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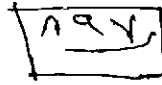
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Ain Shams University
Faculty of Education
English Department



The Alienated Self in the Poetry of Sylvia Plath

A Thesis

Submitted in fulfillment of the requirement of the
Degree of Ph.D. in Teacher Preparation (English Literature).

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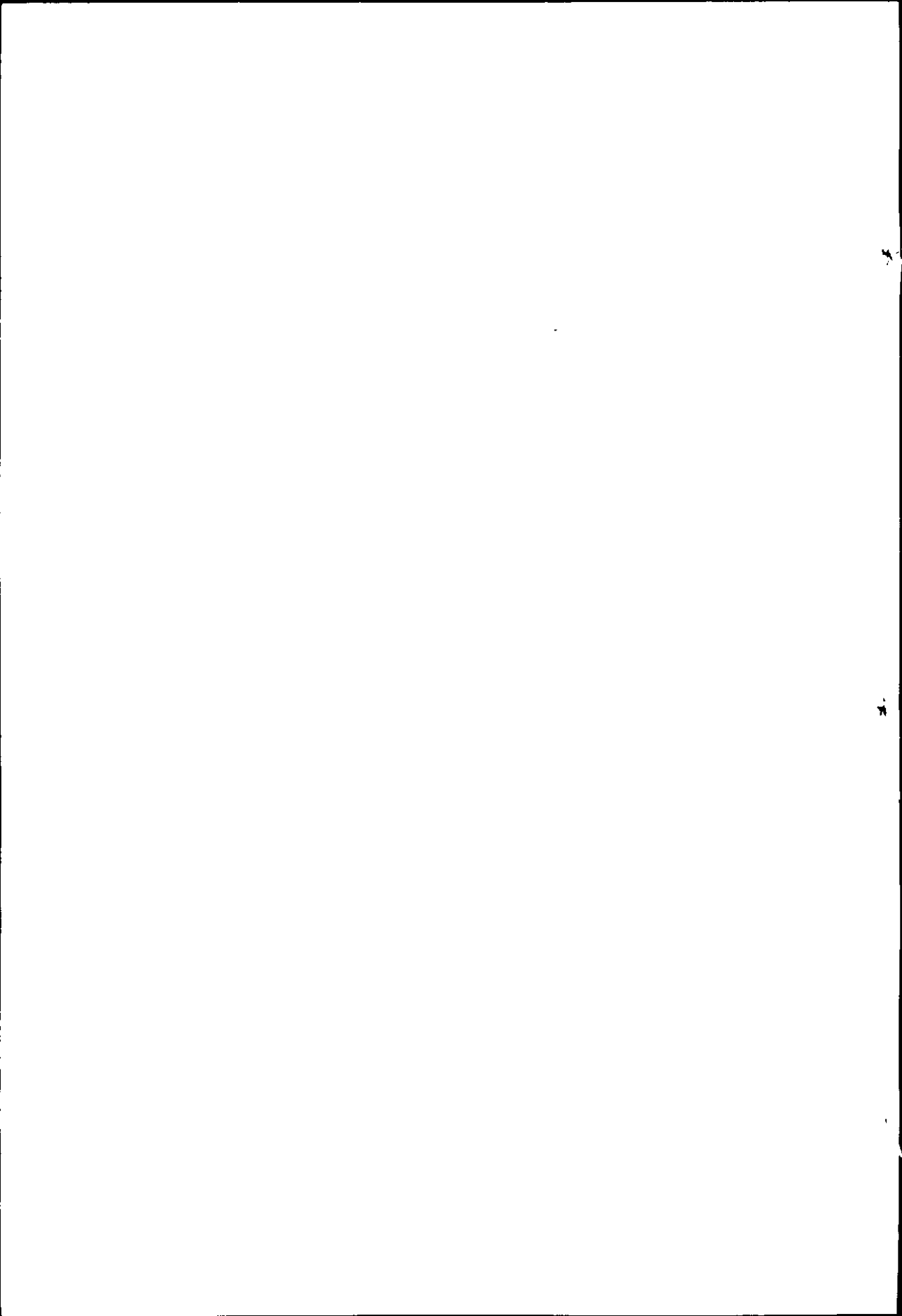
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The Alienated Self in the Poetry of Sylvia Plath

Abstract

The thesis is a study of the concept of the alienated self as reflected in Sylvia Plath's life and work within the framework of psychoanalytic approach. The purpose of the study is to find an analogy between Plath's psyche and her poetry. This is to be done by digging deep into the unconscious of Plath in order to discover hidden sources of alienation and their effect upon the poet. The thesis argues that these sources created many contradictions that Plath could not resolve, thus leading her to a state of alienation that she could not overcome throughout her life.

Those sources helped in alienating the poet from her society, relatives, friends, daily life and most seriously from her own self. The state of alienation that Plath suffered from is reflected in her journals, letters, autobiographical novel and poems.

The thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter one discusses the concept of alienation with a special emphasis on self alienation. This chapter also includes a discussion of melancholia and schizophrenia and their relation to alienation.

Chapter two discusses male figures in the life of Sylvia Plath and their effect upon her as alienating forces. Those male figures are her father Otto Plath and her husband the famous poet Ted Hughes.

Chapter three discusses Plath's relationship with her mother who pushes her to live according to an ideal false self thus leading her to be alienated from her true self. This chapter discusses Plath's schizoid

attitude towards her mother, an attitude that is reflected in her poems, novel, letters and journals.

Chapter four discusses Plath's concept of death. It argues that death has a special meaning for Plath. The chapter illustrates that death, for Plath, is only a step towards achieving rebirth and transcendence.

Key Words:

Plath – Alienation – Melancholia – Schizophrenia – True Self / False Self
- Rebirth – Transcendence.

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Introduction

