic literature that is written to be performed in the theatre. What I mean by dramatization is the twisting of events to fit an artistic purpose, and Plath is a great example of that. Plath has dramatized her emotions in her writings in a gloomy and bitter but artistic and creative way. Plath took from her own experiences and private life in writing but manipulated those events and feelings to fit a bigger audience. She wrote about herself but with an artistic take on things. She dramatized the images in her poetry with the use of simile, comparison, and allusions to make depressive and grander expressions. Hence, to what is previously mentioned about Kaufman's suggestion that poets tend to put a negative spin on their life events (46).

In an interview with Peter Orr who asked her if she takes inspiration from her life, she replied:

"I think my poems immediately come out of the sensuous and emotional experiences I have [...] I think that personal experience is very important, but certainly it shouldn't be a kind of shut-box and mirror-looking, narcissistic experience. I believe it should be relevant, and relevant to the larger things, the bigger things such as Hiroshima and Dachau and so on."  
(Qtd. in Axelrod and Dorsey)

Instead of atrocities like Hiroshima and Dachau, in "Lady Lazarus," she made references to the Holocaust, and also to biblical and mythological figures. She compared her pain to the traumas of others to be relatable, to



intensify the imagery and to dramatize the emotions. She took the liberty of constructing images of her emotions using historical events and war atrocities. This led to a lot of critics accusing Plath of appropriation since she did not experience any war atrocity. Nonetheless, she created the persona of the speaker with the use of hyperbole, caricature, parody, and different references to fictionalize those incidents and to distance the poet, herself, from the speaker of the poem.

The speaker of “Lady Lazarus” is a lady that talks about her coming back from the dead after attempting suicide multiple times. She alludes to the attempts in the first stanza. By the second stanza, she starts metaphorically comparing herself to a Jewish victim of the Holocaust. She compares her skin to a Nazi lampshade, and her right foot to a paperweight. These are references to the rumors that some Nazis killed Jews for the purpose of using their skin and other body parts to make lampshades, paperweights, and other objects. The speaker never revealed whether she is in fact a Nazi, but only compared her body and her experiences to traumas of a Nazi victim. The metaphors used are to intensify the violent imagery that represents how the character feels.

The Holocaust, which is a distressing and traumatic experience for Jews, is an experience that a lot of minorities and war victims can relate to. By comparing her own personal sufferings to a suffering of a people, she is giving the poem a more general meaning that would have more impact and more sympathy. She utilized an atrocity that carries a lot of historical significance to a people to transmit her emotions. She is comparing her self-annihilation to an annihilation of a mass of people and leveling her emotions to the emotions of those who are brutally murdered.

Lazarus is a reference to the biblical figure that Jesus brought back to life, and it is also a Hebrew name which translates to “God will help.” The speaker is the feminine embodiment of Lazarus; however, she is different in that her coming back is not a happy story for her. At first, the speaker is not very content with her resurrection because she wants to succeed in her attempts at suicide rather than be brought back to life. In her third attempt, she had a will to survive. She manages to come back to life alone as opposed to the biblical figure that is brought back by Jesus. She is portraying that she is a strong female Lazarus who needed no one’s help to rise from the dead. The feminization of the biblical figure Lazarus in the title and the statements made in the two final stanzas reinforce the themes of rebirth, self-empowerment, and female-empowerment.

”Herr God, Herr Lucifer  
Beware  
Beware.  
Out of the ash I rise with my red hair  
And I eat men like air.” (Plath, lines 79-85)

Furthermore, ‘Herr’ is a German word that translates to ‘mister.’ By any means, she wants to take revenge on ‘men’ in her life. After confessing about her pain and weaknesses, she shows that she is capable of turning her weaknesses to power. She is a strong woman whom men in her life fear, and that is what makes this poem a feminist piece.

Just like the Phoenix, the Greek mythological creature that rises from ash and is reborn into a red fiery creature, she rises from ash with red hair and transfigures herself to be stronger than ever. After being revived like the phoenix, she will devour men like they are nothing.

Plath created a sympathetic persona through the speaker of “Lady Lazarus.” She used a lot of techniques like simile, comparison, and allusions to portray her emotions through the character. The latter suffered like the biblical figure Lazarus, but she is different because she is a woman that took her fate into her own hands and came back from the dead by herself. She is like a phoenix that rose from ash, but she rose with red hair and a fierce tone to avenge men. She suffered like a Holocaust survivor, but she did not remain weak. Instead, she transfigured herself to a stronger person.

By comparing herself to different famous figures, she is comparing her suffering to the sufferings of others and making herself more relatable. The speaker showcases a lot of vulnerability but ends the poem with so much strength. She is surrendering to her death, yet she manages to find strength within herself and come back alone and even stronger.

### **2.3. Glorification of Death in “Lady Lazarus”**

Plath glorifies death by depicting it as a relief and a release from the physical world and its pains. The speaker of the poem refers to the grave as a home where her body will soon be at ease. Comparing a grave to a home shows her longing for death as something that will give her peace. Her frustration with her failed attempts makes her compare herself to a cat with nine lives to go through. She is currently on number three. “I am only thirty. / And like the cat I have nine times to die. // This is Number Three. / What trash / To annihilate each decade.” (Plath, lines 20-24). At every end of a decade, she tries to put an end to her life.

Dying for the speaker is an art because she is looking for a sense of completeness. Sooner or later, we are all going to die, and eventually, all our bodies will have graves for homes, and we will all leave this physical world. Her body in the grave and her soul released from the physical world are her sense of completeness. Her soul is no longer attached to worldly matters and does not relate to the body that was constrained with ‘million filaments’ and watched by a suffocating crowd. She turns her back to physical matters to experience and glorify the spiritual world, a soul without any attachments and without a body as a cage.

The crowd in the poem represents society’s perspective and opinions on suicide. It is a sensitive topic that should be understood in the context of mental illness. Like any other sickness, mental disorders have symptoms and effects, and suicide happens to be one. No one fancies killing themselves; on the contrary, attempting suicide is a cry for help. However, society has always cast the topic as taboo and looked at suicide victims as culprits of horrid acts rather than people in desperate need of help.

The speaker expressed that there is always a crowd to watch her downfall and criticize her. She calls them the “peanut-crunching crowd” (Plath, line 26). Her body is violated because of the numerous piercing eyes curious about her suicide scandals. It feels like they are there to further suffocate her with their criticism rather than help her, so she introduces her body and starts telling her story.

She lets her audience know that her first death experience at ten years old was only an accident. The second time, she really wished to be dead, but she was rescued. She shows her body deteriorating because that is the only thing she can do. As a victim, dying is the only act she can do well, so she persists in dying. This represents how Plath felt in her low point in life.

After the self-annihilation, she warns both God and Lucifer that nothing can stop her from what she is about to do next. Mentioning these two polar powers is reminiscent of the traditional theme of good and evil, which characters usually would take the side of one or the other. For the speaker of this poem, she chose herself. She warns everyone around her, whether they represent the good or the bad, that she will become stronger than ever and avenge people that did her wrong. She will take her fate into her own hands and turn her situation better by herself.

## Conclusion

Plath's poetics display many dark themes such as suicide and death in artistic and creative ways; therefore, she was often accused of romanticizing depression, suicide, and encouraging self-harm. By her creative ways, Plath managed to talk about subjects that were not easy to present or navigate through, and she broke the silence on taboo subjects that were shamed or brushed off in the 1960s. This paper explored her creativity in discussing such sensitive topics.

In the confessional poem "Lady Lazarus," we have analyzed the similarities between the character's and Plath's attempts at suicide, which were somewhat identical. This was to demonstrate Plath's creativity in taking traumatizing real-life events and fictionalizing them in an artistic way and to confirm James C. Kaufman's theory of The 'Sylvia Plath' effect. Moreover, although most of creative poets suffer from some sort of mental disorder(s), their illness does not fuel their creativity but actually suppresses it. Evidently, writers, or anyone for that matter, are not at their full potential when they feel sick.

A posthumous work with recurrent themes of death is like listening to a message from beyond the grave about dying. For those who have read her biography, her poems are even more interesting and sympathetic. Her death might have made her famous and intrigued people to know more about her personal life; however, her literary genius made people read her literature for generations and established her as one of the greatest writers of 20th-century America.

Writing about suicide in an artistic way can be misunderstood as romanticizing depression; however, for Plath, writing is a therapeutic process to cope with mental illness. What can be viewed as romanticizing depression is just a thought process of a mentally ill person with suicide tendencies going through some hard times. Someone who is willing to go as far as taking their own life is completely against all of the ways humans are wired. Plath shared emotions that are not very talked about, so that a lot of people would relate and do not feel like they are alone in battling depression. She is touching on deep emotional issues for herself and for a lot of young people.

For Plath's readers, her literature is confessions of a modern woman who deals with modern problems such as patriarchal constraints, identity crisis, existential angst, and suicidal thoughts. All of which are still relatable to recent generations. Its confessional nature makes it more meaningful, relatable, and even more personal to readers.

In 'Lady Lazarus,' Plath is fictionalizing her experiences with mental illness with the use of Holocaust references and biblical and Greek mythology references to create relatable images. The use of the Holocaust was a way to magnify the images of her emotions. Comparing her sufferings to the sufferings of peoples that went through atrocities is her way of creating an intensified image of her emotions. Readers would be able to imagine and relate to her emotions through these comparisons.

In conclusion, 'Lady Lazarus' is a well-crafted poem that discusses topics that were in need of representation. Plath's creativity managed to navigate through the topic of suicide and mental illness in a poetic and artistic tone. She brought awareness to an important issue that has been shamed and sidelined at a time when it was hard to talk about it. Society crucifies anyone involved in such acts rather than offer help. After all, suicide is one of the symptoms of mental illness, and an ill person should be regarded as a victim in need of urgent help. And this poem comforts anyone who feels represented and makes them feel like they are not alone in battling their demons.

## Bibliography

Bloom, Harold. *Sylvia Plath*. Bloom's Literary Criticism, 2007.

Bloom, Harold. *Sylvia Plath: Comprehensive Research and Study Guide*. Chelsea House, 2001.

Gill, Jo. *The Cambridge Introduction to Sylvia Plath*. Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Plath, Sylvia, et al. *The Letters of Sylvia Plath*. Faber & Faber, 2019.

Plath, Sylvia. *Ariel: The Restored Edition*. Faber And Faber, 2007.

Taussig, Michael. "Dying Is an Art, like Everything Else." *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 28, no. 1, 2001, pp. 305–316., doi :10.1086/449042.

VanDyne, Susan R. *Revising Life: Sylvia Plath's Ariel Poems*. University of North Carolina Press, 1994.

## Primary Source

Plath, Sylvia. "Lady Lazarus." *Ariel: The Restored Edition*, Faber And Faber, 2007.

Plath, Sylvia, and Ted Hughes. *The Collected Poems*. HarperPerennial Modern Classics, 2018.

Poe, Edgar Allan. "Philosophy of Composition." *Graham's American Monthly Magazine of Literature and Art*, Apr. 1846. <https://colibris.link/vNXgF>. Accessed 29 Nov 2021.

## Secondary Source

Axelrod, Steven Gould, and Nan Dorsey. "The Drama of Creativity in Sylvia Plath's Early Poems." *Pacific Coast Philology*, vol. 32, no. 1, 1997, p. 76. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1316781>. Accessed 29 Nov 2021

Bailey, Deborah Smith. "Considering Creativity--the 'Sylvia Path' Effect." *Monitor on Psychology*, American Psychological Association, Nov. 2003, <https://www.apa.org/>

monitor/nov03/plath. Accessed 29 Nov 2021

Bloom, Harold. *Sylvia Plath*. Chelsea House, 2001.

Bloom, Harold. *Sylvia Plath : Comprehensive Research and Study Guide*. Chelsea House, 2001.

Tikkanen, Amy. (Ed) "Anxiety." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., <https://www.britannica.com/science/anxiety>. Accessed 30 Nov 2021

Kaufman, James C. "The Sylvia Plath Effect : Mental Illness in Eminent Creative Writers." *The Journal of Creative Behavior*, vol. 35, no. 1, 2001, pp. 37–50., <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2162-6057.2001.tb01220.x>. Accessed 18 Jan 2021

Gill, Jo. *The Cambridge Introduction to Sylvia Plath*. Cambridge University Press, 2008.

---

## Abstract

---

This paper examines Sylvia Plath's creativity in portraying taboo topics in an artistic way. In "Lady Lazarus", she fictionalized her own suicide attempts and created a sympathetic persona to captivate the attention of the readers. Nonetheless, Plath managed to navigate through taboo topics like suicide, and she raised awareness on mental illness.

---

## Keywords

---

Sylvia Plath, « Lady Lazarus », Mental Illness, death, suicide

---

## مستخلص

---

يدرس هذا المقال إبداع سيلفيا بلاث في تقديم مواضيع محرمة اجتماعياً. في القصيدة "Lady Lazarus"، روت بلاث عن محاولات انتحارها بأسلوب الشعر الطائفي، وصنعت شخصية ليتعاطف معها القراء. فقد تمكنت بلاث من الإبحار في مواضيع محظورة مثل الانتحار، ونشرت الوعي الاجتماعي في موضوع الأمراض النفسية.

---

## كلمات مفتاحية

---

"Lady Lazarus" سيلفيا بلاث، الفن، الإبداع، المرض النفسي، الانتحار، الموت

---

## Résumé

---

Cet article examine la créativité de Sylvia Plath dans la représentation artistique de sujets tabous. Dans le poème "Lady Lazarus", elle a romancé ses propres tentatives de suicide et a créé un personnage sympathique pour captiver l'attention des lecteurs. Néanmoins, Plath a réussi à parler de sujets tabous comme le suicide, et elle a sensibilisé les gens aux maladies mentales.

---

## Mots-clés

---

Sylvia Plath, suicide, mental illness, « Lady Lazarus », *Ariel*

---