

# White as a Symbol of Death and Eternity in Darwish's and Lorca's Poetry: A Comparative Study

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**Abstract**—This article investigates the symbolism of white color in the works of the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish and the Spanish Federico Garcia Lorca. The white color is exceptionally employed in their poetry, which is different from its normal symbolism in Arabic and Spanish cultures. In their poetry, the white color is used to symbolize a duality of opposites, death as an end to mortal life and eternity as an infinity phase of afterlife. This paradoxical use of the white color cannot be grasped by readers without considering the poetic context. This color is employed by the two poets to reflect their psychology, feelings, and emotions toward death and eternity. The color white symbolizes death in all forms; the self-death as shown in Darwish's poem *Mural*, the death of the other as illustrated in *Lament for the Death of a Bullfighter* of Lorca, the divine death as in Lorca's *The Martyrdom of Saint Eulalia* and the instant death of humans as in *Remainder of a Life* of Darwish. In addition, the white color is used to symbolize eternity as an afterlife phase. The two poets have exploited the white color to express their interrogation about man's destiny after death being eternal or not.

**Index Terms**—Lorca, Darwish, white, death, eternity

## I. INTRODUCTION

Symbolism as a literary device is commonly used by poets to represent their ideas, emotions, and beliefs. It is normally used to support the overall theme of a poem evoking images of selected objects by poets. Symbolism is considered the soul in poetry in all languages, cultures, and ages. It is used by poets to enhance their expression and make more impact on their readers (Tiwari, 2001).

As justified by Dwivedi (1998, p. 22), symbolism is used by poets "instead of indulging in direct expression, the symbolists represent ideas and emotions by indirect suggestion". As symbolism conveys a hidden meaning to the reader or the listener of poetry, it can only be grasped by considering the whole context. Symbols differ from one poet to another, because they are employed depending on the poet's conscience, psychology, and his own life experience. Some poets use certain symbols very commonly and dominantly to reflect their own experience.

Color symbolism is very recurrent and dominant in poetry. Colors hold peculiar significance based on the cultures they are used in. Some cultures share the same symbolism of colors such Arabic and Spanish. In the two cultures the black color stands for mourning, death, sorrow and grief. In contrast, the white color stands for purity, virginity, and fertility. For example, the bride is dressed white in both cultures to reflect the above associations. The symbolization of colors is crucial in understanding cultures. McAuliffe (2015, p. 56) maintains that,

the associations that people have made with certain colours are certainly not set in concrete. Depending on the context, culture, or part of the world, the symbolism of a colour varies according to certain habits, traditions, and myths. Within a culture, colours may also symbolize different things in different contexts, and have been subject to change over the years.

The symbolizations of colors can be comprehended by reading the poetry of certain cultures. The meaning and the significance of colors differ from one context to another even in the same culture and this depends on the setting of text. Poetry is a suitable field where the significance of colors can be highlighted. Poets can resort to colors to draw images

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and relay emotions. They are used to convey poets own experience and the impression they have about certain issues. Using colors makes poetry more vibrant, unusual, and deep as they form a very important role in understanding poets' experimentation with abstract themes and ideas.

Lorca is influential in Arabic literature in general and Arabic poetry, in particular. According to Al-Tarawnih (2009), Mahmoud Darwish was influenced by Lorca, and this is noticed in the Lorquian images and elements that the Palestinian poet used such as blood, moon, gypsies, green color and olive tree. As an acknowledgment, Darwish has written a poem titled *Lorca* in his collection *Leaves of Olive* and mentioned him twice in the poem *I have a sky behind the sky*, where he is recalling the scene of the assassination of the Spanish poet.

The presence of Lorca in Darwish's poetry as an intertext poet is considered as an identical voice of Darwish. Darwish wrote many poems Andalusia, as a Spanish region which Lorca admires too much. The similarity between both poets is that they have lived in exile and exteremly suffered. Issa and Daragmeh (2018, pp. 28-29) are quoted as saying,

the similarity in the experience of these two prominent figures might be the reason for conjuring up the Lorca spirit- Lorca was jailed, oppressed, and murdered by nationalists during the Spanish civil war. Darwish adapts the reference to his own special condition; thus, he is not writing praise to Lorca's spirit, but wailing the waning of his own moon. References to Lorca are made to reveal the depth of the human tragedy and intensify the sense of agony and exile from a home which had turned into an exile in shape, in shade, and in meaning.

## II. WHITE COLOR IN LORCA'S AND DARWISH'S POETRY

The first reason that motivated the authors to conduct this comparative study is the extensive use of colors in their works. They use the colors as a complement to image connotations or as symbols for special emblems. Colors can have universal symbolizations and can have cultural ones, too. Though Arabic and Spanish are two different and distinct cultures, Lorca and Darwish have employed the white color to symbolize the same connotations. Although Lorca and Darwish belong to two different cultures, they have used the white color to designate the same symbolism. The cultural context is very important to understand the meaning of specific colors, Matinson and Delong (2013, p. ii) maintain that:

Color usage characterizes a specific society or group and play as an important role in enabling us to understand how people who belong to that group experience and use colors. Accordingly, just as the meaning of a word is understood through cultural context rather than only through a dictionary definition, the meaning or value of color used by a specific group also needs to be understood in a cultural context of continuity and change.

In this study, focus is made on the exceptional use of the white color as a symbol of death and eternity, which is not culturally recurrent in Arabic and Spanish cultures. As Harvard (1972, p. 811) confirms,

at an elementary level colour may help to create verbal pictures that are simply attractive, or literally, colourful; while in its more complex use, when the values of a particular colour have been established, it may be a most effective means of condensing thought into a metaphorical or symbolic unit.

Color is considered a central element in the poetry of Darwish and Lorca. White, as the main theme of this study, is very dominant and frequent in their poetry. This view is confirmed by the American poet Sarah Arvio (2017, p. 116) in her translation of Lorca's poetry to English, when she maintains that,

Red, green, purple, yellow: all these colors have a strong presence in Lorca's work. (...) But white is the color that seems to mean the most - quietly, this non -color or all-color color. White creates mood; black punctuates. White inhabits Lorca's poetic mind more than any other color.

Lorca was obsessed with the use of colors in his poetry. In his essay titled "a Poet Crazy about Color", Louis Parrot (1965, pp. 57-64) presents Lorca's love of colors and how they are normally manifested in his poetry. He analyzed the use of colors in Lorca's poetry in many collections, tracing the evolution of the use of colors by the poet and their related significance and manifestation. Parrot confirmed that the use of colors by Lorca is related to his personal experiences, childhood, and psychology.

Similarly, Darwish enriches his poems by using color symbolism to express social, political, and religious values. Colors helped Darwish to express his poetic personality and consciousness. The significance of colors varies in Darwish's poetry; the same color may hold different meanings depending on the context. This flexibility and variety in using colors in the poetic contexts of Darwish allowed him to express his feelings and beliefs without any difficulty.

The employment of colors took the tendency to describe and embody the image at all levels. Darwish was keen to have an explicit coloristic rhythm in his texts to express his artistic vision. This prompted him to acquire harmonious colors that are capable to reflect the meanings he intends, and refer to the boundaries he draws. It should be pointed out that Darwish does not prioritize a color over another in his poetry, although white, black, blue, and green are more used in his literature. Darwish uses a certain color to express other colors (Rahaleh & Amayrah, 2015).

In the Arabic and Spanish cultures, white color is associated with death; it is the color of the coffin, a cloth or a shroud in which people are wrapped and buried when they die. In both cultures, the same color is dressed by medical staff and hospital patients.

### III. WHITE, SYMBOL OF DEATH AND ETERNITY IN LORCA'S AND DARWISH'S POETRY

In literature, in general, and poetry in particular, the color white conveys a sense of purity, tranquility, innocence, cleanliness, and optimism and is often associated with weddings, angels, and hospitals. In the Spanish and Arabic cultures, these symbolizations of white are socially and culturally inherited. In Lorca's and Darwish's poetry, the color white is exceptionally linked with death and eternity.

Born in Palestine, which represents the Arabic culture, Darwish has exceptionally employed the white color in his poems. Instead of utilizing this color as a symbol of positive connotations, he has associated it with destruction, annihilation, mortality, eternity, sorrow, pain, and death. Not only does the poet mourn and express his sadness, but he also describes his experience while going through death as a first step of entering into the eternal world of the afterlife. In his poem *Mural*, a self-elegy poem, Darwish portrays his death project which has transitions, one for (the self-still-alive) and the one for (to-be-dead-self). This whole project of the poet's death is coated with whiteness.

In this poem, there is a clear self-elegy. Ramazani (1990, p. 27) employed this term in his powerful book on Yeats. According to him, the self-elegy is characterized by a "reflexive stance – a term indicative of the form's central perplexity; namely, that the mourning "self" seems to coexist with the dead "self" self-elegy; the elegy poem is a type of poem that intensifies «the self-mourning implicit within the autobiographical lyric»".

In *Mural*, Darwish is describing his feelings when death was approaching him. The poem was composed when he was admitted to the hospital for a dangerous heart surgery operation. Darwish did not expect to get out alive of the operation, and therefore he drew an alive image of the transfer into the other life. This poem is considered the longest by the critics because Darwish wanted it be eternal in it. In Arabic culture, it is commonly known that black is the color of grief and mourning, and it is used to express all feelings concerning death. However, Darwish differently chooses white color to express his moods and feeling of grief and mourning in this self-elegy poem.

This Palestinian poet has used the color white to refer to death and its associations. He referred to the female nurse in the hospital when she addressed him by saying (this is your name/and then vanished in the winding corridor). Internationally, the nurse is always associated with purity, compassion, and care. However, the poet in *Mural* has linked her with death and vanishing. The white dove is cross-culturally considered a symbol of peace, co-existence, and emotional stability. The Angel of Death (Azrael) is incarnated by the white dove. In this incarnation, the mission of the dove has completely deviated. Instead of bringing hope and life to those who are impatiently waiting for them, the dove in this usage symbolizes the Angel of Death, which terminates one's life. He was fully certain that he is traveling into a new life, a life where everything according to him is real and not fake or false. He is to start to a new life; he is to start a new childhood, in the eternity of the other world.

This is your name  
a woman said,  
and vanished through the winding corridor  
There I see heaven within reach.  
The wing of a white dove carries me  
towards another childhood. And I never dreamt  
that I was dreaming. Everything is real.  
I knew I was casting myself aside . . .  
and flew. I shall become what I will  
in the final sphere (Darwish, 2009, p. 447).

Darwish invested broader elements in describing his departure into the other world, where everything is whitened. The clouds, where the spacious sea suspended upon, are white; even the nothingness which paradoxically shows every thingness is white; the whole eternal absolute world is white; he is extinct and not existent anymore, and this is clear when he explicitly states 'I was and I was not'. His loneliness shows his new journey; the journey of no people or companions; he has not witnessed angels that ask him about what he did in the departed world. There is a clear feeling of sorrow and melancholy as the poet was certain that he would not come to life again.

And everything  
is white. The sea suspended  
upon a roof of white clouds. Nothingness is white  
in the white heaven of the absolute.  
I was and was not. In this eternity's white regions,  
I'm alone. I came before I was due;  
no angel appeared to tell me:  
"What did you do back there, in the world?"  
I didn't hear the pious call out,  
nor the sinners moan for I'm alone  
in the whiteness. I'm alone (Darwish, 2009, p. 449).

In another poem titled *Remainder of a Life*, the color white incarnates death, which is threatening the poet's life. He is waiting for the whiteness to appear; the white death can come in any moment. So, the poet is preparing and sitting at his desk alive waiting for the sudden white death. He tries to write but words have died and have over occupied the

whole scene. He prepares the lunch and two glasses, one for him and another for the sudden visitor, death. The death of his words takes place when everything is colored with whiteness, emphasizing that white color denotes the termination of everything, even words. This poem was composed in the last days of the Palestinian poet, when he was waiting for the death, fearing to die suddenly without being notified or prepared.

If I were told:  
 By evening you will die,  
 so what will you do until then?  
 I would look at my wristwatch,  
 I'd drink a glass of juice,  
 bite an apple,  
 contemplate at length an ant that has found its food,  
 then look at my wristwatch.  
 There'd be time left to shave my beard  
 and dive in a bath, obsess:  
 "There must be an adornment for writing,  
 so let it be a blue garment."  
 I'd sit until noon alive at my desk  
 but wouldn't see the trace of color in the words,  
 white, white, white . . . (Darwish, 2007, p. 57).

Similarly, Lorca in his four-part poem, *Lament for the Death of a Bullfighter*, laments his friend Ignacio Sanchez Mejias. Unlike Darwish, Lorca has used the white color to lament the other and not the self. In each part, he describes a phase of the death event and ceremonies. In the first part, his setting was five in the afternoon when he successively depicts what was happening. He explicitly employed the white color when he referred to death. For example, he referred to the coffin when he says that the boy brought the white sheet at that time. It is hinted that it may be the angel of death incarnated in that child, who brings a white sheet as if it were a shroud. Then, a wheelbarrow, normally used to transport white lime stones, was used to transport the body of the bullfighter. Here, the whiteness is dominating the scene of the death of the bullfighter.

At that particular time, Lorca referred to many white elements that describe the scene of death. Cotton, nickel, dove, smoke, eggs, coffin, and sun are some natural elements that are white and they all symbolize death according to Lorca. When he referred to all these elements, it was five in the afternoon when his friend was dead. In this part, Lorca portrays the struggle of death between the bullfighters and the bulls in the ring.

At five in the afternoon.  
 It was five sharp in the afternoon.  
 A boy brought the white sheet  
 at five in the afternoon.  
 A wheelbarrow of lime already set  
 at five in the afternoon.  
 The rest was death and only death  
 at five in the afternoon.  
 The wind swept away the cotton  
 at five in the afternoon.  
 And rust planted crystal and nickel  
 at five in the afternoon.  
 Now the struggle of leopard and dove  
 at five in the afternoon.  
 And a thigh with a desolate horn  
 at five in the afternoon.  
 And so began the bass notes  
 at five in the afternoon.  
 The arsenic bells and the smoke  
 at five in the afternoon (Lorca, 1953, p. i).

In the second part, Lorca continued describing the sad scene employing more white elements. To mention but a few, Lorca referred to silver, fog, mist, bleach, and white jasmines. Lorca wrote this elegy poem in 1935, a year before his assassination during the civil war, when traveling from Madrid to Granada to escape the rising political pressure (Gale 2016, p. 6). In Granada, he was arrested by the nationalist forces. After a few days in jail, he was assassinated. According to Oropesa and Ihrle (2011), in their *Encyclopedia of Spanish Literature*, Lorca in this elegy poem is reflecting on his own death in addition to his grief and mourning on his friend. White is used by the poet to express his emotions and thoughts regarding to his death. Like Darwish, Lorca was waiting for his death in this poem.

I don't want to see it!  
 My memory burns.

Warn the jasmine  
to cover its whiteness!  
I don't want to see it!  
The cow of the old world  
stroked a snout of blood  
with its sorrowful tongue  
and the bulls of Guisando  
almost death and almost stone  
bellowed like two centuries  
tired of walking the land.

No.

(...)

I don't want to see it.

Up the bleachers goes Ignacio

with death on his shoulders. . (Lorca, 1953, p. ii).

The topic of the poem is death, a significant key to all the works of Lorca turns in this long poem. In the third and fourth parts, Lorca continues his lament for the death of his friend. The dominant color in this funeral poem or crying elegy is white. In the poem and from a content perspective, the use of expressions that connote death can be seen in the elegy: "pale fog", "pale sulfur", "white sheet", "bowl of limestone", and "sweat of snow". The paleness and whiteness are prevailing between the verses to signify irreversible death.

*The Martyrdom of Saint Eulalia* is another elegiac poem, where Lorca invests the white color to expose death. Eulalia was a saint who was martyred by crucifixion in Barcelona. Lorca dedicates the poem to lament Saint Eulalia and express his melancholy. Cruelly tortured, her breasts and body were torn to bones with iron hooks and then burned with torches. Lorca has used the white color in this poem as a synonym of death, and instead of saying the Dead Eulalia, he said the white Eulalia. Different from his lamentation of his friend in the poem *Lament of the Death of a bullfighter*, Lorca has divinely elegized the Saint Eulalia, using the white color. The poem shows the struggle between good and evil, where the white Saint Eulalia has sacrificed in her life for the good of others (Ritcher, 2014).

Lorca concluded the poem by saying that Saint Eulalia has moved into another white eternal world, where angels are residing. In other words, she has moved to the world of whiteness which is eternal, and in this sense, different from the mundane one. In the eternal life, the land of angels is white; in this sense, the common symbolism of white as a symbol of eternity expresses the innocence, purity, and serenity of the angels' land. In this poem, white has two symbolisms. The first one is the recurrent symbolism of purity and innocence, as used to symbolize the eternal world of angels; and the second symbolism is the exceptional one as a symbol of death.

The broken snow is falling.  
Eulalia white upon the tree.  
In her side, triangles  
of nickel are joining their angles.

(...)

Eulalia white on a white field.  
Angels and seraphim are crying:  
Holy. Holy. Holy. (Lorca, 2005, p. 99).

In another poem titled *Ballad of the Moon*, inspired by a Spanish folk song, titled *El niño de La Luna* (The Moon's boy), the white color symbolizes death too. The boy in the poem is albino, having a white body and hair. The boy was a gift from the moon to a sterile gypsy woman. When the mother gave birth to this boy, her husband killed her claiming that the boy does not belong to him (Lorca, 1990). In the poem, Lorca uses the white color to show that it gives an excuse for killing the mother. The poem is dominated by the white color; the child is albino; the light of the moon is described as metallic white; and silver is also mentioned as a source of making white jewelry. After the death of the mother, the moon takes the albino boy after closing his eyes, as a demonstration of his death. Lorca concluded his poem with the death of the albino boy, stressing that the white color is strictly connected with death in both cases, the mother and the albino boy.

Young boy, leave me to dance.  
When they come, the gypsies  
will find you upon the anvil  
with closed eyes (Lorca, 1990, p. 41).

White is the color of death in all of Lorca's works. This color represents suicide and murders. White in Lorca's works became the definite symbol of the negative motif of death as Hollis (1965, p. 167) confirms when saying: "besides this simple employment of color, Lorca attached great symbolic significance to certain colors that appear in all his works. He used white, green, and red most vividly to represent various concepts".

Eternity is one of the main themes that writers in general, and poets in particular employ in their compositions. It can be used as a way to eternalize people, works, and issues. Lorca and Darwish have employed the white color to show

infinity as an eternal after-death stage. For them, the white color symbolizes the first beginning that has nothing before and the last end that nothing can come after. Azzam (2016, p. 244) in his article *reflection on white eternity in the poetry of Mahmoud Darwish* justifies the choice of *Mural* in Darwish's poetry by saying,

Then, (white) eternity is the eternal flux that has no finality. In this way, the work of art, or equally the mural on the wall of the universe, defeats death: Mural itself has been a dialogue with death seeking after the possibility of the eternity of the work of art.

So eternity, which is symbolized in the white color by Darwish, is very clearly observed in his poem *Mural*, too. An illustration of this symbolization is noted in the following verses:

My me who are you?  
We are two on the road  
and one at the resurrection  
Take me to the light of my disappearance to see how I'll be in my other mirror  
Who my me will I be after you?  
Is my body behind me or before you?  
Who am I you tell me?  
Make me as I make you  
anoint me with almond oil  
crown me with cedar  
and transport me from the valley to a white eternity  
Teach me life on the way  
test me like an atom in the heavens  
come to my aid against the boredom of the eternal  
and be lenient when the roses pierce from my veins and wound me...(Darwish, 2009, p. 449).

In the above verses, Darwish makes a dialogue between the alive Darwish and the eternal Darwish. He has gone through a real death experience when he was admitted to surgery after a heart attack. He miraculously escaped death and this has helped him to portray this life and the eternal afterlife. He started the verses by interrogating whether there is eternal life after death or not. The first reference to eternity is plain in the dialogue he made between the body which represented mortal life and the soul which represented the immortal one. He addresses his soul part to carry his body part to eternity. In this regard, Mattawa (2014, p. 148) maintains that,

Implied in the sketch of the new poet Darwish would be in the whiteness (of death) that he wished to fill (in defiance) with his poetry, the whiteness of the blank page (the pages he filled with poetry erased and forgotten), and the whiteness of the identity card on which his fate had been inscribed. All the poet needed to do in this new space/place, as the nurse instructed his, was to "remember your name to keep it safe. / do not betray it, / pay no mind to the banners of the tribes./ be a good friend to your name

Whiteness stands for the official color of eternity, where other colors may perch. In this respect, Darwish is heavily influenced by the German philosopher Martin Heidegger, who employs the white color as a sign of eternity. After escaping death, Darwish has come with the following strange queries about eternal whiteness.

Is the climate warm over there?  
Do the seasons change in the eternal whiteness?  
does the weather stay fixed in autumn or winter?  
, Will one book be enough to read in non-time?  
Or should I take a library?  
And what do they talk over there?  
Vernacular or classical? (Darwish, 2009, p. 450).

In his poem *sacred hells*, Darwish provides answers to the questions he raised above. He says that everything is white in eternal life: the clouds are white, the alphabet is white, and the whole eternity is white. When your hills are white, Darwish describes the transformation that death makes to humans, man leaves his earthly past and starts a new eternal white life. This happens like passing a passage of white fog; this transformation from the mortal world to the eternal one happens without perceiving it. This intertwining between eternity as a stage after death and whiteness are dominant in all works of the Palestinian poet.

The cloud is white, the alphabet is white,  
And eternity is as white as you are and how  
much You are not you.. when your hills become white  
Free from your mistake and your oral history,  
And devoid of but you and his oral history as if you come  
Just from nothingness in the fog lane to nothingness

It is as if the resurrection took place without your attention (Darwish, 2017, p. 157).

Darwish, is trying to bring eternity into being, describing the eternal afterlife with mundane descriptions. The resurrection took place without paying attention by humans. Describing eternity as white is justified by Azzam (2016, p. 242) saying,

This act of the relocation of eternity brings eternity into being. Eternity is transformed from the realm of metaphysics into the realm of being. Eternity gains through the meditation of the poetical saying “eternity is-white” its ultimate admission into the realm of being. When eternity reveals itself to be white, it becomes part of the poet’s experience of time. Under these conditions, the poet may now seek after letting eternity show itself in that which is white, such as white flowers, white clouds, white sheets, and so on.

Lorca wrote a lyrical poem as a dedication to his best friend Juan Ramon Jimenez. In this ode, Lorca uses the white color to describe the eternal afterlife, besides explicitly using the white color in the ode. He employs other white elements like snow, tuberose, salt, and pigeon feathers to describe this afterlife. Dead people are gone to the white world, the infinite world, where everything is white.

In the infinite white,  
snow, tuberose and saline,  
it lost the fantasy of it.  
The color white, come on,  
on a dumb carpet  
of pigeon feathers.  
Without eyes or gesture  
motionless suffers a dream.  
But she trembles inside.  
In the infinite white,  
what a pure and long wound  
she left the fantasy of it!  
In infinite white.

Snow. Nard. Saline (Lorca, 1997, p. 110).

In this poem, Lorca is questioning about the afterlife. The white color is two-fold in this poem. The first one is when this color is personified as a dead human being. Lorca is addressing the personified color by asking it to come close and walk on a dumb carpet. This color is also employed in the poem to resemble the eternal afterlife. This resemblance is clear in using snow, nard, and saline as elements of the afterlife world.

Although the personified color is white, still it fears the unknown world of the afterlife. Lorca describes this color as motionless when it walks on the dump carpet. What is paradoxical here is that death should not fear the eternal afterlife in the view that it holds the same color. The use of white color to symbolize this opposite duality of death and eternity by Lorca can be justified by the intention of the poet to intensify the meaning of each term. As Arango (1995, p. 280) confirms in his book *simbolo y simbologia en la obra de Federico Garcia Lorca* (symbol and symbology in the works of Federico Garcia Lorca), he refers constantly to colors in his works, where the white color is considered as the one with which poet is passionate; he used this color to make his texts more assimilated, active and intense.

In another poem titled *Autumn Song*, Lorca talks about the eternal afterlife. In his notes about this poem, Gareth confirms that it is inspired by the city of Babel, which according to Genesis was built by humans to reach heaven, the eternal destiny afterlife (Lorca 2007, p. 171). Lorca uses the white color to describe all roses, which are white in his view. In the previous poem, Lorca mentions that the tuberose is dominant in the afterlife; however, in the present poem, he says that all roses are white as his sorrow. He is wondering if the snow in the afterlife will melt or remain. He is also wondering if the roses in the afterlife will have their own whiteness and are thus perfect, getting their color from their own and not from the falling snow as in this life.

*All roses are white,*  
as white as my sorrow,  
but the roses are not white  
that have snow on them.

(...)

*Will the snow melt*  
when death takes us?  
Or will there then be other snow  
and other roses more perfect?  
Will there be peace among us  
as Christ teaches us?  
Or will there never be

a solution to this question? (Lorca, 2007, p. 3).

Lorca uses roses a lot in his poetry; most of them are white like nards, jasmines, tuberoses, and lilies. In Spanish culture, all these flowers are related to death. About this aspect in the poetry of the Spanish, Harvard (1972, p. 812) maintains,

does white express longing, absence, death - and also erotic love? There are many flowers, and most of them - by far the most- are white. Nard, *nardo*, is a fleshy, creamy white flower on a long stalk, with a penetrating

fragrance, resembling a lily. There are also many white lilies, called either *lirio* or *azucena* by Lorca (...) Lorca would have known, and felt, the lily as a flower associated with religion, love, and death

He concluded the poem wondering about what will happen if death is death, and what is the destination of poets, and other things that human beings do not care about. In Lorca's and Darwish's poetry abounds the duality of some symbolic elements, white color in our case. The white color is the end of the mortal life and at the same time, the dominant color of the eternal life. White color is employed by both poets to make a unity between opposites, death, and eternity.

*And if death is death,  
what will become of poets?  
and things in a cocoon  
which no one remembers?  
Oh sun of hopes!  
Clear water! New moon!  
Dull souls of stones!  
Today I sense in my heart  
a vague tremor of stars  
and all roses are*

as white as my sorrow (Lorca, 2007, p. 3).

In his article, *The symbolic ambivalence of "Green" in Garcia Lorca and Dylan Thomas*, Harvard (1972) pays particular interest to what he calls a "verbal conflict" in Lorca's poetry, a technique used by the Spanish poet in which he multiplies symbols and images with one specific word, which can be a color, like white in our study. The word white, is heavily used to symbolize many things.

Both poets are setting a paradoxical question about the eternal afterlife, asking about its features. The only thing that they are sure about is the whiteness of this eternal afterlife. In their poetic verses mentioned above, Lorca and Darwish don't know anything about the afterlife, except its color, which according to them is white. White color is adding to the poetry of both an artistic value with a purely psychological perspective. White in particular and colors in general, are prominent in the poems of Darwish and Lorca, reflecting their characters through the untraditional symbolism of white color used by them.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This comparative study has shown that colors have universal symbolizations. It has shown that the symbols of colors differ from one culture into another. It has, however, shown that the white color has the same symbolism in the Arabic and Spanish cultures. As revealed in the study, Lorca and Darwish have exceptionally employed the white color in their poetry to designate death and eternity. The two poets have negatively used the white color when they utilize it to refer to death. The analysis has made clear that the white color should be carefully interpreted as it is used out of its habitual meanings. The white is highly expressive and exceptionally employed to amplify and intensify the color capacity of meaning. As made apparent, the white color has a wide range of meanings in Lorca's and Darwish's poetry adhering to an additional meaning which is not associated with it in Spanish and Arabic cultures. White color becomes a central poetic motif of death and eternity and a powerful psychological and material force in the poetry of both. The study has concluded that whiteness has a psychological force that affects the audience of both poets, acquiring a deeper meaning. It is paradoxical in their poetry since it is employed to designate death and eternity.

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