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Exploring Themes of Death in the Poetry of Clara Codd and Dorothy Codd: A Spiritual and Humanistic Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Recalling the poetry's theme of death, this research analyses how leading figures in the Theosophical Society- Clara Codd and Dorothy Codd- addressed it. Built on theosophical principles, Clara Codd interprets death as a calm return to ascended spiritual realms. In poems such as He Cometh, she uses the image of darkness turning into day to stand for the progress from soul-darkness. There, she emphasizes the re-birth cycle of life, and that our soul never dies from where we accept comfort from a spiritualist point of view, which takes death not as finishing but merely evolving to something more significant. Dorothy Codd takes your heart and soul below the surface of humanity in her collection Darker Matters to explore what it feels like when you are dying on a psychological and emotional level. In her works, such as "During A Vigil", she looks at the sadness, loss and continuity of life with deceased people. Dorothy approaches her account in death and the Compass with a certain pungency that assuredly will hit home for some, as she contemplates life on Earth after death; what does it mean to live once someone close suddenly leaves us? Key themes of Dorothy Codd and her death inquiry; influences upon Clara Dodd's portrayal of death due to Theosophical upbringing and how their views differ and intersect are some research issues that later surface. Clara leans on spiritual transcendence, while Dorothy favors emotional connectedness with intriguing juxtapositions that balance our understanding of death as a unique journey for each individual (one which adds new shades to what has become hackneyed in some respects). These poems explore death in all its guises and with an emotional complexity that makes them more profound than mere intellectual exercises.

Keywords: *Death, Theosophy, Mortality, Theosophical Society, Eternal Connection.*

Clara and Dorothy Codd, Longstanding members of the Theosophical Society founded in 1875 to learn about spiritual practices, divinity, and natural laws, capabilities within man or woman. Clara Codd (1876–1971), Theosophist and feminist A member of Theosophical Society from 1903, has written a lot on feminism. Clara - deeply devoted to the teachings of Theosophy and, subsequently, with amazing energy and enthusiasm for getting good ideas into circulation all

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over the planet, beginning in South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand; on then to India, among other countries -- was at once a more than worthy successor. Her writing has often stressed individual growth, introspection, and spiritual development of the self. Her belief in the immortality of the soul and that life goes on even after death, has also influenced her attitude towards poetry regarding death as she seems to see it as just another chapter since there is transcendence about it along with peace within. Codd's verses often conceptualize death as part of the natural cycle, not an end but a transformation or a leading to better things. We can hear the resounding sentiment in her careful, meditative style as she tries to offer solace and inspiration to those tormented by death. In her poetry the promise of life eternal ripples through, dousing fear of dying to bring peace and assurance.

In true Victorian style, Dorothy Codd, though less documented than Clara, edges into the realm of profound meditations on mortality with her poetry. In her reflective pieces, Dorothy sometimes delves into death personally and emotionally. So, she often brings it on a personal level - on the human experience of loss, grief, and remembrance. Dorothy conveys the agony of saying goodbye and the lasting influence of the deceased with striking images and moving words. Her poetry may explore the grieving process and the quest for purpose after death, emphasizing the ongoing bond between the living and the dead. She may also address spiritual topics, but her poetry is particularly relevant and profoundly touching since it focuses on coping with death's psychological and emotional aspects. Clara says:

> "Death means that the subtler, interpenetrating inner man or soul withdraws from the outer physical sheath, generally from the feet upwards. Death should never be feared, but welcomed, for it is the great liberator. Nature's kindly deliverer from the pains and trials of life. Like sleep, it brings peace and refreshment to the tired soul. Indeed, sleep and death have often been compared. "How wonderful is death," writes Shelley, "death and his brother sleep!" (C. M. Codd 128)

In the poem "To the God in My Heart," the author expresses his or her opinion on death in a way that appears to be reflective and even peaceful, with a strong connection to spirituality and the eternal. The statement that life is 'high above my soul as life in death' alludes to a respect for the transcendent aspect of life, in which death is seen as a higher form of life that exists outside of the soul's present comprehension or visibility.

The poem describes the divine as both 'strange' and 'not strange,' implying a connection that is both enigmatic and deeply ingrained in the poet's psyche. This refers to a familiarity and closeness with a supernatural presence. When seen through the prism of spiritual proximity and everlasting connection, this dichotomy highlights a comfort with the unknown aspects of death.

Phrases like 'I have lived so long, Eternities!' and the acknowledgement of a common age and experience with the divine being can evoke a deep feeling of timelessness, "Ah! I have lived so long, Eternities! Such long, long years surge in my memory, Such years and years of long-dead sweets." (C. a. Codd 1)

This perspective promotes the idea that life and death are ongoing cycles rather than a one-time train ride from birth to a singular human-death experience, with aspects of consciousness moving through many lifetimes or states beyond our agreed upon third-density human existence. Between references to 'channels of long-dead sweets' and seeming almost reminiscent 'and appetites more tender', the song repeats phrases promising love ('And loves, loves, loves') and positing an eternal continuity before its heavenly interdiction in pastoral terms torturously wrought: "Thou Lord & I / Life's living till we die and life remain". These sayings show the necessity of all experiences in life and death run. These elements are valued and, in their sectioning off of the poet's adventures into what appears to be pai chiang, his eternal journey beyond death is further retained, alluding once again to a fundamental bond between man and God without as well life policymakers. This regard for death is one of love and continuity, born from a deep faith in the endless spiritual journey that passes beyond our understanding. It is not one of dread.

In Clara Codd's poem He Cometh, however, this process is presented as a pathway or a change into a deep state of radiant, much like the night becomes shrouded in the day. The flaming heart signifies a change, with the splendid arms of the day standing in instead of the world behind death, glorified in the energy of disenchantment, while the black night symbolizes living and death. This painting has a reverse tint, as if the black night fades before the light of day.

> "Ah! burning heart, as dies the night
> Into the glorious arms of day,
> And hath no sorrow that her way
> Is lost amidst the abysmal light;" (C. a. Codd 21)

The line 'Into the glorious arms of day' skims a sense that dying is as accepting and warm, where it becomes present throughout life not to be dreaded. In the assertion that 'the night / Hath no sorrow,' we read a concept of freedom from human suffering and bondage, one if not identical then complimentary to an acceptance (even pleasure) in death. Furthermore, the portrayal is that of night being 'lost amongst abysmal light', implying an identity no longer just

its own but rather a part of vast and deep cosmic experience. According to this notion, death is not the end but a reuniting with some greater expansive truth of existence. Furthermore, "He Cometh" takes the preconceived notion of death as a sad or terminal time and inverts it - proposing an existence after life that is spiritual (light) freeing from physical restraints and becoming one with God. Instead, death is illustrated as a portal to an eternal light and peace. J. Krishanmurthy thinks about death, “I have been frightened of death because I have never inquired into it, found out what it means. So I have gone into it. Now my mind has inquired into the living and what it means to die. So it says both living and dying are the same.” (Krishnamurti)

Another poem which explores mourning, death “During A Vigil” by Sheridan student Clara Codd utilizes silence and shifts of time within a person's vigil over their sleeping loved one. The warm, life-affirming feet of the poem and its peaceful rhythm (one imagines the beat of breaths - in-out) commingle with that reminder about death. “So near I'd kneel, and yet as still as Death! So would my heart beat time with every breath You, sleeping, drew, and let The hours their flight forget.” (C. a. Codd 29)

But near I'd bend, as still as if 'twere death! refers to a close call but might also allude the temporality of life, with no assurance whatsoever when it comes. They are so close that the open display makes it seem more silent than ever, emphasizing a moment of great sadness and gravity. When the poet describes how the heart of ‘a lover’ sleeping next to him thumps time waltz-like with each breath it is an act of empathy, a connection that almost seems cyclical: birth and death. This profound personal insight highlights the ruinous impact of death on those left behind, as well as life and fatality walk a fine line.

The hours their flight forget - refers to the time-standing-still vigil when mortality makes all earthly and temporary worries cease. A magnificent halt of the present carries us out a world surface into recognition: Here, in timelessness at pace. Through intimacy, silence, and the sublime of mortality this issue is one that “During A Vigil” opens up on with a serenity we rarely feel in these general exchanges. It is the lament for our loved ones lost, an ode to life and death; this beautiful poem dares readers to consider briefly what margin of complexity a silent examination may reveal.

The concept of death, and the wish to not be alone after departing from this world. The speaker wants death to come sooner so that they may connect with their lover while eternally awake.

Death is portrayed as a redeemer who frees the soul to ascend from this mortal coil and gently peer down over her sleeping love. The speaker quite resonantly perceives the current imprisonment of his soul in the material world but, at this stage, where he comes up against death itself; there is no fear. The speaker is grateful that despite being enclosed, their lover could feel them thanks to an act of God or a twist of fate. Hence, death in these words has an air of congratulations that life is all over here, coupled with a longing to cross into something brighter.

The poem "Transcending" seamlessly weaves in with death the pursuit of love and spiritual transcendence. In this, the speaker poignantly speaks of love as something one can only truly understand through experiencing death (spiritual birthing), thus connecting spiritual learning to sorrow and eventual mortality. The speaker contends that you can only truly know Love through the wound in which life cuts with (the inevitably deadly) death cut and the grieving of all critters with it. In other words, death is not only the final destination but also a potentially immense spiritual growth and enlightenment. The wording 'garland heaven in all my tears' is compelling with much and intensity to great awe, sadness being such a transformational emotionalist path towards union of spirit. When the speaker wishes to shake off his physical and material existence and longs to unite with the divine substance, he appears somewhat optimistic about life after death.

The concept that the music of love is too great to be confined within the confines of this world is furthered by the allusion to a lute's shattered strings. It implies that pure love is a spiritual condition of unity with the divine, and that true love transcends the material world. As a result, the poem's topic of death is closely related to its examination of love and spiritual enlightenment, showing death as the soul's path towards divine union's conclusion as well as a doorway to a greater awareness.

In her poems, Dorothy Codd apprehends the trauma of loss and a brief on eternity persuasively whilst concurrently rather respectfully gives way to mortality. Usually, her poetry work centres on topics of longing or wanting for acceptance and meaning amid defeat; orchestrations that constitute a part of these experiences is being tempted by death. In this poem, with his intense imagery and forceful words Codd forces readers to contemplate the shortness of life (frailty) and inevitability of death. Whereas Clara Codd records death from an implicitly spiritual angle, her sister Dorothy tends to focus on the psychological or emotional dimensions of human being.

Her poetry uses a simpler, more immediate and relatable language to create an objectively tender perspective on death. Codd's poetry provides a poetic account of this ongoing bond between life and death, through sorrow and memory - it tells us how love is forever, even when loved ones have died.

This fear and loneliness in company with the great, mighty source of feeling into which our dread is plunged are touched on subtly in "The Forest" by Dorothy Codd. She goes from reflecting on the spookily benign beauty of the woods, to contemplating nature's mild yet pervasive telltales - and then she considers life as a continuum that includes death. One may write on the topic of death as it melds with the spirit of the forest, emulating Codd's research. The forest becomes a symbol for the life-death cycle because of its old trees and quiet depths. Our existence has an undercurrent of death, just as the forest is teeming with vitality.

"LONELY woods that clothe the hills,
What fellowship for man is here?
I stand unutterably lone,
For here prolific Nature spills
The wine of being-yet I fear
This life with death for undertone.

Majestic trees that faintly move,
And ferns of magic tracery,
And fatal-fingered clinging bloom,
What eerie forms your fabric wove?
I tremble in such company,
And wonder wavers into gloom." (C. a. Codd 56)

The imposing trees serve as witnesses to death's inevitable outcome with their whispered truths dating back thousands of years. Though their leaves may bloom and fade, their deeply ingrained roots constantly remind them of the cycle of regrowth and deterioration. In addition, Codd's description of the clinging blossoms and spooky shapes evokes the fleeting essence of life. Our lives are short, doomed to fade and wither with time, much like the delicate flowers and ferns that cover the forest floor. The poem's contemplation of the forest's solitude emphasizes how

serious death is. The forest's silence speaks volumes when there are no human sounds around, reminding us of the peace ahead.

In the end, the deep mystery of the forest and the eerie depths of its spirit reflect our own experiences with death. We struggle with death's inexplicable nature in the same way that Codd feels cut off from the mystery of the forest. We may never completely understand this mystery, but it ties us irrevocably to life's cycles and the forest's enduring embrace.

> "In the very last moments of life, when the body appears dead, everything you did, said, thought, and experienced in the life just ended will pass in perfect clarity before your inner vision. You will see the absolute justice and fairness of everything that happened to you in life and how everything proceeded exactly as it should have done, according to the unfailing law of cause and effect, action and reaction, known as Karma." (Blavatsky)

In "George VI," a poem by Dorothy Codd, the demise of a king is depicted with a subtle touch of death. The poem honours the passing of a monarchy and the putting down of emblems of authority, but it also marks the passage from this life to the next, forever. The symbolic act of setting down the orb, sceptre, and crown represents letting up of earthly power and accepting one's own mortality. The departing king uses death as a portal to enter the unknown realm of eternal, leaving behind the shackles of earthly dominion. In the face of death, the poem highlights how everyone is equal, regardless of position or class. The deceased monarch, no longer encircled by ostentation, state, or palaces, becomes simply a man, chosen by destiny to embark on the journey into eternity. This portrayal reflects the universality of death, which ultimately levels all distinctions and unites humanity in its shared mortality.

> "A nation's heartbeats measure his tread;
>
> A people's loving thoughts uphold
>
> As with wings of gold,
>
> Bear him, alive for ever, not dead,
>
> Into the Presence High." (C. a. Codd 73)

The poem's powerful last line, "alive for ever, not dead, / Into the Presence High," captures this idea. This claim of perpetual life casts doubt on the idea that death is final, implying that George VI has passed beyond this life and become a part of the divine. The journey is characterized by the metaphor of 'wings of gold' that conjures a sense of apotheosis, spiritual ascent This is how the poem proposes death as a transition to an exalted or transcendent life, instead of its end; lending credit both to immortality and eternal vicissitudes of soul. In short, the poem "George VI" suggests that death is a beneficial right and passage from life to new existence. It follows

the elevation of spirit into a godly presence, and all are served one level playing field in death for everyone, submitting to serve each other whilst its evocative imagery and reverent tone. It is comforting, and it even seems death in a soothing, positive light is more of an afterlife than life termination.

The images of drum silenced the appearance of drums. with voice stilled and rulers in retirement, make this seem like a solemn occasion The depiction of the dead king as a humble servant to humanity, who's each step is accounted for by the country's heartbeats shows that respect and dignity amidst all this solemnity. In the poem, we are told that a man may die but his soul will live in feelings and memories of affection. Here the dead monarch is not carried into eternity as a lifeless figure, but rather sheltered immortally within his or her overawing presence upon the back of their fellow citizens. While it reflects on how death is the sad part of life, this poem speaks to an everlasting quality and persistence from one world into another. By writing of the death of a king, he invokes eternal meditations on mortality and legacy, as well as the timeless human spirit. Dorothy Codd also addresses death through the lenses of loneliness and confusion in "Riley". With an exploration of the enigmatic journey we must each embark, it compares impermanence in life to certainty through death.

The poem opens with 'You have eternity in which to live - Or to be dead,' the first line that sets up a mood of exploring life and death as opposites. Being dead emphasizes the transience of human life, while eternity implies a perpetual existence beyond the bounds of mortality. The picture of the flower blooming and the big tree standing speaks to the cyclical aspect of life, in which new life begins to bloom even as old life fades. But the attention turns to a single character, a little child, who sets off on a trip down the "long, long road" of life. The ambiguity surrounding his destination – 'Which? Who knows?' highlights how enigmatic and ultimately unknown death is. At the poem's conclusion, 'Alone' emphasizes the sense of isolation that comes with venturing into the uncharted territories of death. Even while all living things are related, dying is ultimately a private event that each person must face alone.

Codd considers the important existential issues about mortality and the human existence in "Riley." The poem encourages reflection on the fleeting essence of existence, the mystery of what comes beyond, and the lonesome path that each human must travel. By doing this, it forces readers to face their own mortality and reflect on the purpose and importance of life in light of eternity.

In "Experience," a poem by Dorothy Codd, the issue of death is examined via the transformational potential of transcendence and spiritual insight. The poem describes a deep experience of being in touch with God that awakens the speaker's deepest self and results in a transcending sense of oneness and connection.

> "As it were an angel wand
> Touching my spirit,
> As I brooded on things
> Beyond my thoughts' imaginings,
> Something inward did respond
> In a sweet minute,
> Opening flowerlike to its ministerings." (C. a. Codd 76)

The idea of a heavenly touch "touching my spirit" alludes to a revelation or supernatural intervention that goes beyond the bounds of this world. The opening flower, which is meant to represent the speaker's inward reaction "to its ministerings," acts as a trigger for this spiritual experience. This visual evokes a feeling of spiritual awakening and openness to heavenly direction.

The 'silvering ember of pervasive dream' turning into 'a tongue of scented fire' represents the alchemical process leading to insight and spiritual cleansing. The encounter had a dreamlike character that implies a voyage beyond conventional awareness, when the boundaries between the God and the self-disappear.

> "The silvering ember of pervasive dream
> A tongue of scented fire became,
> A worldless groping taking the lovely frame
> Of moulded language-then did all seem
> Melted, blended, into something rare,
> And He, the True Dreamer of my heart, was there." (C. a. Codd 76)

The speaker feels oneness and union with the "True Dreamer" of their heart as their awareness grows and the line between the divine and the ego becomes hazier. This understanding of the divine's presence and relationship provides a glimpse of the limitless and the eternal, beyond the bounds of earthly life. Henry Scott Holland also speaks in the same tone:

> "Death is nothing at all.

I have only slipped away to the next room.

I am I and you are you.

Whatever we were to each other,

That, we still are.

Call me by my old familiar name.

Speak to me in the easy way

which you always used.

Put no difference into your tone.

Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow." (Holland)

Clara and Dorothy Codd also contributed to a richer understanding of death in poetry, although they do not write from the same perspective. The authenticity of Dorothy's words serves to personify death in a sober, human way that garners user sympathy - while Clara intimidates with spiritual philosophy and an existential response once the comfort has been given. Their work is an exhaustive exploration of one or our most potent and age-old experiences.

The poem proposes that true enlightenment might offer some solace, perhaps meaning in death. Through the transformational power of divine revelation, however, they are able to face and succumb these fears - with reassurances that divinity is a constant companion. All told, Experience: by Dorothy Codd has touched on the theme of death through a lens of transcendence and spiritual revelation, landed upon whatever depictions reside beyond that window or screen door described in Laura Mullen's "Particular Speech x," depicted what she imagines is profoundly potentiated contact with the divine which grants warmth, understanding -- some light amidst mortality

For the Codd couple, death is an opportunity to test different thoughts and feelings surrounding it using poetic form. Clara Codd finds a real connection to the continuation of life beyond it (the idea is deeply rooted in Theosophy ideology, which can be found on her website) and that through death we enter an afterlife due to its peaceful nature. There is a peace and acceptance in her poetry, erasing all the fears we have of dying for good, creating more spiritual rather than religious convictions that when we die, there was never any real death at all. At the same time, Dorothy Codd muses over the grief, sadness and darkness that are so very human in her reflective verse on death. Through her poignant storytelling, she offers comfort to all those who

have had the pain of separation visited upon them and offers a healing light on the eternal bonds that bind us with one another and even more importantly - between life and death.

Both writers handle death with the gravity it deserves, exploring its existential and spiritual significance. Clara's soul-searching and Dorothy introspective journey remind us of an experience that speaks to the very depths we have pertaining to this epitomized adventure by two individual artists: one high, one low; but between them completes a summary commonality shared among every person born. Clara and Dorothy Codd urge readers to confront death without fear, with courage evolving into empathy that comes from a place of knowing in life's eternal mysteries through their poetry. We are left with them, their poems glistening like raindrops upon a field of green and dying wheat - the long-term heritage for us decaying mortals that furthers our literature passageway in unravelling this death.

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