

# Artistic Creation Of A Soul In Depression: The Healing Power Of Poetry (Select Poems From D.H.Lawrence's *Last Poems*)

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## Abstract:

*D.H. Lawrence enhances his ardent desire towards life with his idea of life after death which has evolved from the Greek mythology, biblical references. Lawrence's Last Poems explores his depression wrought by his debilitating tuberculosis and is an attempt to overcome his grief. He creates his own imaginary world in order to overcome his sadness. The imaginary world can only be expressed through figurative language, metaphors, similes, images, symbols, allegory, and myths, repetition of words, phrases and sounds. The poet yearns for a new life after death which provides him a peaceful life. Through figurative language such as metaphor and simile, Lawrence enriches his hope of renewal of life. Lawrence deals with the metaphors and similes in order to express his intense mind and is expressed in the Last Poems. Julia Kristeva in her book Black Sun enunciates that depressed person cannot communicate through ordinary language. In order to communicate they find new means to overcome their depression. Kristeva calls this new poetic language as "depressive discourse" (55). Poetry is depressive discourse, once a person writes his/her sadness; he/she can experience repeal from the depression. Lawrence's poems associate with emotions which flow unleashed as William Wordsworth says in his "Preface to Lyrical Ballads": "Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; it takes its origin from emotions recollected in tranquility" (13). Lawrence attempts to visualize his vision of life after death in order to get rid of his depression throughout his Last Poems. He has tried to change his feelings into images-'word pictures' and his poems remind us of Coleridge's 'Imagination', that is, "Mental pictures or images received from the sense" (Abrams 87).*

**Key words:** poetry, depressive discourse, figurative language, renewal of life, oblivion.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

D.H. Lawrence is one of the significant poets who has experimented with the language and technique for the poetic expression. Lawrence is a man of powerful feelings who has exhibited creative and intense imaginative power in his *Rhyming poems*, *Unrhyming Poems*, and *Last Poems*. Lawrence delineates the renewal of his life through the power of his artistic imagination.. Mathew Arnold in his essay "The Study of Poetry" argues that "For poetry the idea is everything; the rest is a world of illusion, of divine illusion. Poetry attaches its emotion to the idea; the idea is the fact. The strongest part of our religion today is

unconscious poetry” (161). Lawrence conveys his feelings and emotions through his poetry. With his soul, he must search for the sources of the power of life. It is life we want. I know that where there is life, there is essential beauty” (*Return to Bestwood*, 23).

Lawrence’s *Last Poems* explores his depression wrought by his debilitating tuberculosis and is an attempt to overcome his grief. Lawrence understands that his illness has increased and realizes that he has to face death. Lawrence starts to think of immortal life and yearns for immortality through his power of imagination. In order to enunciate his idea, the poet employs various poetic tools. Thus poems are a relieving process taking the depressed person out of the grief. Suffering in his life, encourages Lawrence to write his *Last Poems* which are replete with images of death, darkness, and depression. Lawrence’s hope of immortal life and his yearnings for immortality is explored by his poetic devices throughout the poems. In his *A jungle of Depression*, Majeed Massara says that the depressed mind finds a new way to communicate and connect with humans. Hence his *Last Poems* are replete with images of death, darkness, and depression. (73)

Lawrence enhances his vision of the renewal of his life after death through the beautiful usage of images. He knows that it is very necessary to use the images to explore his unconscious. Hence in his *Last Poems*, he beautifully mirrors the images in order to exhibit his ideas. Imagery is ‘images taken collectively’ (Abrams 121). An image “is a picture made out of words and a poem may itself be an image composed from multiplicity of images (121). “ Imagery is used to signify all the objects and qualities of sense perception referred to in a poem or other work of literature” (121). In recent usage: “Imagery signifies figurative language, especially the vehicles of metaphors and similes” (121).

In the poem “The Bodiless God”, the speaker expresses: “Everything that has beauty has a body, is a body (1). Lawrence in his poem “Rainbow” expresses that: “Even the rainbow has a body / made of the drizzling rain” (1-2). Here the poet mirrors rainbow as the image of beauty. He realizes that his health is too weak and soon he will not have body. But he argues that since God does not have body, still God is there, therefore, the poet hopes that he will exist after death. Later in the poem “Maximus”, he feels the presence of God. He describes the image of God as an old man thus: “God is older than the sun and moon / and the eye cannot behold him / nor voice describe him” (“Bodiless God” 1-3). He believes in the renewal of life by expressing the image of death which paves way for life. The Man Who Died”, one of the last prose works of D. H. Lawrence, mirrors death as a renewal, a way to a new life of freedom.

In the poem “Bavarian Gentians”, Lawrence portrays the reminiscences of the sad days at the end of the September. This poem gives much more magnificence to the poem with the description of a Bavarian Gentian, a blue flower which stands as a torch that provides revitalizing power to the poet. Hence the poet brings the rich imagery of darkness and colour blue to depict the gloom:

Bavarian gentians, big and dark, only dark  
darkening the daytime, torch- like, with the smoking blueness of  
Pluto’s gloom,  
ribbed and torch- like, with their blaze of darkness spread blue  
down flattening into points, flattened under the sweep of white day  
torch- flower of the blue-smoking darkness, Pluto’s dark- blue daze,  
black lamps from the halls of Dis, burning dark blue,  
giving off darkness, blue darkness, as Demeter’s pale lamps give

off light.” (“Bavarian Gentians” 3-11)

Here the poet repeats the image of darkness and blue color which enables the reader to see and feel the darkness through the blue colour of the flower. The gloom of the underworld is inherent in the poem. Gentian is a blue flower which he calls as the torch of Pluto. The images like “blaze of darkness”, “black lamp”, ‘images of light heightens the sense of darkness. Imagery of darkness is explored throughout the poem which has tried to evoke the fear and the pain of the death. Lawrence has also thought of giving the title “Glory of darkness” for this poem.

In the poem “Silence”, Lawrence visualizes his journey to the death. Here Lawrence depicts the imagery of a triumphant journey which ends in gaining entry into the gates of the other world:

now we are passing through the gate, stilly,  
in the sacred silence of gates  
in the silence of passing through doors,  
in the great hush of going from this into that,  
in the suspension of wholeness, in the moment  
of division within the whole. (“Silence” 27-31).

The poet wishes to pass through the gates of silence: “Lift up your heads, O ye Gates! / for the silence of the last great thunderous laugh / screens us purely, we can slip through” (“Silence” 30-32).

In the poem “Abysmal Immortality”, Lawrence depicts the image of God as a mother who cradles the child that is, God who continues to “cradle” humans “even through the great blasphemies” (4). There is also an image of petulant children trying to free themselves of their parent’s authority. The image of falling from god’s protective hands expresses a sense of fear inside the poet who is thinking deeply about death and what follows after. The poet expresses his sadness and fear towards those who fall away from God’s protection and plunge into what he calls as “abysmal immortality”. In order to show his fear and sadness, he brings out the image of ‘abyss’ and says ‘abyss is bottomless.’ The poet shows the image of a soul falling into abyss as ‘plunging’, ‘sinking’, ‘seething’, sinking in the endless ‘bottomless’, in the poem “The Hands of God”. The poem also enunciates his fear that he has failed to unite with God before death. He portrays the image of God as a judge who pronounces judgment: “It is fearful thing to fall into the hands of God” (1). Lawrence uses the image of oppression and restraint in the poem “Lucifer”:

But tell me, tell me, how you know  
he lost any of his brightness in the falling?  
in the dark-blue depths, under layers and layers of darkness,  
I see him more like the ruby in the invisible dark, glowing  
with his own annunciation, towards us. (2-8)

Lawrence describes Lucifer’s presence like a ruby in the invisible dark although people condemn Lucifer to have lost brightness in his fall. Here the poet highlights the oppressive nature of religion. Lawrence was criticized by the church for some of his views. His image was tainted in the same way Lucifer is looked down by the believers.

Most of the poems in the *Last Poems* express the idea of death especially, the poem “The Ship of Death”. It attempts to explore Lawrence’s artistic creativity of Lawrence and his attitude towards death and dying. This poem is divided into ten songs and is the ultimate song of the death. Lawrence relates his own weak health to the image of autumn season. It indicates the poet’s declining period. It marks the end of the growing season and the onset of

the winter season. He hopes that death will provide a peaceful life and he imagines his death, oblivion, and a new life.

In the poem “The End, The beginning”, Lawrence depicts the image of death and the peace it gives through forgetfulness. Through death the soul has inward and lovely peace. Here he uses imagery of despair as an attempt to reconcile with the death:

and if there were not an absolute, utter forgetting  
and is a ceasing to know, a perfect ceasing to know  
and a silent, sheer cessation of all awareness  
how terrible the life would be!  
how terrible it would be think and know, to have  
consciousness! (5-10)

Lawrence feels that his life will be terrible without the gift of forgetfulness or silence, ‘sheer cessation of all awareness’.

In the poem “Phoenix”, Lawrence enunciates the image of rebirth. He finds himself with the mythical creature Phoenix, which is burns itself and changes from the old to new also like the eagle.’ Only when a phoenix is burnt out and made into nothing will it get renewed. Lawrence asserts that unless a person is dipped into oblivion, erased out through death there cannot be a renewal. It is like a refining furnace. After this small trial the frail soul is renewed into a new being and immortal too. Lawrence seems to allude to Psalm 103.5 which says: “. . . thy youth is renewed like the eagle’s” (*King James Version*).

Lawrence employs the symbols in order to enrich the themes of life after death, his acceptance of death, his renewal of life in his *Last Poems*. The word ‘symbol’ is derived from the verb ‘symballein’ which means ‘to put together’. The poet indulges in symbols to understand the unconscious and delves into the mystery of the mind. Symbolism conveys the personal feelings of the poet through words and images, brings additional meaning.

A symbol is anything which signifies something; in this sense all words are symbols. In discussing literature, however, the term ‘symbol’ is applied only to a word or phrase that signifies an object or event which in turn signifies something, or has a range of reference, beyond itself. (Abrams 311)

D.H. Lawrence evolves symbols which symbolizes human feelings and experiences and with the power of symbol arises his intense emotional self. In the poem “The Greeks are Coming”, Lawrence finds his confidence in a renewal of life to come: “ Little islands out at sea, on the horizon, / keep suddenly showing a whiteness, a flash and a furl, a hail / of something coming, ships a-sail from over the rim of the sea”(1-3). Here the sea symbolizes the eternal, the other world and explains the last journey as a sea voyage.

In the poem “Bavarian Gentians”, Lawrence draws his journey to other world. This poem gives much more meaning to the poem with the description of a Bavarian Gentian. It is a blue flower and is one of the symbols mentioned in the poem. Here Lawrence relates the flower with Persephone myth. Persephone, a daughter of Zeus and Demeter was seized by Pluto king of Hades. Persephone carries the torch like flower into the underground to her way to Pluto’s chamber. During his journey to death, Lawrence also wishes this flower will guide him to the darkness and conquers the fear of death. The poet introduces the flower as: “Bavarian Gentians, big and dark, only dark / darkening the day - time, torch like with the smoking blueness of Pluto’s gloom/ ribbed and torch-like, with their blaze of darkness spread blue” (3-6). Pluto represents the journey into the dark and unknown realm of death and it becomes symbolic in the line “lead me then, lead the way. The Gentians symbolize the other world:

Reach me a gentian, give me a torch!

let me guide myself with the blue, forked torch of this flower  
down the darker and darker stairs, where blue is darkened on blueness  
even where Persephone goes, just now, from the frosted September  
to the sightless realm where darkness is awake upon the dark. (13-17)

Here the unknown world is described as darkness and like a torch of Pluto, Gentian flower glows with darkness. Gentians also stand for life in the midst of death and darkness, for the poet it is not terrible but divine. Darkness also symbolizes the great sadness of the speaker.

In the poem “The Ship of Death”, Lawrence wants his soul to exit from his body and hopes to carry the soul to the oblivion. For that, Lawrence uses the symbol of ship that he has taken from the paintings on the wall at the Etruscans. It is their tradition of placing the ship of death in their tombs for the soul’s journey to the unknown world. The ship stands for the ship of courage. Lawrence realizes that the ship of death will provide him a safe journey to the oblivion. Oblivion is consolation which will end the pain of the body and allows the soul to reach the everlasting life. It will be a renewal, rebirth for the soul. The symbol “the ship of death” is repeated in the poem and reminds us to build the ship of death: “Oh build the ship of death. Oh build it! / for the voyage of oblivion awaits you” (103-105).

Lawrence creates his artistic creation by employing different kinds of symbols and which are inherent in the *Last Poems*. Through evolving symbols, Lawrence becomes unique, he starts his journey to death with a flower, gentian in order to gain a peaceful life. Later the poet draws the symbol of phoenix in the poem “Phoenix”, phoenix symbolizes regeneration, creativity. According to Lawrence, we are beginning and the end, created and nourished in the darkness of the God and Creator, understanding ‘infinite light of unblemished being’ (qtd.in Sinha71). The mortal man seeks the darkness to become the everlasting light and that eternity will be forever.

D.H. Lawrence evinces allegory in his poems “The Ship of Death” and “Bavarian Gentians”. “Allegory is a narrative, whether in prose or verse in which the agents and actions, and sometimes the setting as well, are contrived by the author to make coherent sense on the literal or primary level of signification.” Allegory represents the real life issues and incidents through images, metaphors and symbols whose vehicle may be character, place or event. The poem “The Ship of Death” expounds the theme of life after death and the poet procures the inspiration from the image of ship which has been taken from the paintings on the wall at the Etruscans, who place the ship of death in their tombs for the soul’s journey to the unknown world. The poet’s visit to Etruscan tombs has inspired him to write this poem. The poem originates from the Etruscan’s customs of putting a small bronze in the burial chamber of the Etruscan prince. The idea of filling the ship with: “with its store of food and little cooking pans / and change of clothes” (“The Ship of Death” 59-60) is also derived from the Etruscans. For Lawrence, allegory is an important technique which can convey his poetic vision and the ideas through symbols. The ship of death symbolizes the grand death like Etruscan kings. It represents the preparation of the person for death, the real stormy experience of death and then the peace of the soul which enters into a new life. In this poem Lawrence uses the Shakespearean term “quietus” in order to highlight his need of spiritual peace for the longest journey. Lawrence brings an allusion to the Hamlet’s soliloquy ‘to be or not to be’. Lawrence reflects on death like Hamlet contemplating death: “And can a man his own quietus make / with a bare bodkin? (“The Ship of Death” 16-17).

“Bavarian Gentians” portrays Lawrence’s reminiscence of the sad days at the end of September. The poet has some Bavarian gentians, a bright blue flower which grows in his

house in September. This flower inspires him to write this poem and turns to a prayer in which he asks the flower to lead him as a torch into the dark underworld. The poem begins with "Not every man has gentians in his house/ in Soft September, at slow, sad Michaelmas."(1-2). Here the poet brings out the reference to Michaelmas, the feast day of Archangel Michael, who sits at the gates of Heaven and invites souls. This poem gives much more meaning to the poem with the description of the flower, Bavarian gentian. It represents something or someone who could lead him safe to the other world.

Lawrence relates the gentian flower with Persephone myth that has drawn from the Greek Mythology. According to him, a myth narrates one's experiences, inner emotions of mind, and discovers the depths of unconsciousness. M.H. Abrams in his *A Glossary of Literary Terms* says that:

In classical Greek, "mythos" signified any story or plot, whether true or

Invented. In its central modern significance, however, a myth is one story in a mythology—a system of hereditary stories of ancient origin which were once believed to be true by a particular cultural group. (170)

Lawrence's Persephone myth reflects his mind and discovers the deep unconsciousness of the poet in the poem "Bavarian Gentians". Persephone, a daughter of Zeus and Demeter has been seized by Pluto king of Hades. Persephone carries the torch like flower into the underground to her way to Pluto's chamber. According to the Greek Mythology, Persephone, the queen of the underworld, daughter of Zeus and Demeter is lovely and is fascinated by many Gods. Pluto, the God of the underworld who lives among the shadow of the dead people sees Persephone and wishes to marry her. But her mother Demeter doesn't agree to marry her daughter to Pluto. One day, Persephone sees an enchanting flower in the garden and she stoops down to pluck the flower, suddenly earth beneath her feet opens and God Pluto comes with the black horses through that gap and descends her to the underworld with that enchanting flower. During his journey to death, Lawrence also wishes this flower will guide him to the darkness and conquers the fear of death. The poet introduces the flower as: "Bavarian Gentians, big and dark, only dark / darkening the day - time, torch like with the smoking blueness of Pluto's gloom/ ribbed and torch-like, with their blaze of darkness spread blue" (3-6). The Gentians represents the other world:

Reach me a gentian, give me a torch!

Let me guide myself with the blue, forked torch of this flower

Down the darker and darker stairs, where blue is darkened on blueness

Even where Persephone goes, just now, from the frosted September

To the sightless realm where darkness is awake upon the dark. (13-17)

Here the unknown world is described as darkness and like a torch of Pluto, Gentian flower glows with darkness. Gentians also stand for life in the midst of death and darkness, for the poet it is not terrible but divine. Here the poet explores his journey to death and there he wants a light for a new life. Here the flower acts as a symbol of life. In the poems "The Greeks Are Coming" and "Argonaut", Lawrence evokes his faith through his vision of death and identifies his renewal through Argonauts and Cnossos. In Greek Mythology they believe that the soul of the dead person has to ferry across the sea: "a hail of something coming, ships a- sail from over the rim of the sea" ("The Greeks are Coming" 3). Here he pictures his last journey to the other side of life through the use of myth. In the poem "Phoenix", Lawrence brings out his own thoughts about his self:

Are you willing to be sponged out, erased, cancelled,  
made nothing?

Are you willing to be made nothing? (1-3)

In order to change, Lawrence prepares himself for death, for a renewal. Phoenix is a bird that renews itself by burning into ashes and later, reborn as a new bird:

The phoenix renews her youth  
Only when she is burnt, burnt alive, burnt down  
to hot and flocculent ash.  
Then the small stirring of a new small bub in the nest  
With strands of down like floating ash  
Shows that she is renewing her youth like the eagle,  
Immortal bird. ("Phoenix" 6-12)

Lawrence finds himself with the mythical creature which is changing from the old to new". Lawrence also feels a relief from all pains of life. The frail soul now feels strong and is filled with peace. In Greek Mythology, Phoenix is a bird that can live for a long time, it can be reborn from the ashes of its predecessor. Phoenix is the symbol of rebirth. The bird can resurrect, that is, rebirth from its own death stands for immortality and regeneration. Through the mythical bird phoenix, Lawrence tries to explore his desire for everlasting life through death.

Lawrence depicts common metaphors such as silence, shadow, sleep, darkness to express his hope of life after death. A metaphor is a word or expression in which one kind of a thing is applied to the different kind of thing. In the poem "Silence", Lawrence treats the word 'silence' as a metaphor for death and greets silence: "Come, holy silence! reach, reach/ from the presence of God, and envelope us ("Silence" 3-4) and greets the silence as: "great bride of all creation" (2). The poet is trying to experience the silence in order to rescue him from awful reality. Death is a kind of silence and Lawrence hopes that silence will take away his sadness. Lawrence depicts death as his holy bride and he invites her into his life in order to overcome his emotions and agony: "Come, great bride of all creation" (2). He wants a peaceful life, but his sickness and mortal life encourages him to think of another life which provides him an everlasting life. Silence is a holy silence and endless and living silence which envelopes the poet to that lovely silence.

Lawrence considers sleep as the metaphor for death in which there is "hint of lovely oblivion". In the poem "Sleep", Lawrence considers sleep as the metaphor of death and expresses as:

Sleep is the shadow of death, but not only that,  
Sleep is a hint of lovely oblivion.  
When I am gone, completely lapsed and gone

and healed from all this ache of being. (1-4)

Lawrence believes that the sleep will help to relieve all his painful experiences. Lawrence compares sleep to 'the shadow of death' and 'lovely oblivion' in order to explain his positive attitude towards death.

In his poem "Sleep and Waking", Lawrence uses the same metaphor. He calls death as 'deep oblivion' and 'dreamless sleep' which emphasizes that death is a form of sleep which will take him to 'the deep oblivion,' the fresh world. He expresses that the sleep is the loveliest thing in the world and the dreamless sleep will lead him to the fresh unknown world: "And nothing in the world is lovelier than sleep, / dark dreamless sleep, in deep oblivion" ("Sleep and Waking" 3-4).

Lawrence uses 'breath of life' as a metaphor for human harmony with God in his poem "The Breath of Life". In the poem "Bavarian Gentians", Lawrence evokes his vision of renewal of life through death with the two major metaphors, that is, the myth of Persephone

and the flow of darkness. The poem "The Ship of Death" begins with the metaphor for the dying body as the fruit breaking with ripeness:

Now it is autumn and the falling fruit  
and the long journey towards oblivion  
the apples falling like great drops of dew  
to bruise themselves an exit from themselves. (1-4)

Lawrence wants his soul to exit from his body and hopes to carry the soul to the oblivion.

'The Ship of death' is the metaphor used by the poet in order to disclose his acceptance and preparation for death. Lawrence exhorts to build the ship of death: "Build then the ship of death, for you must take / the longest journey, to oblivion" (28-29). Lawrence portrays his preparation for the death by using the metaphor 'the ship of death.' Again he expresses his preparation for death: "A little ship, with oars and food / and little dishes, and all accoutrements / fitting and ready for the departing soul" (50-52).

Simile is a figure of speech which compares two different things in order to bring out the poet's description vivid and powerful. Simile is different from the metaphor as simile uses the words 'like' or 'as' to bring out a comparison. Lawrence's use of simile in his *Last Poems* has helped him to enhance his musings on death and after life.

In the poem "The Greeks are Coming", Lawrence compares the ocean liner into the small beetle walking the edge: His imagination is about ships because in Greek mythology the soul of the dead person is carried across the waters. Lawrence in the poem "Argonauts" likens the sun setting a lion licking its paw. The moon's appearance is described as the queen looking down on her people. In the poem "Bavarian Gentians", Lawrence depicts the gentian blue flower as a torch to guide him to the underworld. In the poem "Lucifer", he describes that though Lucifer has not any of his brightness by falling down from heaven's glory, still Lawrence seems to visualize Lucifer shining like a ruby in the dark blue depths of the underworld. In the poem "Pax", Lawrence wishes to develop intimacy with God and dwell in the house of God in the peaceful manner. To highlight this thought he brings out the cat which lies peacefully in the house of its master without any fear or worry. To quote: "Like a cat asleep on a chair / at peace, in peace / and at one with the master of the house, with the mistress" (3-5)). In the poem "Kissing and Horrid Strife", Lawrence while talking about the bliss of life he describes the sun kissing the sea and playing with the wavelets. This he compares to the panther playing with its cubs without harming them. Then while talking about a dying person's life of dreadfulness, bereft of beauty and health he compares them to tall foxgloves, mulleins and mallows which are destroyed in the autumn season. In the poem "The Ship of Death", Lawrence exhibits his suffering which may lead to death through the simile of apple falling and bruising on the ground like a "great drops of dew" (3). Again the poet brings out that "death is on the air like a smell of ashes!" (12).

Lawrence in the poem "The Houseless Dead" describes the people who have been denied their life as "outcast dogs". In the poem "Shadows", Lawrence compares his death and new awakening to "wake like a new- opened flower", that is, he compares death to sleep and a renewal to newly bloomed flower. Finally Lawrence compares him to an eagle which can rejuvenate its youth.

The Repetition of the words and phrases create an artistic effect to the poem. It helps the readers to understand the poet's thoughts and feelings. Repetition is a poetic device used by the poet which captures the fear, conflict and depression in the mind of the dying poet. This poetic device is used in different ways, sometimes a word is repeated, a phrase is repeated, a single line is repeated throughout the poem, and sometimes many lines are repeated.

Anaphora is a literary device in which the repetition of initial words in the poem. words are repeated in inverse order. Epanadiplosis is a repetition of the same initial and final words in a phrase or clause. Epanalepsis is general repetition of words, but not specifically at the beginning or end of language units and Epizeuxis is the immediate repetition of adjacent words. Polyptoton is the repetition of words with the same root. There are different types of sound repetitions which picture the emotions and feelings of the poet. The repetition of initial sounds is called Alliteration. Assonance is the repetition of vowel sounds in the poem. The repetition of consonant sound is called Consonance. Refrain is a type of repetition of a phrase, line or group of lines repeated throughout the poem which provides a song structure to the poem. All the above kinds of repetitions have been employed by the poet in large numbers.

In the poem “The Greeks are Coming”, Lawrence uses the literary device Epizeuxis ‘it is ships, it is ships, it is ships of Cnossos coming’ the immediate repetition of adjacent words. This repetition underscores the urgency of the situation. In the poem, “Argonauts”, Lawrence refuses to accept the death of ancient heroes by saying “They are not dead, they are not dead.” Here the poet uses the device Epizeuxis in order to instil confidence in himself that he too may not die and be gone. In the poem “Rainbow”, Lawrence repeats ‘built up, built up’ which signals the alert (4). In the poem “Abysmal Immortality”, Lawrence’s repetition of “long, long fall” (10) enhances his fear of falling from the hands of God. In the poem “Mana of the Sea”, the poet expresses: “I am the Sea, I am the sea.” The poet’s use of the device Epizeuxis identifies himself to the sea which is immortal. Likewise, he repeats ‘sea-power, sea-power’ to stimulate his vision of immortal life. In the poem “The Ship of Death”, Lawrence repeats “We are dying”, “We are dying’ in order to explore his failing health and exhorts to build the ship of death to start to longest journey. Likewise in the poem “The Difficult Death”, he repeats ‘dying, dying’ to highlight that death will not come according to our wish.

Polyptoton is the repetition of words with the same root. In the poem “Bavarian Gentians”, Lawrence uses the word ‘dark’ and ‘darkness’, ‘flattening’ and ‘flattened’ in order to explore his musings of death. The poet’s use of ‘bottom’ and ‘bottomless’ describes the underworld or abyss. In the poem Mana of the sea, Lawrence uses the words ‘roll’ and ‘rollers.’ In the poem he repeats ‘dark’ and ‘darkness’:

Bavarian gentians, big and dark, only dark  
darkening the daytime, torch- like, with the smoking blueness of  
 Pluto’s gloom,  
 ribbed and torch- like, with their blaze of darkness spread blue  
 down flattening into points, flattened under the sweep of white day.  
 In “Silence” he describes the laugh of God thus:

Huge, huge roll the peals of the thunderous laugh  
 huge, huger, huger and huger pealing. (13-14)

In the poem “The Ship of Death” Lawrence expresses that in order to start a journey, he needs a spiritual peace:

And can a man his own quietus make  
 with a bare bodkin?  
 With daggers, bodkins, bullets, man can make  
 a bruise or break of exit for his life:  
 but is that a quietus, O tell me, is it quietus?  
 Surely not so! for how could murder, even self murder  
 Ever a quietus make?

“O let us talk of quiet that we know  
that we can know, the deep and lovely quiet  
of a strong heart at peace!

How can we this, our quietus, make? (17-27)

Lawrence’s repetition of the word ‘quiet’ and ‘quietus’ brings out the poet’s yearning for the quiet life.

The poet’s use of Epanalepsis in repetition of ‘the hands of the living God’ stimulates the poet’s feeling of the presence of God in the poem “The Hands of God”. Lawrence’s general repetition of the words ‘dark’, ‘blue’ and ‘dark- blue’ in the poem Bavarian Gentians reflects his own coming death:

Bavarian gentians, big and dark, only dark  
darkening the daytime, torch- like, with the smoking blueness of  
Pluto’s gloom,  
ribbed and torch- like, with their blaze of darkness spread blue  
down flattening into points, flattened under the sweep of white day  
torch- flower of the blue-smoking darkness, Pluto’s dark- blue daze,  
black lamps from the halls of Dis, burning dark blue,  
giving off darkness, blue darkness, as Demeter’s pale lamps give  
off light.” (“Bavarian Gentians” 3-11)

Here the poet repeats the image of darkness and blue color which enables the reader to see and feel the darkness blue of the flower that is inherent in the poem. Gentian is a blue flower with darkness, like a torch of Pluto which heightens the sense of darkness which has tried to evoke the fear and the pain of the death. The poet’s use of alliteration “down the darker and darker stairs” describes his seriousness of his illness and originates a great pain and fear in his mind.

The poem “Breath of Life” conveys Lawrence’s expresses his philosophy of creation. This poem addresses the poet’s sadness and the poem is a reprieve from his emotions as his death is near. The poet’s use of assonance in the poem, ‘breathe deep’ and ‘see nothing’ is to remind us the soul’s connection with the cosmos.

Lawrence depicts his desire to leave with silence in his poem “Silence”. The poet visualizes his journey with the silence, that is, Silence symbolizes the death, death is a kind of silence and Lawrence hopes that silence will take away his sadness. The repetition of ‘Come, holy Silence’ emphasizes that Lawrence is deeply depressed. Though the speaker wishes silence to come and take him, we can see, he opposes the silence and defies it through the anaphora,

Lo! the laugh of God!  
Lo! the laugh of the creator!  
Lo! the last of the seven great laughs of God!  
Lo! The last of the seven great laughs of creation! (9-12)

Again in the poem “Abysmal Immortality”, Lawrence describes in an anaphora the deep fall of a godless person into the abyss thus: “which he can never reach till he touch the bottom of abyss / which he can never touch, for the abyss is bottomless” (12-13).

Homoeteleutons are repetition of final consonant sounds which are evident in the following lines

Huge, huge roll the peals of the thunderous laugh  
huge, huger, huger and huger pealing  
till they mount and fill and all is fulfilled of god’s last and  
greatest laugh (Silence, 13-16)

Lawrence depicts his desire to leave with silence. The poet visualizes his journey with the silence and emphasizes the laugh of God by the use of the word 'huge.' The repetition of the consonant sound again reminds us of the 'laugh' of God. The laugh of God gives a positive energy to him and has created an impact on him.

Lawrence in the poem "The Hands of God" enunciates his fear that he has failed to unite with God before death. He expresses: "It is fearful thing to fall into the hands of God. / But it is a much more fearful thing to fall out of them" (1-2). Lawrence's use of repetition and alliteration to emphasize the inevitable fall one has to experience when he is out of the hands of the living God. The repetition of the word 'falling' mentions the fear of the poet to fall out of the hands of the God. The repetition of 'Let me never know' also brings the poet's fear of falling out of the hands of the living God. The alliteration in the line 'sickening endless sinking, sinking' is sibilant which is a specific type of alliteration which relies on the repetition of soft consonant sounds in words.

andsinks, seething and sinking, corrupt  
andsinking still, in depth after depths of disintegrative knowledge  
Consciousness,  
sinking in the endless undoing, the awful katabolism into the  
abyss! (13-17)

Here the poet brings out the seriousness of the falling and his prayer against falling out of the hands of the living God with the effect of sibilance.

The poem "Kissing and Horrid Strife" is a poem of despair which explores sadness in the beginning of the poem with the alliteration: "I have been defeated and dragged down by the pain." But the poet mentions that the "life is for delight and for bliss" in the next two stanzas. Again in the fourth stanza, we can see the repetition of the sounds in order to create an atmosphere of death:

And life is for dread,  
For doom that darkens, and the Sunderers  
The sunder from each other,  
That strip us and destroy us break us down  
.....  
Are torn down by dismembering autumn. (14-17,19)

Lawrence use of the alliteration and consonance creates a new language to express his grief. The final stanza starts with "Life is for kissing and for horrid strife", the poet is expressing sadness by representing it in the sound. This poem provides message through the repetition of words and sounds.

In the poem "Song of Death", the poet expresses his approach to death and after death through the refrain "Sing the song of death, O sing it." The soul gains a peaceful life through oblivion. The line 'fold after fold of deepening darkness' / for the cosmos even in death is like a dark whorled shell (6-7), reveals the mystery of death, through the consonance which creates an artistic effect. In the poem "The End, The Beginning", Lawrence's repetition of words tries to strengthen his vision of death and a peaceful life after death. The repetition of "Ceasing to know, a perfect ceasing to know" conveys the poet's vision of forgetting all his pains and sufferings, feel unconsciousness during his journey to death and after that enter into a "lovely peace"(16). The poet once again uses the consonance: "But dipped, once dipped in dark oblivion" (15).

The poem "Sleep" conveys the message with the anaphora which is the repetition of first word or phrase in each line of the poem. Here the word 'sleep' is repeated: "Sleep is the shadow of death, but not only that. / Sleep is hint of lovely oblivion (1-2). The poem "Sleep

and Waking” he once again talks of the sleep, “dark, dreamless sleep in the deep oblivion”, with the alliteration. Again in the poem “Fatigue”, the poet repeats the consonant ‘h’ sound: “My soul has had a long hard day” (10), in order to bring out his failing health and tiredness due to sickness.

In the beginning of the poem “Shadows”, we can see Lawrence’s use of stylistic device, sibilance to bring out the poet’s feeling of the presence of god in his sleep with ‘s’ hissing sound: “ And if tonight my soul may find her sleep, and sink in good oblivion” (Shadows, 1-2). The second stanza describes the poet’s thought of death and that follows after: “ And if, as weeks go round, in the dark of the moon / my spirit darkness and goes out, and soft strange gloom / pervades my movements and my thoughts and words,” (5-6). The assonance of ‘moon’, ‘gloom’ and ‘move’ indicates his deep thinking of death and the idea of death disturbs him very much. The poet’s thought of death shows his despair not only through words and thoughts, but also through his movements. In his despair he says:

And if, as autumn deepens and darkens  
I feel the pain of falling leaves and stems that break in storms  
and trouble and dissolution and distress

.....  
.....  
then I shall know that my life is moving still  
with the dark earth, and drenched  
with the deep oblivion of earth’s lapse and renewal.

(“Shadows” 10-12, 17-19)

Lawrence’s repetition of consonance reveals his desperation and creates an artistic beauty and structure to the poem.

Lawrence says that the death is a form of sleep in which there is “hint of oblivion” in the poem “Sleep”, Lawrence considers sleep as the reflection of death and expresses as: “Sleep is the shadow of death, but not only that, / Sleep is a hint of lovely oblivion” (1-2). The poet believes that the sleep will help to relieve all his painful experiences. Lawrence in his poem Sleep and Waking emphasizes that death is a form of sleep which will take him to ‘the lovely oblivion,’ the fresh world. He expresses that the sleep is the loveliest thing in the world and the dreamless sleep will lead him to the fresh unknown world:

In sleep I am not, I am gone,  
I am given up.  
And nothing in the world is lovelier than sleep,  
Dark, dreamless sleep, in deep oblivion. (Sleep and Walking, 1-7)

The poem “Forget” reminds the reader that the concept of renewal is possible only through death:

To be able to forget is to be able to yield  
To God who dwells in deep oblivion.  
Only in sheer oblivion are we with God

According to Lawrence, ‘God dwells in sheer oblivion’ (3), that is, we are with God only in sheer oblivion. A person who enables himself to forget is surrendering to God. After a long journey, the soul seeks for oblivion, because oblivion arranges a meeting place for soul and God. Lawrence wants his soul to exit from his body and hopes to carry the soul to the oblivion. The poet thinks that temple will be the oblivion, a right place to have communion with God. Lawrence describes the temple as:

silence and forgetting,  
where we may cease from knowing, and, as far as we know,

may cease from being  
in the sweet wholeness of oblivion. ("Temples" 2-5)

Oblivion is the identification of the renewal of life; an essential part of the divine: "For the soul has a long, long journey after death / to the sweet home of pure oblivion" ("All Soul's Day" 13-14). After having dipped into this dark oblivion, the soul can realize an inner peace: "But dipped, once dipped in dark oblivion/ the soul has peace, inward peace" ("The End, The Beginning" 15-16).

In the poem "The Ship of Death" Lawrence brings out the theme of vision of a soul in resurrection and the poem begins in an elegiac tone: "Now it is autumn and the falling fruit / and the journey towards the oblivion ("The Ship of Death" 1-2). The soul will release from the body for the journey towards death for a new life. Then the poet asks to build the ship of death for the longest journey to the oblivion. Lawrence asks to carry food, little cakes and wine for the journey as the dying is painful: "And die the death, long and painful death/ that lies between the old self and the new" (27-28).

Lawrence wants his soul to exit from his body and hopes to carry the soul to the oblivion. For that, Lawrence uses the image of ship, stands for the ship of courage which has taken from the paintings on the wall at the Etruscans, who has placed the ship of death in their tombs for the soul's journey to the unknown world. The poet refers to death as a journey to a 'dark oblivion. 'He expresses: "So build your ship of death, and let the soul drift / to dark oblivion ("Difficult Death", 8-11). Oblivion is consolation which will end the pain of the body and allows the soul to reach the everlasting life. It will be a renewal, rebirth for the soul

"Everything is gone, the body is gone  
Completely under, gone, entirely gone"  
The upper darkness is heavy as the lower,  
Between them the little ship.  
is gone.

It is the end, it is oblivion. ("The Ship of Death" 75-76)

Lawrence says: "I am in the hands of the unknown God, / he is breaking me down to his own oblivion / to send me forth on new morning, a new man. ("Shadows" 32-34)

Therefore, Lawrence's *Last Poems* records his hope of existence of the soul after death in order to attain a peaceful everlasting life with the artistic beauty of various images, symbols, metaphors, myths, and through the repetition of words, phrases and sounds. All these poetic devices create a structure and rhythm which indicates the poet's emotional state and brings out his depressed feelings through the artistic creation. Through the power of language, Lawrence attempts to visualize his vision of a new life, an immortal life. Finally by depicting the phoenix image, Lawrence expresses his desire to be like the phoenix bird and renew his youth like the eagle.

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