



**FEAR OF DEATH FROM ATHEISM POINT OF VIEW
IN PHILIP LARKIN'S POEM, *AUBADE***

a Final Project

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by

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FEAR OF DEATH FROM ATHEISM POINT OF VIEW IN PHILIP
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yang saya tulis dalam rangka memenuhi salah satu syarat untuk memperoleh gelar sarjana pendidikan ini benar-benar merupakan karya saya sendiri, yang saya hasilkan setelah melalui penelitian, bimbingan, diskusi, dan pemaparan atau semua ujian. Semua kutipan, baik yang langsung maupun tidak langsung, dan baik yang diperoleh dari sumber lainnya, telah disertai keterangan mengenai identitas sumbernya dengan cara sebagaimana lazimnya dalam penulisan karya ilmiah. Dengan demikian walaupun tim penguji dan pembimbing penulisan skripsi / tugas akhir / final project ini membubuhkan tanda tangan keabsahannya, seluruh karya ilmiah ini tetap menjadi tanggung jawab saya sendiri.

Demikian, harap pernyataan ini dapat digunakan seperlunya.

Semarang, September 2010
Yang membuat pernyataan,

Arief Catur Hapsanto

"Bomb or Not to Bomb"

"Do the Best, God will do the Rest"



*To
My beloved father, Apandi
and my beloved mother,
Subandiyah
My brothers and my sister
Me and myself*

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Finally, I expect that this final project would be useful for further study. Every effort has been made to trace the owners of the material used as sources in this final project. I would like to apologize for any apparent negligence. If noticed, I will be pleased to rectify any errors or omissions have inadvertently occurred.

Semarang, September 2010

The writer

ABSTRACT

Hapsanto, Arief C. 2010. "Fear of Death From Atheism Point of View in Philip Larkin's Poem, *Aubade*." A Final Project. English Department, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Semarang State University. Advisor 1: Frimadhona Syafri, S.S, M.Hum. Advisor 2: Drs. Amir Sisbiyanto, M.Hum.

Keywords: Fear of Death, Atheism, Death.

This final project deals with a phenomenon in rejecting the existence of God, it is called Atheism. Atheism is one of the society phenomenons which are debated by people in every era. Meanwhile, fear of death from atheism point of view as reflected in the "Aubade" poem by Philip Larkin is become the objects of the study in this analysis. The purposes of this study are to find the concept of atheism and fear to death and to explain the ambivalence between both concepts of Atheism and fear to death as reflected in the "Aubade" poem by Philip Larkin.

In this final project I use descriptive qualitative research as a method since the data is in the form of written utterances, phrases, and words and they were descriptively analyzed. There were several steps in collecting the data. Firstly, I read the poem repeatedly to understand the meaning of this poem. Secondly, I identify the data by separating between data and non-data by marking and numbering. The last step is classifying, it means that the writer classified the words, phrases, sentences in each line and stanza from the poem. After I get the data, I start to analyze the data according to the theory related to the topic in order to clarify and analyze the meaning.

This study emphasizes on two main objectives. First, is to explain the concept of fear to death towards atheism point of view in the "Aubade" poem by Philip Larkin and the ambivalence of atheism towards death as described in "Aubade" poem by Philip Larkin. As a result, the poem gives an ambivalence subject. At the last two stanzas, reflected that fear of death do not change their disbelief of God existence. Finally, their logical thoughts have limitation that cannot find the answer, so they pretend that the death will never influence their routine.

At the end, this study is expected to give additional knowledge to the readers about atheism and its behaviour that may be useful as an additional reference. I do hope there will be next researchers who want to continue my research about the importance of disbelief in God.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Background of the Study

Every Religion teaches in recommending people to belief in God. Every religion in this world believed that there is God who created anything in this world including human. There are little numbers of people betraying their faith about believing in God. So that, we have to follow God's rules as they are addressed by each religion. All Religions teach that every living human will eventually die, therefore everybody has to do the best and the right things for their next afterlife

Freud says that religion develops from the need to exorcise the terrors of nature, particularly the cruelty of death, and also to make amends for the deprivations that the culture imposes upon the individual (The Sociology of Religion Classical and Contemporary Approaches, 1979:6). Religious distress is at the same time the expression of real distress and the protest against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless situation. It is the opium of the people. The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is required for their real happiness. The demand to give up the illusion about its condition is the demand to give up a condition which needs illusions (Karl Marx, Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right 1975:38).

Recently, people have been aware of believing in God existence. However, many people seem to have no respect in God's position as their lord. Subsequently, it decreases what they have trusted in religion. In this case, the religion keeps trying to change their principles, but they still cannot accept what the religion is said to them. In contrast, they are scaring to face with the death.

Most people often their lifetime without enough of self-awareness, they live their lives in of emptiness and drudgery based on their early programming. They rarely reflect on their circumstances but rather are addicted to a lifestyle of form and routine. Few develop a life plan or project that gives value and substance to their daily lives. The search for transcendent goals, supported by death awareness, makes life more meaningful. Humans are a meaning-seeking species. When this experience is limited or entirely excluded, one is deprived of one's human heritage.

Death denial has other destructive complications. Religious faiths that offer the promise of an afterlife provide comfort but tend to polarize people of different beliefs against one another. People are threatened when their defensive resolutions of the death issue are challenged by nonbelievers. They become hostile and aggressive when their defenses are disrupted by people with different attitudes and customs. (it was quoted from cited : http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theories_of_religion accessed on January 19, 2010)

It is obviously clear that in this final project I try to discuss atheism. From time immemorial, human faith has been one of the central issues of self-perception. Belief is a property associated with human beings. This could be

considered even as a characteristic. Belief is not only related to human beings. Belief in God can be associated with the background of their religion, certain concepts, certain things etc as well. This property or characteristic named belief makes other people think about what are living above all the humanity. Disbelief from the God existence which makes people distinguish the place of religion in pursuing of God existence.

Julian Baggini in his book *Atheism a Very Short Introduction* (2003: 9) Atheism is in fact extremely simple to define: it is the belief that there is no God or gods. However, many people think that atheists believe there are no God and no morality; or no God and no meaning to life; or again no God and no human goodness. As we shall see later, there is nothing to stop atheists believing in morality, a meaning for life, or human goodness. Atheism is only intrinsically negative when it comes to belief in God. It is as capable of a positive view of other aspects of life as any other beliefs.

There is one respect, however, in which the negativity of the atheist's belief does extend beyond God's existence. The atheist's rejection of belief in God is usually accompanied by a broader rejection of any transcendental reality. For example, an atheist does not usually believe in the existence of immortal 3 souls, life after death, ghosts, or supernatural powers. Although strictly speaking an atheist could believe in any of these things and still remain an atheist, for reasons that will become clearer, the arguments and ideas that sustain atheism tend naturally to rule out other beliefs in the transcendental.

From the example above, I become so curious to find out the meaning of atheism, its concept and death influence toward atheism. In this final project I will take the poem from Philip Arthur Larkin *Aubade* to be analyzed. As I stated above that Atheism is disbelief in God existence, moreover is that Atheism is only a rejection of God existence or perhaps there are other meaning of atheism that I want to show. Here, the writer will analyze the poem above to find out the atheism indication which is stated in *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin, and also to find out the point of fear of death as related to atheism view in that literary period. And with this purpose, I have taken an example from the poem by Philip Larkin. The poem by Philip Larkin has the topic about individual's fear to face the death. We will also analyze how this poem above appreciates the fear of death in view of atheism. Is it right in placing the concept of death according to Atheism view in that poem that there is connection with the period when that poem was written? Finally I use textual analysis to get the point of each concept of atheism and death from the poet and how they do in appreciating view of atheism itself.

This study is not about dying and death; rather, it is about facing death in the prime of life instead of limiting life through the process of denial with its numerous personal stories, illustrates an important truth: that defensive denial of death has profoundly several consequences for each person's life. One of those consequences is about atheism aspect as well as imagined in *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin.

Referring to the background above, I chose the fear of death from atheism point of view as the topic of my study; I focused the analysis on the textual of the lyrics in the poem.

My explanation above is the same with is talked in *Aubade* Poem. I want to use this poem as my final project proposal.

1.2 Reason for Choosing Topic

As I noted above that poem is the most impressive and beautiful kind of literary works. From the statement above I have several reasons why I want to define why the atheism of being afraid to face the death in *Aubade* by Philip Larkin. Those reasons are: Firstly, death is one aspect in our live, which is still debating by some people.

Secondly, the unique purpose of this work is to suggest that the acceptance of death and dying as a reality and an awareness of the typical defenses that people develop to counter the dread can be life-affirming rather than leading depression. In *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin, it describes how the death interfere the feeling of emptiness without God existence.

The last, by analyzing the poem, I try to find the concept of atheism, which is influenced a feeling of anxiety by death.

1.3 Statements of Problem

In order not to discuss something I want to solve in this study, I had limited the discussion by presenting and focusing my attention on the following problems:

- 1) What is atheism views described in *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin?
- 2) How does atheism view about death as revealed in the poem?
- 3) How does the atheism's fear of death as showing ambivalence?

1.4 Objective of the Study

Based on the formulated problems above, this thesis has several objectives. They are elaborated as follows:

- 1) To explain the concepts of atheism behavior are described in *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin.
- 2) To explain How Philip Larkin was showed the fear of death toward atheism point of view in the *Aubade* poem.
- 3) To explain the ambivalence which is showed atheism's fear of death as revealed in the poem.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Hopefully the findings of this research may have these following significances for the readers; related to the objectives of the study, this analysis made to give knowledge to the reader such as: Firstly, this study is analyzed to develop the knowledge of the reader in understanding the fear of death relating with atheism concept.

Then, this study is also aimed to show which parts of the poem entitled *Aubade* by Philip Larkin described the atheism aspect towards the fear of feeling to face the death.

For the English department students, I hope that they will increase their knowledge about literature and its works and also can use this final project as a reference. Therefore, the explanation above is supposed to present coherence between the death towards atheism's view.

Finally, I do hope that this poem could be one of supplementary literary subjects since the significant moral values conveyed by this poem.

1.6 Outline of the Study

This proposal is systemized into five chapters. The first chapter is introduction, which consists of background of the study, reason for choosing the topic, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, study scope, and outline of the study.

The second chapter is review to related literature. In this chapter, the author presents poem as affections, reflections, and psychology in literature.

The third chapter consists of presents methodology consisting, object of the study, types of the data, roles of the researcher, the procedures of collecting data, and the method of analyzing data.

The fourth chapter is the result of the analysis, general description, and discussion.

The last chapter is the conclusion and suggestion.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The second chapter presents the theories underlying the topic of the study. This chapter consist of four subchapters. Firstly, it talks about review of previous research. Secondly, it deals with review of related literature. It covers the definition of literature, the definition of poetry and the elements of poetry, atheism and death concepts, the contrasting characteristic between belief in god and atheism, and also the atheism and its view towards death. The last subchapter is framework of analysis.

2.1 Review of the Previous Research

In doing this study I review previous research, who work about theories of death anxiety and fear in Freud's book entitled *Thoughts For The Times On War And Death* in 1953. Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) had the first say. The founder of psychoanalysis recognized that people sometimes did express fears of death.

” Our own death is indeed quite unimaginable, and whenever we make the attempt to imagine it we . . . really survive as spectators. . . . At bottom nobody believes in his own death, or to put the same thing in a different way, in the unconscious every one of us is convinced of his own immortality. (Freud 1953, pp. 304–305)”

This anxiety is so intense that it generates many if not all of the specific fears and phobias people experience in everyday life. Fears of being alone or in a confined space, for example, are fears whose connections with death anxiety are

relatively easy to trace. People would have a difficult time controlling their anxiety, though, if alarming realities continued to intrude and if they were exposed to brutal reminders of their vulnerability.

In Reflection about “Atheism” by Karl Marx, the writer focuses on his atheism was not only practical but also theoretical. Marx proclaims in no uncertain terms that "in the country of reason" the existence of God cannot have any meaning. With atheism he intends to exclude that there is any superior being, greater than man. It is in view of man's greatness that he considers it necessary to destroy religion, because in his judgment the latter is the opium, the drug, the substitute which prevents man from becoming aware of his dignity.

The next analysis has been taken from a journal by Henry Salt in Percy Bysshe Shelley's poem entitled *The Necessity of Atheism* in 1811. His early poems advocated social reform, a perception of an agreement is a termed of belief. In his poem, Shelly stated "the evidence of the senses". If the Deity should appear to us, if he should convince our senses of his existence, this revelation would necessarily command belief. the Deity has thus appeared have the strongest possible conviction of his existence. But the God of Theologians is incapable of local visibility.

2.2 Review of Related Theories

There will be some theories relating to the topic of this final project. The theories written in this subchapter will be used in chapter four.

2.2.1 Literature

The first subchapter of the second chapter is talking about literature. Each topic has differences from one another whether viewed by its definition, history, genres and elements. The elaboration of each topic of the first subchapter will be presented as the following description.

2.2.1.1 Definition of Literature

Literature is a writing that expresses and communicates thoughts, feelings, and attitudes towards life. This certainly seems to be expressing thoughts, feelings and attitudes (R.J. Rees 1973:2). Hornby (1974:687) also stated that the definition of literature itself is the writing or study as book valued as works of art. Literary works are the basic men's expression to have certain attitudes towards the circumstance that he/she belong to. Literary works are about how people respond to their surroundings through the poet's ideas of thought that are expressed in a written way and then it may be performed such as drama, fiction, essay, poetry and biography.

Meanwhile, Widdowson (1975:74) also states, "When a study of literature requires sensitivity, intelligence, precision of response and so on, it brings the readers' imagination to an unknown territory where familiar sign may be few and where he must often find his own way by following difficult clues." So by reading a literary work people can enrich their thinking and their mind as reflected in the literary work. It means that literary work has a close relationship with our thought, feeling, and creates emotional impact on its reader's mind.

“As a work of imagination, literature has no limit, but we have to be aware of the danger of forces outside literature. The principal threat to the creative imagination is the attempt to control man’s thoughts” (Koesnobroto 1988:5). There are three characteristics of literature according to Koesnosoebroto. First, that literature has power. The use of language in certain piecework of literature may create a powerful impact on the reader’s mind. A work of literature makes use of producing multiplication of images, which sometimes lead people to action. Second, literature is also vivid. One of its great achievements is by the power of the written word to make you hear, to make you feel it is before all, to make you see. The last, the language of literature is clear. For example, in the literary description of a character, it is clear that the writer clarifies his definition of a person by showing what he does, why he does it, how he does it, or what he would never do (Koesnosoebroto 1988:2)

From the explanation above, I conclude that literature may be divided into novels, plays, poetry, short stories, lyrics, essays, biographies and so on. By learning literary works we can enrich our minds because literary works express and communicate thoughts, feelings and attitude towards life.

2.2.2 Poetry

The second subchapter of the second chapter is talking about poetry. Each topic of this subchapter has differences from one another whether viewed by its definition, elements of poetry and the theory used in the study.

2.2.2.1 Definition of Poetry

There are so many definitions which explain about poetry, but there is no single definition which is satisfactory. As Hornby (1989:954) defines about poetry that a “poetry is of a creative writing in verse which contains one expressing deep feeling or noble thoughts in beautiful language, written with the intention of communication an experience”, therefore, a poem is not able to be viewed only from one’s point of view. Its deep feeling understanding makes not all the readers have the same interpretation indeed.

Mill as cited by Frederick (1988:140) says that “the objects of poetry is to act upon poetry addresses itself to the feelings; poetry works using any movement; poetry acts by offering interesting objects of contemplation to the sensibilities”. The same as Mill, Samuel Johnson as cited by Tarigan (1984:5) describes that “the poetry as spontaneous expression of feelings, which is full of power and based on emotion get together in peace”. From that explanation I can conclude that a poem is an expressing deep feeling which is full of power and based on emotion that the writer has experienced. Yet the power embedded inside the poem is not easily being understood by reading it at once.

In *World Book Encyclopedia* (1966:563) explains that “many people find rich rewards in the magic of words that capture thought, the startling image or metaphor, and the seer fun of rhyming. All life, all things seen and felt, all joys and sorrow, all these belong to poetry”. How beautiful a poem is, if only we can really understand the function of each word that are structured, and if we can understand inside the use of imageries in beauty of the poem itself. Therefore, all the components of a poem can make special enjoyment for the reader itself. Then

they can judge, whether the poem is beautiful, amusing, interesting, full of hatred or emotion or full of pleasure.

2.2.2.2 Elements of Poetry

Like another kind of literary work, poetry also has some elements or components that are built into a better literary work as explained above. Those elements will be presented as the following points:

(a) Form of Poetry

Reaske (1966:34) explains “The form of poetry is the organization of the parts of poetry into a whole. It is usually discussed in literature by picturing the total pattern, organization and effect of a poem. Form is the complete package that has a distinguishable content”. A poem is really influenced by its form, because form can make the poem has certain sense and effect towards its readers.

Form includes rhythm, meter, feet, line, stanza, and rhyme. The definition of rhyme is explained clearly as Reaske states:

Rhyme of poetry is created by the pattern of repeated sounds in term of both duration and quality and ideas. Rhythms sometimes also known as meter, the arrangement of stressed and unstressed sounds in speaking and writing. Pattern of rhyme is organized into verse paragraphs, or blocks of line. Stanzas are the major divisions made in poem in a regular or consistent way. A stanza is recognizable unit in a poem: ordinarily, each stanza follows a particular rhyme scheme” (Reaske, 1966:12).

From that statement, Reaske views that pattern of repeated sounds represented certain quality as well as ideas of a poem. While stanza has the function to make a poem structured in a consistent way.

(b) Language of poetry

The discussion of language of poetry includes diction, imagery and figure of speech. Language used in poetry is usually figurative language that is language employing various figures of speech (Reaske, 1966:31). Diction is the use of language of word in poetry. The diction of a poem has something to do with stylistic and tonal qualities of the words chosen by the poet” (Reaske, 1966:31). Imagery is about images, pictures or sensory content, which are found in a poem. Images are fanciful or imaginative description of people or subjects stated in terms of senses”, so that there is always a certain amount of mystery surrounding images because their precise meanings can be articulated.

Meanwhile, deeper information about metaphor, figurative language and figure of speech that have been cited by Reaske’s explanation:

“Language used in poetry is usually a figurative language that is a language employs various figures of speech. Some examples are metaphor, simile, antithesis, hyperbole and paradox. Metaphor is a figure of speech, which compares one thing to another directly. Simile is a direct comparasion between things, which are not particularly similar with their essence. Antithesis is a result when a pair or more of strongly contrasting terms are presented together. Hyperbole is a figure of speech, which employs exaggeration. Meanwhile paradox is a result when a poet presents a pair of idea, words, images or attitudes, which are or appear to be, self contradictory. In general figurative language is that kind of language employed in traditional, literal ways of describing person or objects” (Reaske, 1966:33)

Reaske, (1966:33) says that a poem conveys a various figure of speech that consist of metaphor, simile, antithesis, and hyperbole. The short definition about metaphor and simile has been stated by Reaske, yet the main difference between

the two things is the direct comparison which is conveyed, when simile is not particularly the same in its essence.

(c) Theme

The central concept in poetry is theme. Theme is not moral, not the subject, not a “hidden meaning” illustrated by a poem. A.A Durya Serayawati (2000:17) says that “Theme is the central idea or view of life that the writer explores or experienced in his life”. So I can say that theme is the central idea which is accurate that the writer experiences or explores in his life.

Meanwhile, Reaske (1966:42) states, “The theme of poetry, in another light, is the poet’s reason for writing poems in the first place. It is usually an abstract concept that becomes concrete through the idiom and imagery. Most of the images, in other words are designed to present the central theme, or the main idea of the poem”.

(d) Tone

“Tone is the exceptional case of dissimulation or instances in which the speaker unwittingly reveals an attitude he or she is not consciously desirous of expressing, will come to mind.” (Richard, 1978:182). Moreover Shipley in his book (1962:418) states that tone is the attitude of a work, as revealed in the manner rather than stated. So that we can conclude that tone is the attitude or emotion of the writer towards his or her work.

(e) Imagery

Imagery is the representation of the picture of mind in language. As Cuddon quoted by Badrun (1989:15) “Generally imagery is the using of language in

presenting objects, actions, feelings, thinking, and ideas, mind expressions and sensory experiences”.

2.2.3 New Criticism

New Criticism is an approach to literature which was developed by a group of American critics, most of whom taught at southern universities during the years following the first World War. The New Critics wanted to avoid impressionistic criticism, which risked being shallow and arbitrary, and social/ historical approaches which might easily be subsumed by other disciplines. Thus, they attempted to systematize the study of literature, to develop an approach which was centered on the rigorous study of the text itself. They were given their name by John Crowe Ransom, who describes the new American formalists in *The New Criticism* (1941).

New Criticism is distinctly formalist in character. It stresses close attention to the internal characteristics of the text itself, and it discourages the use of external evidence to explain the work. The method of New Criticism is foremost a close reading, concentrating on such formal aspects as rhythm, meter, theme, imagery, metaphor, etc. The interpretation of a text shows that these aspects serve to support the structure of meaning within the text. The aesthetic qualities praised by the New Critics were largely inherited from the critical writings of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Coleridge was the first to elaborate on a concept of the poem as a unified, organic whole which reconciled its internal conflicts and achieved some final balance or harmony.

In *The Well-Wrought Urn* (1947), Cleanth Brooks integrates these considerations into the New Critical approach. In interpreting canonical works of poetry, Brooks constantly analyzes the devices with which they set up opposing these and then resolve them. Through the use of "ironic contrast" and "ambivalence", the poet is able to create internal paradoxes which are always resolved. Under close New Critical analysis, the poem is shown to be a hierarchical structure of meaning, of which one correct reading can be given.

The New Critics privileged poetry over other forms of literary expression because they saw the poem as the purest exemplification of the literary values which they upheld. However, the techniques of close reading and structural analysis of texts have also been applied to fiction, drama, and other literary forms. These techniques remain the dominant critical approach in many modern literature courses.

2.2.4 *Atheism*

Recently some people in our surroundings create a phenomenon that some people consider if there is a God, but they do not realize that a God always by their side. Some stanzas indicate any phenomenon that I will talk about. This matter is necessary to discuss because the different of interpretation make people wondering why it could happen in some people lives.

The poem entitled *Aubade* tells about the relation between people's belief in God, the fear of death and atheism aspect. Conflicts in this poem begin when people believe that someday they all will absolutely die, but they still doubt God's position as their Lord. According to the stanza that tells "Religion used to try.

That vast, moth-eaten musical brocade created to pretend we never die, and specious stuff that No rational being” show that there is an atheist aspect.

Believing in God is always asked for all people in the world. Every religion in this world has told that there is a God who created anything in this world including human's life. So, we have to follow God's rule which is delivered by religions. Religions teach that every living human will eventually die, therefore, everybody has to do the best and do right things for their next better life after the death come. It is so contrast with atheism. Atheism believes that there is no God as their Lord in their life. They believe that human exist because there is God and also God exists because there is a human life.

Atheists claim that there are two main reasons for their denial of the existence of God and/or disbelief in God: the conviction that there is positive evidence or argument that God does not exist (Strong atheism which is also sometimes called positive atheism), and failed their claim that theists bear the burden of proof to show that God exists, that they have to do so, and that belief is therefore unwarranted (Weak atheism).

2.2.4.1 The Definition of Atheism

A “lack of belief” definition is a bad definition for many reasons. It is not commonly used. It is not defined that way in any reputable dictionary. It is too broad because most agnostics and babies do not consider themselves atheists. And it makes no sense for an “-ism” to be based on a lack of belief. These atheists are usually motivated to redefine the word “atheist” because they want to enlarge the definition of “atheist” to include as many people as possible, or because they

perceive it to be an advantage in debates with theists. Unfortunately, some of these people have used lies and distortions to support their opinions, and some have made extremely ignorant and grossly incorrect statements that may reflect badly on all atheists.

Atheism, as defined by the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* and the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, is the denial of the existence of [God](#). The atheistic worldview has a variety of effects on individuals and [society](#) at large which will be elaborated on shortly. In regards to individuals adopting an atheistic worldview, atheism has a number of causal factors that influence its origination in individuals which will be addressed. In addition, critiques of atheism will be offered and some of the historical events relating to atheism will also be covered. Since atheism is denial of the existence of God or gods, it is important first to identify in which God and/or gods the atheist denies.

Atheism, as an explicit position, can be either the affirmation of the nonexistence of gods, or the rejection of theism. It is also defined more broadly as an absence of belief in deities, or non theism (accessed on en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atheism on 23 March 2010). If there were no God there would be no atheists (G. K. Chesterton 1874 – 1936: 11) that was one of the reasons why atheism exist in our surroundings.

There is, unfortunately, some disagreement about the definition of atheism. It is interesting to note that most of that disagreement comes from theists — atheists themselves tend to agree on what atheism means. Christians in

particular dispute the definition used by atheists and insist that atheism means something very different.

The broader, and more common, understanding of atheism among atheists is quite simply "not believing in any gods." No claims or denials are made an atheist is just a person who does not happen to be a theist. Sometimes this broader understanding is called "weak" or "implicit" atheism. Most good, complete dictionaries readily support this.

There also exists a narrower sort of atheism, sometimes called "strong" or "explicit" atheism. With this type, the atheist explicitly denies the existence of any Gods making a strong claim which will deserve support at some point. Some atheists do this and others may do this with regards to certain specific gods but not with others. Thus, a person may lack belief in one god, but deny the existence of another god.

In Oxford English Dictionary second edition has several definition of atheism. The first is to contradict or gainsay (anything stated or alleged); to declare to be untrue or untenable, or not what it is stated to be. Second, assert the contradictory of a proposition. Third, refusing to admit the truth of (a doctrine or tenet), rejecting as untrue or unfounded; the opposite of assert or maintain. Fourth, refusing to recognize or acknowledge (a person or thing) as having a certain character or certain claims; to disown, disavow, repudiate, renounce. Note that the OED definition covers the whole spectrum of atheist belief, from weak atheism (those who do not believe in or credit the existence of one or more gods) to strong atheism (those who assert the contrary position that a god does not exist).

The word "atheism," however, has in this contention to be construed unusually. Whereas nowadays the usual meaning of "atheist" in English is "someone who asserts there is no such being as God," I want the word to be understood not positively but negatively. I want the originally Greek prefix "a" to be read in the same way in "atheist" as it customarily is read in such other Greco-English words as "amoral," "atypical," and "asymmetrical." In this interpretation an atheist becomes: someone who is simply not a theist. Let us, for future ready reference, introduce the labels "positive atheist" for the former and "negative atheist" for the latter.

(Antony G.N. Flew and Paul Edwards, *God, Freedom, and Immortality* p. 14. Prometheus, 1984)

If we look up "atheism" in the dictionary, we will probably find it defined as the belief that there is no God. Certainly many people understand atheism in this way. Yet many atheists do not, and this is not what the term means if one considers it from the point of view of its Greek roots. In Greek "a" means "without" or "not" and "theos" means "god." From this standpoint an atheist would simply be someone without a belief in God, not necessarily someone who believes that God does not exist. According to its Greek roots, then, atheism is a negative view, characterized by the absence of belief in God.

(Michael Martin, *Atheism: A Philosophical Justification*, p. 463. Temple University Press, 1990)

The average theologian (there are exceptions, of course) uses "atheist" to mean a person who denies the existence of a God. Even an atheist would agree

that some atheists (a small minority) would fit this definition. However, most atheists would strongly dispute the adequacy of this definition. Rather, they would hold that an atheist is a person without a belief in God. The distinction is small but important. Denying something means that you have knowledge of what it is that you are being asked to affirm, but that you have rejected that particular concept. To be without a belief in God merely means that the term "God" has no importance, or possibly no meaning, to you. Belief in God is not a factor in your life. Surely this is quite different from denying the existence of God. Atheism is not a belief as such. It is the lack of belief. When we examine the components of the word "atheism," we can see this distinction more clearly. The word is made up of "a-" and "-theism." Theism, we will all agree, is a belief in a God or gods. The prefix "a-" can mean "not" (or "no") or "without." If it means "not," then we have as an atheist someone who is not a theist (i.e., someone who does not have a belief in a God or gods). If it means "without," then an atheist is someone without theism, or without a belief in God.

(Gordon Stein (Ed.), *An Anthology of Atheism and Rationalism*, p. 3. Prometheus, 1980)

2.2.4.2 The History of Atheism

Although the term [atheism](#) originated in the [16th century](#) based on [Ancient Greek](#) "godless, denying the gods, ungodly" and open admission to positive atheism in [modern times](#) was not made earlier than in the late [18th century](#), atheistic ideas and beliefs, as well as their political influence, have a more expansive history. The spontaneous proposition that there may be no gods after all is logically as old as

[theism](#) itself (and the proposition that there may be no [God](#) as old as the beginnings of [monotheism](#) or [henotheism](#)). Philosophical atheist thought appears from the 6th or 5th century BCE, both in Europe and in Asia.

(a) Period of Asian and European philosophy

The history of atheism, depending on how one defines the term, can be dated to as early as the 6th century BC or as recently as the late 18th century AD. The word atheism itself was not coined until the 16th century.

(i) Early Asian and European philosophy

The earliest possible examples of atheism involve Eastern religions such as Jainism, Buddhism and Taoism, which do not include a deity. These date back to the 6th century BC, but there is some dispute over whether these religions can be classified as atheistic, in the sense of denying the existence of gods, as many other branches of these religions do incorporate deity worship. In some such religions, the question of the existence of gods is considered to be unimportant rather than a question which can be answered one way or the other. This stance can be better described by the neologism apatheism.

Atheism can also be traced to Ancient Greece in the 5th century BC. Diagoras of Melos is often referred to as "The First Atheist", and other men who claimed to be atheists include Theodorus of Cyrene and Euhemerus. Epicurus and Lucretius, who are often described as atheists, believed that the gods existed but that they were unconcerned with human affairs: a position better described as Deism than atheism. Protagoras espoused a position which we would describe today as agnosticism, stating that "With regard to the gods I am unable to say

either that they exist or do not exist." At the time, however, atheism was a capital offense in Greece - it was the crime for which Socrates was executed, though he denied the charge. It is therefore possible that some individuals may have concealed their true beliefs.

(ii) The Middle and Renaissance Ages

In Medieval and Renaissance Europe, instances of atheism are rare. The existence of arguments put forward to demonstrate God's existence by Aquinas, Anselm and others suggests that non-belief was not unheard of, but few records of it are known. The term atheism was coined in France in the 16th century. The concept of atheism re-emerged initially as a reaction to the intellectual and religious turmoil of the Age of Enlightenment and the Reformation as a charge used by those who saw the denial of god and godlessness in the controversial positions being put forward by others. During the 16th and 17th centuries, the word 'atheist' was used exclusively as an insult; nobody wanted to be regarded as an atheist. Although one overtly atheistic compendium known as the Theophrastus Redivivus was published by an anonymous author in the 17th century, atheism was an epithet implying a lack of moral restraint. How dangerous it was to be accused of being an atheist at this time is illustrated by the examples of Étienne Dolet who was strangled and burned in 1546, and Giulio Cesare Vanini who received a similar fate in 1619. In 1689 the Polish nobleman Kazimierz Łyszczyński, who had allegedly denied the existence of God in his philosophical treatise *De non existentia Dei*, was condemned to death in Warsaw for atheism and beheaded after his tongue was pulled out with a burning iron and his hands

slowly burned. Similarly in 1766, the French nobleman Jean-François de la Barre, was tortured, beheaded, and his body burned for alleged vandalism of a crucifix, a case that became celebrated because Voltaire tried unsuccessfully to have the sentence reversed.

Among those accused of atheism was Denis Diderot (1713–1784), one of the Enlightenment's most prominent philosophes, and editor-in-chief of the *Encyclopédie*, which sought to challenge religious, particularly Catholic, dogma: "Reason is to the estimation of the philosophe what grace is to the Christian", he wrote. "Grace determines the Christian's action; reason the philosophe's".[23] Diderot was briefly imprisoned for his writing, some of which was banned and burned.

The English materialist philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) was also accused of atheism, but he denied it. His theism was unusual, in that he held god to be material. Even earlier, the British playwright and poet, Christopher Marlowe (1563–1593), was accused of atheism when a tract denying the divinity of Christ was found in his home. Before he could finish defending himself against the charge, Marlowe was murdered, although this was not related to the religious issue.

(b) *Modern History*

Modern atheism did not begin until the Enlightenment. In addition, the French Revolution increased the spread of atheism in Europe. Baron D'Holbach's book *The System of Nature* was the first publication which explicitly denied the existence of God. Other atheists from this time included the philosopher David

Hume. Others denied being atheists (heresy and blasphemy were capital offences) but held materialistic, empiricist, broadly deistic views; these include Voltaire, Thomas Hobbes, Thomas Paine, John Locke, Immanuel Kant and Benjamin Franklin.

(i) 19th century

In 1844, Karl Marx (1818–1883), an atheistic political economist, wrote in his *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*: "Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people." Marx believed that people turn to religion in order to dull the pain caused by the reality of social situations; that is, Marx suggests religion is an attempt at transcending the material state of affairs in a society the pain of class oppression by effectively creating a dream world, rendering the religious believer amenable to social control and exploitation in this world while they hope for relief and justice in life after death. In the same essay, Marx states, "...an creates religion, religion does not create man..."

(ii) 20th century

Atheism in the 20th century found recognition in a wide variety of other, broader philosophies, such as existentialism, Objectivism, secular humanism, nihilism, logical positivism, Marxism, feminism, and the general scientific and rationalist movement. Neopositivism and analytical philosophy discarded classical rationalism and metaphysics in favor of strict empiricism and epistemological

nominalism. Proponents such as Bertrand Russell emphatically rejected belief in God. In his early work, Ludwig Wittgenstein attempted to separate metaphysical and supernatural language from rational discourse.

The 20th century also saw the political advancement of atheism, spurred on by interpretation of the works of Marx and Engels. State support of atheism and opposition to organized religion was made policy in all communist states, including the People's Republic of China and the former Soviet Union. In theory and in practice these states were secular. The justifications given for the social and political sidelining of religious organizations addressed, on one hand, the "irrationality" of religious belief, and on the other the "parasitical" nature of the relationship between the church and the population. Churches were sometimes tolerated, but subject to strict control - church officials had to be vetted by the state, while attendance of church functions could endanger one's career. Very often, the state's opposition to religion took more violent forms; Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn documents widespread persecution, imprisonments and torture of believers, in his seminal work *The Gulag Archipelago*. Consequently, religious organizations, such as the Catholic Church, were among the most stringent opponents of communist regimes. In some cases, the initial strict measures of control and opposition to religious activity were gradually relaxed in communist states. In India, E. V. Ramasami Naicker (Periyar), a prominent atheist leader, fought against Hinduism and the Brahmins for discriminating and dividing people in the name of caste and religion. This was highlighted in 1956 when he made the

Hindu god Rama wear a garland made of slippers and made antitheistic statements.

(iii) 21st century

The early 21st century has continued to see secularism and atheism promoted in the Western world, with the general consensus being that the number of people not affiliated with any particular religion has increased. This has been assisted by non-profit organizations such as the Freedom from Religion Foundation in the United States which promotes the separation of church and state, and the Brights movement which aims to promote public understanding and acknowledgment of the naturalistic worldview. In addition, a large number of accessible antitheist and secularist books, many of which became bestsellers, were published by authors such as Michel Onfray, Sam Harris, Daniel Dennett, Richard Dawkins, and Christopher Hitchens. This gave rise to the New Atheism movement, a neologism that has been used, sometimes pejoratively, to label outspoken critics of theism. Richard Dawkins also propounds a more visible form of atheist activism which he light-heartedly describes as 'militant atheism'.

(c) *Militant Atheism and Atheistic Communism*

The atheism in [communist](#) regimes has been and continues to be [militant atheism](#) and various acts of repression including the razing of thousands of religious buildings and the killing, imprisoning, and oppression of religious leaders and believers. The theory of [evolution](#) played a prominent role in regards to atheistic communism.

It has been estimated that in less than the past 100 years, governments under the banner of communism have caused the death of somewhere between 40,472,000 to 259,432,000 human lives. Dr. R. J. Rummel, professor emeritus of political science at the University of Hawaii, is the scholar who first coined the term democide (death by government). Dr. R. J. Rummel's mid estimate regarding the loss of life due to communism is that communism caused the death of approximately 110,286,000 people between 1917 and 1987.

2.2.4.3 The Contrast Characteristic between Belief in God and Atheism

Atheists realize that, in the past, followers of many religions believed that:

- 1) Supernatural forces controlled the weather,
- 2) Comets were harbingers of doom,
- 3) Angels physically pushed the sun, moon, planets and stars across the sky,
- 4) A male God created the Earth, its life forms, and the rest of the universe;
- 5) God micro-manages the life of every human on earth.

Elements of these beliefs remain today. But the Atheists, with whom we have communicated, including a volunteer in our own group, reject these concepts. Many find that they make no sense to them. They are seen as left-over relics from a pre-scientific tribal culture.

Different people have many different ideas of what ' God' Means. But there is one quite precise conception of God, traditionally held by Christian, Muslim, and Jewish theologians. I will refer to this as the God of 'classical theism'. According to classical theism, God is:

1. *A person*

A person behaves purposively acts to achieve desired ends he or she has mentally preconceived. God has conscious preferences and behaves intelligently to bring about God's Ten Qualities 5 what he prefers. God thinks, imagines, chooses, calculates, and plans. In traditional accounts he experiences emotions, though some theologians repudiate this.

2. *A spirit*

This means that God is not physical. He is not made of atoms or quarks, or superstrings, or of energy. He cannot be detected by the naked senses or by scientific instruments. No flickering needle on a dial could ever cause some research worker to say 'Hey, we've got some God activity here'.

3. *All powerful (omnipotent)*

This means he can do anything he likes, as long as it's logically possible. Most theists say that God cannot do anything which is logically impossible, such as make a square circle. But with that restriction, he can do anything. For example, he could wipe out the entire physical cosmos in an instant, completely effortlessly. He could then bring a new cosmos into existence with entirely different physical laws, again completely effortlessly. Or he could intervene piecemeal in the cosmos, in a trillion different ways simultaneously, again without effort, and without his attention being distracted in the slightest from other matters.

4. *All knowing (omniscient)*

God knows everything every human has ever known, and a lot more besides. There's nothing that can be known that God does not actually know. He knows every detail of the past. Some say he also knows every detail of the future, though this is disputed.

5. *Everywhere at once (omnipresent)*

He is not localized in space. God is, for instance, in the room with you as you read these words. As the Quran puts it (50:16), he's closer to you than your jugular vein. And he's just as fully present in the center of the Sun, on the icy surface of Pluto, and in every particle of the Horsehead Nebula, 1,600 light years away. For all practical purposes, the claim that God can accurately perceive what is going on everywhere and can actively intervene everywhere is equivalent to the claim that he is everywhere.

6. *All good (omnibenevolent)*

He does no wrong and never could do any wrong. Theologians don't agree on whether good is good and bad is bad because God has decided it that way, or whether good and bad are defined independently of God. But they do agree that, one way or another; God is entirely good and never commits evil.

7. *Interested in humans*

He is usually reported to be intensely concerned about the life of each individual human. For example, he cares whether individual humans believe in his existence and, if they do, whether they have the appropriately awestruck attitude. Many people assume that God's interest in individual humans follows

automatically from his perfect goodness, but I think it's so remarkable that it deserves a separate listing here.

8. Creator of every existing thing other than himself

If there's more than one universe, God made the whole lot of them. And if there's a spiritual universe, apart from God himself, God made that too. He made the universe, or all universes.

9. Unchanging (immutable)

He is "the same, yesterday, and today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). This at least means that his character never changes, but it's usually taken to mean more than that, for example that he cannot learn from experience because he already knows everything. Theologians differ somewhat on this point. They also differ quite sharply on a related point, whether God has existed for all of infinite time, or whether instead time is finite and God is 'outside time'.

10. Necessary.

What this means is that it's inconceivable that God could not exist: he has to exist. Why would anyone think this about God? We'll look at some reasons in Chapters 6 and 7. (Van Inwagen, 2006, pp. 20-32)

So there are three types of non-believer in something:

- 1) The agnostic, who refuses to render a verdict on whether that thing exists, agnosticism is the view that the truth value of certain claims especially claims about the existence or non-existence of any deity, but also other religious and metaphysical claims is unknown or unknowable.

- 2) Someone who denies the existence of the thing, but does not believe that the thing's non-existence can be conclusively demonstrated.
- 3) Someone who denies the existence of the thing and believes that its non-existence can be conclusively demonstrated. (When applied to the God question, this third kind of non-believer is called a 'disproof atheist')

In a 2002-JUN-27 column, columnist Ken Schram of KOMO, Seattle, WA, described some of the characteristics of Atheists:

- 1) They fear God so much that even hearing the word "God" distresses them.
- 2) He has observed Atheists squeeze their eyes shut when they remove bills from their pocket out of fear that they might see the phrase "In God we Trust."
- 3) Some go out of their way when driving to avoid passing churches, synagogues, mosques and temples.
- 4) But without God there can be no absolute morality. That's the real reason for Atheism. It's nothing more than wanting to be your own god so you can do whatever you want.

Not all of those characteristics can be true because one cancels out the other out or a combination of two (or more) leads to a logically impossible situation. When this happens, the definition is no longer coherent or understandable.

For instance, particularly with Christianity, the religion which most atheists in the West have to contend with, contradictory characteristics and incoherent definitions are the rule. They are so common, in fact, that it's a real

surprise when anything like a straightforward and coherent definition shows up. Even a "less bad" definition is a welcome change of pace, given how many really bad definitions or explanations there are. Christianity will define their god in radically different ways. One Christian will define the Christian god as being so all powerful that free will is nonexistent who we are and what we do is entirely up to God, while another Christian will define the Christian god as not all-powerful and who, in fact, is learning and developing alongside us (Process Theology). They can't both be right.

When we move beyond a single religious tradition and expand to related religions, like Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, the differences grow exponentially. Muslims define their god as being so "other" and so unlike humanity that any attribution of human characteristics to this god is blasphemous. Christians, who ostensibly believe in the "same god," define their god with a multitude of anthropomorphic characteristics even to the point where they think their god became incarnate as a human being at one point in time. They can't both be right.

It doesn't prove that any of these religions or religious beliefs is definitely false. It also doesn't prove that no gods can or do exist. The existence of some sort of god and the truth of some religion is compatible with all of the things atheist describes above. As I noted, humans are fallible and it's not impossible that they have repeatedly and consistently failed to describe some god that exists (and is perhaps getting annoyed at the situation).

2.2.5 Karl Marx

Karl Heinrich Marx (5 May 1818—14 March 1883) was a German philosopher, political economist, and socialist revolutionary, who addressed the matters of alienation and exploitation of the working class, the capitalist mode of production, and historical materialism. He is famous for analyzing in the initial line introducing the Communist Manifesto. The most influential achievement in political philosophy during the 19th century was the development of Marxism. German political philosopher Karl Marx, who created the system known as Marxism, and his collaborator Friedrich Engels accepted the basic form of Hegel's dialectic of history, but they made crucial modifications. Marx formulated a general theory relating to the economic system, social system and political system namely Marxism and the followers of this theory are known as a Marxist. This theory is the theoretical basis of modern communism. For them history was a matter of the development not of Absolute Spirit but of the material conditions governing humanity's economic existence.

The philosophy of Marxism is atheist. Religion, he concluded, is "the opiate of the masses" that serves the political end of suppressing mass revolution. Marxism is a theory of revolution, of history, of economics, and of politics, and it served as the ideology for Communism. In their view, later known as historical materialism, the history of society is a history of class struggle in which the ruling class uses religion and other traditions and institutions, as well as its economic power, to reinforce its domination over the working classes. Although he was a philosopher Marx had disdain for merely theoretical intellectual work, stating,

“The philosophers have only interpreted the world in different ways; the point is to change it.”

Religious distress is at the same time the expression of real distress and the protest against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless situation. It is the opium of the people. The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is required for their real happiness. The demand to give up the illusion about its condition is the demand to give up a condition which needs illusions (Karl Marx, Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right 1975:38 f).

Usually all one gets from the above is “Religion is the opium of the people“(with no ellipses to indicate that something has been removed). Sometimes “Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature“is included. If you compare these with the full quotation, it’s clear that a great deal more is being said than what most people are aware of.

In the above quotation Marx is saying that religion’s purpose is to create illusory fantasies for the poor. Economic realities prevent them from finding true happiness in this life, so religion tells them that this is OK because they will find true happiness in the next life. Although this is a criticism of religion, Marx is not without sympathy: people are in distress and religion provides solace, just as people who are physically injured receive relief from opiate-based drugs.

The quote is not, then, as negative as most portray (at least about religion). In some ways, even the slightly extended quote which people might see is a bit dishonest because saying “Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature...”

deliberately leaves out the additional statement that it is also the “heart of a heartless world.”

What we have is a critique of society that has become heartless rather than of religion which tries to provide a bit of solace. One can argue that Marx offers a partial validation of religion in that it tries to become the heart of a heartless world. For all its problems, religion doesn't matter so much; it is not the real problem. Religion is a set of ideas, and ideas are expressions of material realities. Religion is a symptom of a disease, not the disease itself. In others words, so many differences between Karl Marx's concept and Religion in terms of God that can't be harmonized.

2.2.6 Death

In defining death is in distinguishing it from life. As a point in time, Death would seem to refer to the moment at which life ends. However, determining when death has occurred requires drawing precise conceptual boundaries between life and death. This is problematic because there is little consensus over how to define life. It is possible to define life in terms of consciousness. When consciousness ceases, a living organism can be said to have died. One of the notable flaws in this approach is that there are many organisms which are alive but probably not conscious.

2.2.6.1 The Definition of Death

Death is the termination of the [biological](#) functions that define a [living organism](#). The word refers both to a particular process and to the condition that result thereby. The true nature of the latter has for millennia been a central concern of

the world's [religious traditions](#) and of [philosophical enquiry](#). Belief in some kind of [afterlife](#) or [rebirth](#) has been a central aspect of many religious traditions. In modern [scientific](#) enquiry, the origin and nature of [consciousness](#) has yet to be fully understood; any such view about the [existence](#) or non-existence of consciousness after death therefore remains speculative.

Phenomena, which commonly bring about death include [predation](#), [malnutrition](#), [accidents](#) resulting in terminal [injury](#), and [disease](#). Death of an entire species is known as [extinction](#). Human activity has increased the number of extinctions [in recent times](#), one cause being, for example, the destruction of [ecosystems](#) as a consequence of the spread of [industrial technology](#).

Almost all [animals](#) fortunate enough to survive hazards to their existence eventually die from [senescence](#). Rare and remarkable exceptions include the [hydra](#) and the jellyfish [turritopsis nutricula](#), both thought to be, in effect, [immortal](#). Causes of death in humans as a result of [intentional](#) activity include [suicide](#), [homicide](#) and [war](#). From all causes, roughly 150,000 people die around the world each day.

[Physiological](#) death is now seen as less an event than a process: conditions once considered indicative of death are now reversible. Where in the process a dividing line is drawn between life and death depends on factors beyond the presence or absence of [vital signs](#). In general, [clinical death](#) is neither necessary nor sufficient for a determination of [legal death](#). A patient with working [heart](#) and [lungs](#) determined to be [brain dead](#) can be pronounced legally dead without clinical

death occurring. Precise medical definition of death, in other words, becomes more problematic, paradoxically, as [scientific knowledge](#) and [medicine](#) advance.

Death is the center of many traditions and organizations, and is a feature of every culture around the world. Much of this revolves around the care of the dead, as well as the afterlife and the disposal of bodies upon the onset of death. The disposal of human corpses does, in general, begin with the last offices before significant time has passed, and ritualistic ceremonies often occur, most commonly interment or cremation. This is not a unified practice, however, as in Tibet, for instance the body is given a sky burial and left on a mountain top. Proper preparation for death and techniques and ceremonies for producing the ability to transfer one's spiritual attainments into another body (reincarnation) are subjects of detailed study in Tibet. Mummification or embalming is also prevalent in some cultures, to retard the rate of decay.

2.2.6.2 The Atheism and Its View Towards Death

It is here that the contrast between theism and atheism seems at its sharpest. For when we contemplate death, theism can comfort us in both personal and impersonal terms. In personal terms, theism can offer us the hope of eternal life, a better existence beyond death. In impersonal terms, it offers an antidote to our dismay at the transience of all natural things. Everything that we see passes away, but God is eternal and unchanging. And, in so far as those things which are valuable, such as love and goodness, reside in him, these too are eternal. For the atheist, it seems, there is nothing but change and decay.

Not all theists, however, believe in life after death. And some nontheistic religions involve the idea of the immortality of the soul. So the contrast between theism and atheism need not always be quite as sharp as it was presented above. Nevertheless, theists often have a distinctive view of death and transience, a view from which they draw comfort and strength. What resources have the atheist at his disposal when he contemplates the end of all things? In this last chapter, we shall look at some of the reasons why death is dreaded, and consider whether these reasons are good ones.

In an often-cited passage, Lucretius makes a point which is sometimes taken to imply that the fear of death is irrational:

“Again, look back and see how the ancient past of everlasting time before we are born has been nothing to us. Nature then shows us this as a mirror of future time after our final death. Does anything appear horrible there, does anything seem sad?” (de Rerum Natura, Book 3, quoted in Sorabji 1983, p. 176)

The only atheistic hypothesis of life after death that I know of is naturalistic reincarnation, which some atheistic religions accept. Otherwise, all life after death hypotheses involve some form of the supernatural, and require that some supernatural entity (a god or deity or similar entity) performs the work necessary to turn a dead person somehow back into a living person. Atheism is the rejection (or the lack of acceptance) of such a hypothesis.

Most of the life after death scenarios I've heard are so entirely vacant that they don't make sense at all: sense cannot be made of them. Nevertheless, people tend to say they believe these ideas, to think they believe these ideas, to think the ideas are true, even though, when asked to describe what life after death will be

like, they cannot do this. They believe it's true and believe this very strongly, yet they cannot even begin to describe what this state will be like.

Death is a temporal phenomenon, in that it is a kind of change, and so takes place in time. Further, many of the puzzles it raises involve aspects of time. We care more about future non-existence after our death than about past non-existence before our birth. We are appalled by the attenuation of the effects of our life after we die, for example, we fear being forgotten and our various projects crumbling to nothing. If we are appalled by death, some of us are also (perhaps even more) appalled by its opposite: the infinite extension of our life. This is not paradoxical, to want to be neither mortal nor immortal.

I hope to have shown how life can have meaning and purpose for atheists. But what if we turn the question on its head: why should anyone think that life can't have meaning or purpose for atheists?

Why does the meaning of life seem to pose an especial problem for atheists?

The answer seems to be that the atheist, not believing in any supernatural realm, believes that death in this natural Earth is the end of life. The atheist unequivocally accepts human mortality, with no belief in after-life, reincarnation, or even dissolution of the ego into the world spirit. So, it is thought, if life is short and death is final.

Why an acceptance of mortality seems to make life any less meaningful than a belief in the after-life does. There can only be two explanations for this: one is that life needs to be longer than it actually is to be meaningful; the other is

that life needs to be endless to be meaningful. Neither assumption survives scrutiny. If we take the idea that life can only have a meaning and if it never ends, it is certainly not the case that in general only endless activities can be meaningful. Indeed, usually the contrary is true: there being some end or completion is often required for an activity to have any meaning.

Death thus occupies a crucial role in the atheist world view. It is the final full stop that makes life meaningful in the first place, but it's coming too soon or even as early as it usually does can still be a cause of regret. There is some truth in the cliché that all good things must come to an end, but just as the curtain falling on Othello does not make the play worse, but is actually a necessary condition for it being any good in the first place, so we may regret death while at the same time knowing that its inevitability is what makes life so valuable in the first place.

2.3 Framework of Analysis

This study is concerned with analyzing atheism and death concepts in the *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin. This analysis also will deal with the atheist point of view toward death.

As the theoretical framework of the study, I choose the theory of atheism from Karl Marx to analyze the textual content in the *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin. According to Karl Marx's theory, atheism is defined "the existence of God cannot have any meaning".

A death anxiety in the *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin will lead us to a different interpretation in analyzing the textual content in this poem. The poem

showed the reason why an atheist is scaring to face the death. From that point we will find the ambivalence subject through analyzing the textual content.



CHAPTER III

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

The third chapter focuses in methodology that is used in the final project. There are six subchapters in this chapter. The first subchapter is the object of the study, the second subchapter is role of researcher, the third is type of data, the fourth is procedure of collecting the data, the fifth is the procedure of analyzing the data, and the last subchapter is techniques of analyzing the data.

3.1 Object of the Study

After a long period of consideration to determine the kind of analysis which kind of object to be analyzed, I finally made a decision of choosing the poems by Philip Larkin to be analyzed. I select Larkin's poem entitled *Aubade* was the perfect representation on one of the recent societal problems which is natural, and so, in order to have the best review about all the conditions and also aspects which were influencing the poem production process, I will use the new criticism in literature point of view.

To complete the study in this final project proposal I will apply the textual approach. The object of this study in this analysis is Philip Larkin's poem entitled *Aubade* which is published in 1980. In this analysis I take the original poem text as source of the data.

3.2 Types of the Data

The type of the data in this final project is descriptive qualitative study. I used one poem of *Aubade* by Philip Larkin to look at the way of a man in appreciating the fear of death towards atheism point of view and finding the depiction of atheism in *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin. Since the object of this final project is a poem, there are some stanzas in each poem. The data will be in form of description and identification of the text of the poem itself.

3.3 Roles of the Researcher

In this analysis the researcher has two main roles. They are as follows:

3.3.1 *The data collector*

In order to complete this study I collect the data of *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin. I get the data from many sources. First, I get the data from the text of the poem itself. Second, I get the data from the books which are related to the subject matter. The last I collect the data by browsing through the internet.

3.3.2 *The data analyst*

After getting the data, I will analyze them then take the essence of the data. I will group the several data based on the classification. I also reduce the data that I get from the sources in order to make me easy in analyzing them.

3.4. Procedures of Collecting the Data

I collect the information through the data found in the poem *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin by doing some steps stated as follow:

3.4.1 Reading

The basic step in analyzing a poem is reading the poem time after time. In order to understand the whole content of the study by reading the poem repeatedly. Next, attempt the poem to find out the concept of the poem. Then, examine the intrinsic and extrinsic affection of the main idea and listing the statements in the poem that relates to the topic in this final project and also collect the dictionaries, encyclopedia, and sites relating to the topic. After that I give the interpretation of the quotation from several sources that were taken and then I will get the conclusions to complete the final project proposal.

3.4.2 Identifying

Identifying here means the activity of separating between data and non-data by marking and numbering. Identify the appropriate data which will be used to support the analysis. In order to be able to identify the necessary data, I must have the best interpretation; the technique to differentiate which one is the data and which one is not. The forms of marking that used to identify data are highlighting and bracketing. They will be used to determine the presence of certain words, phrases, sentences, and idiom that are implied in explicit and implicit meaning. Highlighting is used for explicit and Bracketing is used for implicit meaning. Then after marking by highlighting and bracketing, numbering will make identifying perfect. By numbering, it will be easier to identify data.

3.4.3 Classifying

The last step in analyzing is classify the words, phrases, sentences in each line and stanza from the poem that describes the shift of death and atheism concepts.

Classifying here means to classify the data in order to answer the entire question from the statement of the problem. This step will show the answer of all the statements of the problems and explain the similarities and differences of the poem.

3.5 Procedures of Analyzing the Data

The data will be analyzed to find the shift concept of atheism. In the *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin the Atheism concept deal with the concept of death and the concept of religion in briefly, data are as follows:

3.5.1 Exposing

The data in the form of explicit meanings in the poem are exposed to reveal the real meaning and intention of the words, utterances, and sentences.

3.5.2 Explaining

The data explained clearly, until the data are found.

3.5.3 Interpreting

The data are interpreted in order to know the answer of the statements of the problems.

3.5.4 Correlating

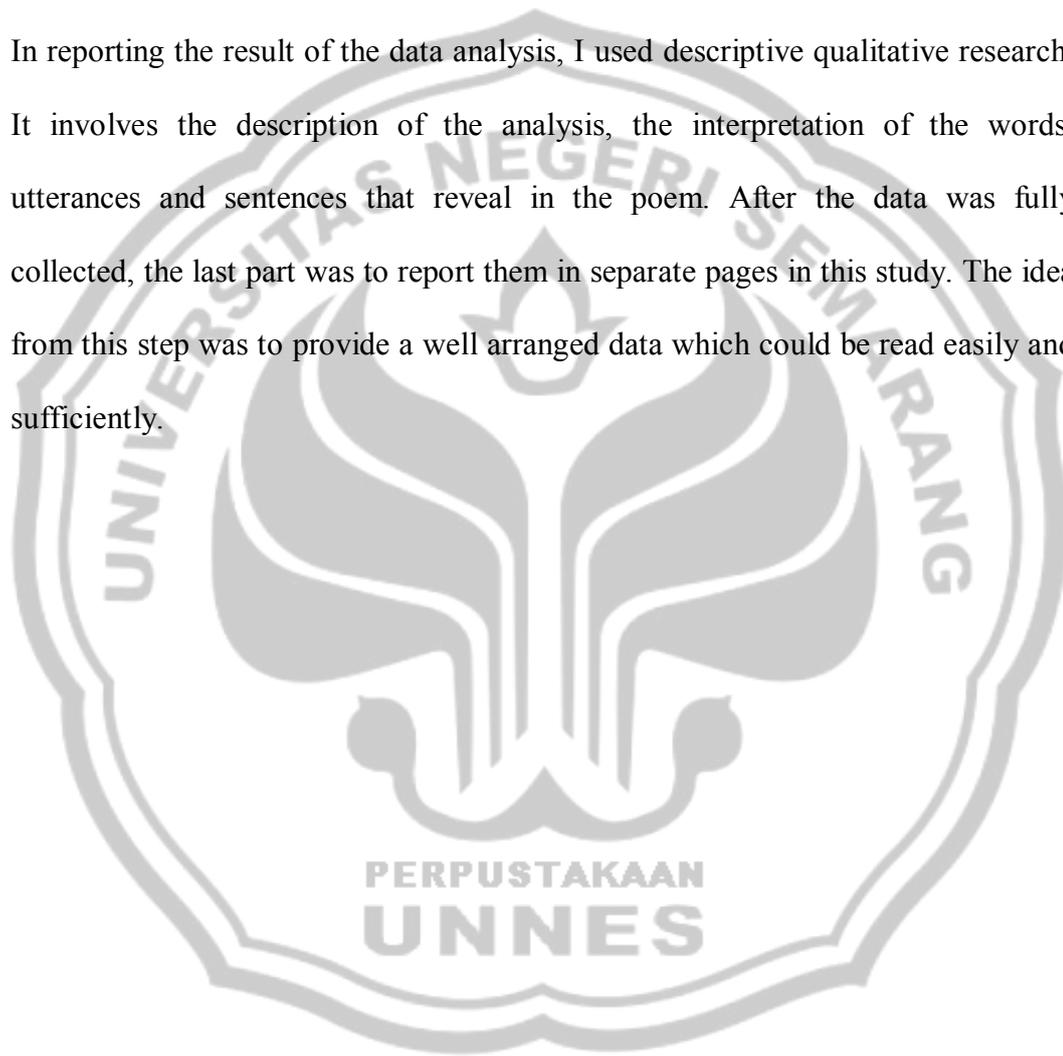
The data will be correlating to get the concept of atheism towards the fear of death from the poem entitled *Aubade* by Philip Larkin, and the way of that poet appreciates the concept of death, atheism, and its ambivalences.

3.5.5 Summarizing

Some conclusions are drawn to answer the statements of the problems. It enables to include personal opinions and judgments dealing with the problem discussed.

3.6 Method of Reporting the Result

In reporting the result of the data analysis, I used descriptive qualitative research. It involves the description of the analysis, the interpretation of the words, utterances and sentences that reveal in the poem. After the data was fully collected, the last part was to report them in separate pages in this study. The idea from this step was to provide a well arranged data which could be read easily and sufficiently.



CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

In this chapter, the study focuses on the analysis of the data. As stated in the previous chapter, I use descriptive research qualitative, which merely focuses on the analysis of textual data, in obtaining and analyzing the data. I obtained the data from the poem by Philip Larkin entitled *Aubade*. I only analyzed words, phrases, sentences and idiom that contain the concept of atheism and death in each stanza from the two poems. This chapter consists of atheism and death described in *Aubade*, by Philip Larkin, it explains the atheism concept according to the poem *Aubade*, by Philip Larkin. The next subchapter is about atheism point of view described in *Aubade*, by Philip Larkin. The third is an analysis which explains about the ambivalence of atheism towards death as described in the poem by using new criticism approach. The last subchapter is my responds to the *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin.

4.1 Atheism Described in *Aubade* Poem by Philip Larkin

Aubade is a poem which is talked about the dawn. The dawn is a moment of passage, from night to day, from sleep to busy life, and this is how Larkin uses it, also as a metaphor for the passage from life to death (it was quoted from cited: <http://malaysia.answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20080413053152AAf7E> Mw, accessed on July 24, 2010). Paradoxically, because it would mean that life is night and day is death, actually when the moment to start a daily routine after

waking up from sleep in the night is the truth of life we can feel and the day when the routine is doing as well as busy life is the appearance of death, because at that moment often evoked a clear thought about the coming of the death and also continue with a brain question whether or not we can wake up after sleeping tonight. It is described in a very accurate way this moment, when we wake up very early, and it is not yet a day, so we will not get up, and so we start thinking. It is the right moment to start thinking about death. Then, light breaks, and it is time to come back to everyday life. Dawn is a special moment.

Here, we have *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin to be discussed to find the concept of atheism by analyzing the poem. The lack of belief in the poem *Aubade* by Philip Larkin shows that a God keeps his hands off anything occur on earth. Likes what is said in the stanza:

***I work all day, and get half-drunk at night.
Waking at four to soundless dark, I stare.
In time the curtain-edges will grow light.***

The stanza above shows those who don't believe in God always think in their minds that they can do anything what they want to do. Their carelessness of the effect from what they've done shows that they are ignoring the causal reason for their future. Atheist does not care about anything that will appear after the death coming because they deny the life after death. In contrast with that every religion always gives limitation in human's being life. Religions always command about anything that must be done, should be done, might be done, and cannot be done. Moreover, the reason what that religions said is the worth prize for all the fellows. So that, people who believe in religion say that they cannot do anything

what they want to do because they all consider the responsibility that they will get at the end of their time.

Particularly, in the very first line of the poem, *I work all day, and get half drunk at night* shows that it is a very mundane comment to make, giving the impression that people are bored with the old routine. In the history of atheism in the 20th century, it told about the hedonism understanding as well as showed in the first line of the first stanza above. Those words are very mundane statement that deliver message about human monotonous routine.

The poem emphasizes on the meaning of the first stanza, *unresting death*, and it realizes that it is one day closer to that momentous event. The poem shows that it cannot think of anything else just wonders *how / And where and when I shall myself die*. No answer comes to him, but only *the dread / Of dying, and being dead, / Flashes afresh to hold and horrify*.

The denial of the existence of God as defined as atheism by the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* and the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, is the atheist's transcendental reality. For example, an atheist does not usually believe in the existence of immortal souls, life after death, ghosts, or supernatural powers. Although strictly speaking an atheist could believe in any of these things and still remain an atheist, for reasons that will become clearer, the arguments and ideas that sustain atheism tend naturally to rule out other beliefs in the transcendental.

Like in the stanza below:

***And shall be lost in always.
Not to be here, Not to be anywhere,***

From the stanza above, it shows that atheism remain the end of their life will surely come true. The word *lost* in that stanza indicates they must die someday, *Not to be here, Not to be anywhere* indicates their perception of life after death that never to happen. Their thought of immortality after life does not exists it is different from the religion's view in which they believe there are some places after the death coming commonly named heaven or hell.

The average theologian (there are exceptions, of course) uses "atheist" to mean a person who denies the existence of God. Even an atheist would agree that some atheists (a small minority) would fit this definition. However, most atheists would strongly dispute the adequacy of this definition. Rather, they would hold that an atheist is a person without a belief in God. The distinction is small but important. Denying something means that they have knowledge of what it is that they are being asked to affirm, but that they have rejected that particular concept. To be without a belief in God merely means that the term "God" has no importance, or possibly no meaning. Belief in God is not a factor in our life. Surely this is quite different from denying the existence of God. Atheism is not a belief as such. It is the lack of belief.

4.2 Atheism View about Death as Revealed in Philip Larkin's

Poem, *Aubade*

Consider one of the biggest questions where the evidence has something to contribute the atheism aspect to know any sign that persuade the characteristic of atheist. This subchapter will show us the particular object appearing in atheism

belief. Their denial of God existence will lead them to the term that all illogical and unacceptable thought always surely strengthen their faith of disbelief. The discussion about death was started a long time ago between theist and non-theist people.

Every religion has clearly explained and described about death and also life after death. So that, what they think about immortality will be given after life and also the prize of it that common says as heaven and hell, whether non-theist disclaims about that perception. Based on non theist's mind, everything that cannot be proved with logical thought will never happen. The coming of death never be denied from both believers, but the contradiction arise when they talk about afterlife.

Religious ideology belief systems represent serious efforts to cope with and allay death. Religions offer a good deal of comfort and security but they fail to completely reassure us about the subject of our own death. Besides, there is a marked tendency for believers to sacrifice important elements of their present day lives for their imagined after life. That is atheism which rejects anything from illogical minds including after life.

Till then I see what's really always there:

One part of stanza above indicates that atheism is still in doubt with something illogical and abstract. However, they believe that when death is coming to their life, they cannot run away from the death, but their concern about the life after death is nothing. What will happen afterlife is still abstract and nobody ever finds any evidence that it can guarantee there will be immortality of soul afterlife.

This condition shows that illogical matter cannot convey the meaning of belief for atheism.

*Unresting death, a whole day nearer now,
Making all thought impossible but how
And where and when I shall myself die.*

The part of stanza above clearly let us know that atheist never deny the coming of death and even believe that they will absolutely face the death though they never know when it comes. They consider and never dodge that they will face the death even though the time of death coming is still abstract for them.

In these few lines it seems that atheism believes that their life is simply awaiting their death, counting down the days until they have no more for them the problem of dying is all consuming and takes up much of their time. Atheism is afraid of death. Horrified as it says in line ten, this poem is an expression of their thoughts about death and the fact that we have to accept it.

*The mind blanks at the glare. Not in remorse
The good not done, the love not given, time
Torn off unused - nor wretchedly because
An only life can take so long to climb*

Atheist reports that their mind *blanks at the glare*. They make it clear that they are not being bothered by the ordinary life regrets that trouble most people, such as the mistakes of young adulthood or that they have not performed enough charitable acts, or that they have wasted too much time in foolishness.

People cannot tolerate direct confrontation with the concept of death or the interminable cessation of conscious awareness, and the majority retreat from these realizations. Nonetheless, most people are confronted with the essential ambiguity of life and with fears of the unknown that exist in their unconscious.

Towards the end on the second stanza, it begins to refer to death as a sort of new beginning.

***But at the total emptiness forever,
The sure extinction that we travel to
And shall be lost in always. Not to be here,
Not to be anywhere,
and soon, nothing more terrible, nothing more true.***

The poem *Aubade* by Philip Larkin is trying to convey that fear is not what one should feel, though natural, because this is all there is and it should not be wasted. When it starts off, talking about lying in bed before the light of the day has started. This stanza is conveying that in this is all occurring in the earliest hours of the day, before the day even starts for many, many people. I think the poem is calling on this time so that the reader will picture a time that is still as they read the poem.

No, they are simply distraught over *the total emptiness forever*, that after they die, there is nothing, nowhere to be, nowhere to go. The saddest part is that they are convinced this situation is coming, it is coming soon, and that there is *nothing more terrible, nothing more true*.

Moreover, the third stanza undoubtedly says what kind of fear they believe and tease the life after death.

***This is a special way of being afraid
No trick dispels. Religion used to try,
That vast moth-eaten musical brocade
Created to pretend we never die,
And specious stuff that says no rational being
Can fear a thing it cannot feel, not seeing
that this is what we fear - no sight, no sound,
No touch or taste or smell, nothing to think with,
Nothing to love or link with,
The anaesthetic from which none come roun***

That stanza seems like what is the religion try to deliver the essential of belief in anything abstract cannot distract the feeling of death dread. The immortal life after death is announced from any religion to achieve that there is no emptiness of life.

This is a special way of being afraid

The first line on the third stanza is about the fear of death being an irrational fear. They cannot hear, feel, see, smell or touch death so why they should be afraid of it.

This way makes a contrastive view towards death by theism and non theism people. Their disbelief of God shepherd their thought in threatening from death and lack in optimism of being immortal. Because most religions require several treatments as the result 1 human will get in after life. Commonly those are called heaven and hell. When people do not have their faith in a matter of life after death, so they have no need to do the best for their future to gain what it is so called heaven. Nevertheless, we never know what kind of heaven is but we can still obtain our purpose in immortal life. It is the same with my explanation from the first subchapter, the first line in the poem *Aubade* by Philip Larkin let us know how people do anything whatever they like without consideration of their judgment after life. It is because of their disbelief.

Whether a person with disbelief in religion find their realization of death, the cessation of all consciousness and feeling for oneself as well as the loss of loved ones, remains an experience of agonizing proportions. The only appropriate

response is despair. Despair is endemic to the human condition and the inability to experience despair is an even greater torture. (Kierkegaard, 1849/1954).

Nothing to love or link with

From line 29 on the third stanza, those words clearly bring the meaning why the fear of death cannot be rejecting? It is somewhat puzzling to the reader that appear to be loved or that particularly to form lasting relationships with many people. So perhaps it is a regret towards the way of life, predominantly by itself. People are always sad about dying. For now this is what we fears: death, and that too without any sense of belonging, especially for people who deny about the immortality of afterlife.

The poem pictures of religion as *That vast moth-eaten musical brocade/ Created to pretend we never die* is as good as music that one remembers it almost every time one enters a church. But the rest of the verse, in which the poem itemizes just what it is that we dread about extinction, for me at any rate, spoils it. It lacks the bleakness, and brilliance, as the full suffocate death fears end and day begins. There are many ways of scaring one. However this one beats it all. No trick can dismiss this fear for it is real. Religion tries to alleviate our fears through repeated sermons (musical brocade) that death is a journey to another life. These dictums are 'moth-eaten' as they are age old. Further, they preach that a rational being can fear only something that it has felt. The poet emphatically asserts that however this is precisely what one is petrified of-the unfathomable, the inscrutable. It is something the major sensory perceptions cannot apprehend.

Based on Karl Max statement about the relation of human with their God has never been united because the existence of God itself is still be a big question to whom deal with Marx's argument about God existence and the position of the religion.

Considering that believed people turn to religion in order to dull the pain caused by the reality of social situations; that is, Marx suggests religion as an attempt at transcending the material state of affairs in a society the pain of class oppression by effectively creating a dream world, rendering the religious believer amenable to social control and exploitation in this world while they hope for relief and justice in life after death.

This dramatizes the most heartrending belief from which the persons suffers. Religion, according to this poor unrealized soul, is just a *vast moth-eaten musical brocade / Created to pretend we never die*. It wrenches the heart of the reader who understands that this people's ignorance is what is dooming them. Atheist does not understand that a human being is essentially an immortal soul who has a body and mind, and if fact the soul can never die.

Unfortunately for his mental and spiritual health, it thinks the religious belief that teaches humanity about its immortality is merely *specious stuff*. It thus deeply mourns losing his physical body for it believes that without it will have no awareness or consciousness.

This technique is used predominantly in the second stanza: *no sight, no sound, no touch or taste or smell, nothing*. The negative words accentuate the sincere misfortune of those who do lack the human senses. By only describing

what one is missing, the reader focuses on what is lacking, rather than focusing on the positive qualities that a person embodies.

4.3 The Atheism's Fear of Death as Showing Ambivalence

Death no matter how far away is always threatening whenever, wherever, whoever and however we are.

A small, unfocussed blur, a standing chill

It was not a matter of if, but when and how. Nothing we could do would change that fact. Things can distract them, in furnace fear when we are caught without people or drink, but nothing changes the fact.

*People or drink. Courage is no good:
It means not scaring others. Being brave*

Personal aims differ from one individual to another but by not putting oneself at risk at all; one can never understand a full sense of achievement. Clearly the poem does not agree with this: *Courage is no good: it means not scaring others*. This italic statement implies that although courage masks the inevitability of death, there is not much point in avoiding the subject in a pursuit for happiness, because everyone will die eventually anyhow. By saying that *no good* at all can come from being courageous, the poem suggests that bravery and recklessness are pointless because there are no benefits, and therefore it perceives courage as immoral and unjustified.

Death is no different whined at than withstood

The reader is given the implication that if they can comprehend the fear and unease associated with death, they can choose whether to live life fully or to

await death: *death is no different whined at than withstood*. This statement shows that regardless of whether one succumbs to fate or tries to shield them from it, the brutality of death will not differ, it is still inevitable. As a result, the reader is left with the option of waiting for their death, or living a fulfilled life before their life ends. The alliteration used twice for both *death* and *different*, and *whined* and *withstood*, again creates a happiness rhythm, contrasting vastly to the subject of the poem. The word *no* used in this sentence provides the statement with negativity, representative of the negativity of death.

The final stanza of this poem is about what happens when death finally gets a hold of us. We know it is true, it is real, yet still cannot accept it. Even though it is not accepted, the world we lived in adapts to life without us, as if their part of the world was rented. Our house is sold, their possessions auctioned. So there is no another place for us to live in this universe.

That first line of the last stanza records the point at which everyday reality comes back into focus. As the last line shows, it is a reality dependent on the familiar and the habitual.

Slowly light strengthens, and the room takes shape.

The poet seeks refuge in the mechanical routine of life to evade fears of death. It is just the same what is talked in the last stanza in *Aubade* poem.

***One side will have to go.
Meanwhile telephones crouch, getting ready to ring
In locked-up offices, and all the uncaring
Intricate rented world begins to rouse.
The sky is white as clay, with no sun.***

It always lingers at the end of vision something that remains as inevitable in spite of all progressiveness. All of a sudden the life fills with sunlight, and the truth dawns in on it. This is the reality of death, it cannot be escaped, and neither can it be accepted. Therefore, one of these sides has to be left behind. The life stands plain as an emptiness, reminding one of the futilities of human existence yet again. The poet indulges in a mechanized routine, it robs the meaningfulness of life, yet it is the mechanical routine that enables to elude the ruminations over death.

Finally, now we are wondering why are atheist people scaring with the death? Are they really afraid of death? From those two simple questions we can surely find the real answer based on our analysis above.

The poem by Philip Larkin entitled *Aubade* described the truth matter that happen in the atheist's personality and also the other way that atheist do to solve their inconvenient perception about death. It is clear enough from the analysis above that atheism deny the existence of God or Goddess. Then, it becomes more understandable why they are afraid to face the death, it is all because they also deny anything which is abstract and logic. When they reject that religion told about the immortality of the soul that a soul never be dead, they begin to think over what they are doing after death pick them up is just nothing.

That is the reason why they fear of death, because the only thing that they will find afterlife is a never end emptiness. This situation is never changed when their idea which is rejecting an abstract thing, illogical, and out of ordinary thought are being the main reason of their anxiety. However, they tried to find the

answer to prove the truth about the existing of God or anything which is illogical and out of human minds, but the answers are always far away from their expectation or maybe out of the question.

After all consideration above about atheism concept and its fear of death just like what is *Aubade* poem show us in the first stanza until the third we may conclude that the death perfectly interfere a life of an atheist.

Nevertheless, atheism is a disbelief of anything which is in illusion, illogical and abstract but death is absolutely real. From several parts of stanza in *Aubade* they indicate that there is no denials existing about death for them. Their best perception about life is that they acknowledge of something factual happen, and death is one aspect in life. But then, just like the second question that was stated above is atheism really afraid of death or not?

Based on our study above we are clearly showed that the poem gives true answer. Atheism believes that the death cannot be avoided, and they are not frightened to face the death, but more complex than that the matter is emptiness forever after the death coming.

In contrast with our analysis above, the poem *Aubade* by Philip Larkin give a different contradictory answer with its first idea about the influence of death towards atheism. The two last stanzas in *Aubade* poem perform a condition with no big burden in their minds. It is so different if we compare it with the imagery of previous stanzas. At the end of the poem, it shows that there is no need to fear of death or the afterlife. What they need to do is continuing their daily life just as a part of the stanza saya:

Work has to be done.

Postmen like doctors go from house to house

What is meant from the stanza above is even though their fear of after life cannot be solved but their routines cannot be disturbed, either in other words, atheism is going to say that what will appear in all illusions is just a nightmare, so they do need to be afraid of it. Continue the life and not recall the threatened perception of illogical idea. From this study in analyzing *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin, I found the answer that the death does not become a threat for an atheist but the afterlife is the matter of emptiness that they are afraid of. Because their logical mind think that there is nothing they can do after the death come to end their life. It becomes clearer when the two last stanzas deliver the meaning of true connection between the afterlife and atheism. Those two last stanzas are comprehensible enough and show imagery of ordinary life without any serious burden in atheist's mind.

4.4 My Response to *Aubade* Poem by Philip Larkin

The poem *Aubade* by Philip Larkin is separated in different enlightened from each stanza. When we read this poem, each stanza delivers different meaning and perception because those enlighten finally shape the message from the poem.

The first stanza in *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin is the opening from a whole message that will be delivered from the poem.

***I work all day, and get half-drunk at night.
Waking at four to soundless dark, I stare.
In time the curtain-edges will grow light.
Till then I see what's really always there:
Unresting death, a whole day nearer now,
Making all thought impossible but how***

*And where and when I shall myself die.
Arid interrogation: yet the dread
Of dying, and being dead,
Flashes afresh to hold and horrify.*

The first stanza above shows the reason of the message to be conveyed by the poem. The daily routine and then it also makes the poet begin to feel bored with the monotonous daily life that causes their minds to start thinking over about something that is not known at the future because no one has ever experienced this thing. When it starts off, talking about lying in bed before the light of the day has started; this stanza is conveying that this is all occurring in the earliest hours of the day, before the day even starts for many, many people. I think the poem is calling on this time so that the reader will picture a time that is still as they read the poem. Questions are arising at the moment they start thinking how, where, and when they shall die.

A part of the first stanza also performed ambivalence in the reflection of their faith in death and also rejection the life after death. They are surely mentioned that the death will come sooner or later, but they condemn themselves not to belief the condition after life. The next stanza is more clearly describe their fear to face the death.

The second stanza in *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin indicates that their fear of death bring their thoughts to the direction that makes no sense because no one ever tell them after experiencing death.

*The mind blanks at the glare. Not in remorse
- The good not done, the love not given, time
Torn off unused - nor wretchedly because
An only life can take so long to climb
Clear of its wrong beginnings, and may never;*

*But at the total emptiness forever,
The sure extinction that we travel to
And shall be lost in always. Not to be here,
Not to be anywhere,
And soon; nothing more terrible, nothing more true.*

The stanza above is clearly conveying that they are not being concerned by their poor life that trouble most people or that they have wasted too much time in foolishness. People distraught over directing their anxiety confrontation with the concept of death. The conscious awareness and the majority retreat from these realizations of being afraid with the total emptiness after the death come to end their life. Nonetheless, most people are confronted with the essential ambiguity of life and with fears of the unknown that exist in their unconscious.

The term of emptiness is what they have always thought that after the death coming it is just nothing, nowhere to be, nowhere to go. The most distressed part is that they are convinced that this situation is coming; it is coming soon, and that there is just a time that they've never been in such more terrible moment.

Dealing with the second stanza, the next stanza still deliver the same message conveying the death dread. The main object is still talking about how atheism views toward death. Their logical thought cannot convince their anxiety of death.

*This is a special way of being afraid
No trick dispels. Religion used to try,
That vast, moth-eaten musical brocade
Created to pretend we never die,
And specious stuff that says No rational being
Can fear a thing it will not feel, not seeing
That this is what we fear - no sight, no sound,
No touch or taste or smell, nothing to think with,
Nothing to love or link with,
The anesthetic from which none come round.*

The message which delivered in the third stanza emphasizes a condition that a religion cannot do anything to ease their fear to face the death. Indeed the quote from the third stanza above suggests that the religion has tried to convey the eternal life after death. When their fear has become excessive then this really will disturb their minds, although it is not necessarily true according to their belief. Atheism is a rejection of illogical thought, but this matter successfully bothers their serenity of life and it become worse because they imagined they cannot hear, feel, see, smell or touch death so why should they be afraid of it.

A condition filled with emptiness, they cannot hear, touch, love, or even know anything else than themselves is their perfect loneliness that haunted their minds. The essential meaning of death is the condition for releasing all that we held in the world during our lifetime and switch to an eternal life after death. However, if we are faced with a different understanding of death as experienced by atheists, death is likely to be the most disturbing word on their minds.

The fourth stanza in *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin is a new part in this poem that delivers the answer from those question an anxiety of death. There is no doubt that death cannot be postponed or even rejected, but from atheism point of view it appears a different perception about the death. Based on my study in the previous subchapter, particularly the poem entitled *Aubade* by Philip Larkin, it had a vision to convey the anxiety of death from atheism perception.

*And so it stays just on the edge of vision,
A small, unfocused blur, a standing chill
That slows each impulse down to indecision.
Most things may never happen: this one will,
And realisation of it rages out
In furnace-fear when we are caught without*

***People or drink. Courage is no good:
It means not scaring others. Being brave
Lets no one off the grave.
Death is no different whined at than withstood.***

An absolute death will never be denied, nothing we could do would change a moment when we face the death. An individual has their own concept about death from one individual to another. A truth apprehending of achievement can never be clearly understood. In fact, the fourth stanza in this poem obviously did not agree with a brief understanding that an intensive death dread is not necessary. The poem implies that although courage to face death, there is not much point in avoiding the subject in a pursuit for happiness, because everyone will absolutely die. The poem suggests that courage is worthless; as a result it perceives courage as immoral and unjustified because there are nothing we can do.

The poem implicitly tells the reader to choose whether to live life fully or to await death. It shows that regardless of fate or tries to shield feeling a fear of death, because the savage death is still inevitable. As a result, there are only two options left. First option is waiting for their death and second is living a rewarded life before the death ends their life. Contrasting enormously to the topic of the poem, the poem again creates a happiness rhythm because several lines use the words “no”, the poem does not mean to make the concept of death be worse.

The last stanza of this poem is strengthening what is actually being discussed in the fourth stanza. The fifth stanza is about a true intension behind the main conflict in the previous stanza. We know that death is a real destiny for

everybody, yet some people still cannot accept the after life concept. Even though it is not accepted just like atheist concept about the life after death.

*Slowly light strengthens, and the room takes shape.
It stands plain as a wardrobe, what we know,
Have always known, know that we can't escape,
Yet can't accept. One side will have to go.
Meanwhile telephones crouch, getting ready to ring
In locked-up offices, and all the uncaring
Intricate rented world begins to rouse.
The sky is white as clay, with no sun.
Work has to be done.
Postmen like doctors go from house to house*

Firstly, the poem shows the focus on which everyday reality turn into focus. As the last line shows, it is a reality dependent on the familiar and the habitual. Everyone cannot be escaped, and neither can it be accepted is the real meaning of death.

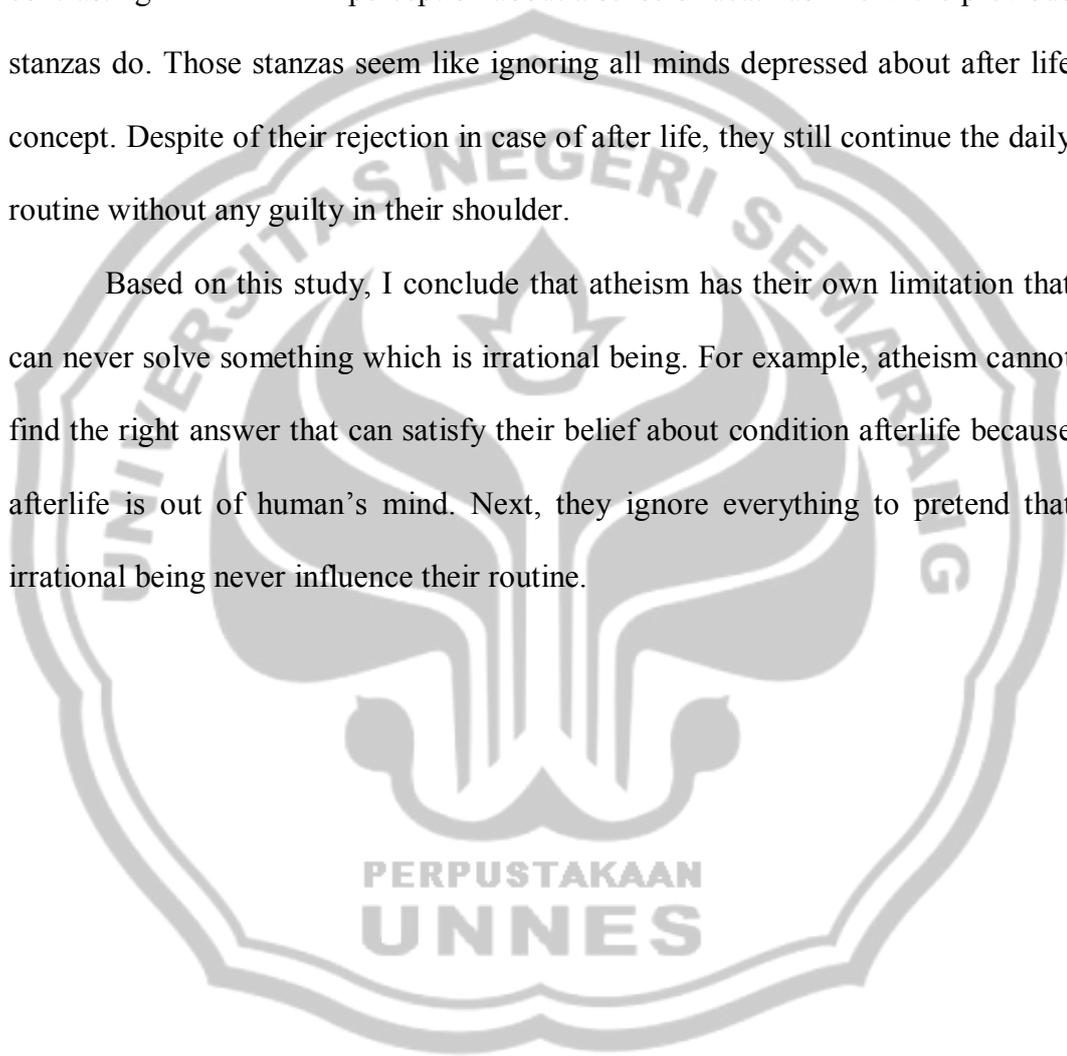
The next lines in that stanza still try to comprehensively show the real message that the poem convey to the reader. Those lines showed a daily routine that never be distracted from feeling of dread death. It means that they consider the death will eventually come to end up peoples life whether they do not believe in eternal after life or not, but those things paradoxically do not make sense anymore in their daily routine.

In other words, I want to clearly convey the message from this poem to reader that atheism concern about their denial of God existence and all the things which are abstract and illogic. One of the examples which is being discussed in this poem is death. They do not really fear to face the death but they are afraid of a total emptiness forever after live. Somehow several religions explain about an eternal life, commonly known as heaven and hell. Atheism denies the existence of

God and neither is religions experience. They find no evidence that can convince them about the immortality as religion does.

The poem *Aubade* by Philip Larkin points out a contradiction to the after life understanding by atheism. In the two last stanza of this poem indicate a contrasting perception about a sense of death as like in the previous stanzas do. Those stanzas seem like ignoring all minds depressed about after life concept. Despite of their rejection in case of after life, they still continue the daily routine without any guilty in their shoulder.

Based on this study, I conclude that atheism has their own limitation that can never solve something which is irrational being. For example, atheism cannot find the right answer that can satisfy their belief about condition afterlife because afterlife is out of human's mind. Next, they ignore everything to pretend that irrational being never influence their routine.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The last chapter includes two subchapters, they are conclusions and suggestions. Conclusions of the data analysis are presented in the first subchapter as the summary of the final project and the second subchapter presents some suggestions that may be useful for the readers.

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the analysis in the previous chapter, I present the conclusion related to the poem *Aubade* by Philip Larkin. Here, I make a conclusion based on my analysis in finding the atheism point of view towards death in the *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin. The comparison of several indications between fear of death and atheism which arise in the *Aubade* poem by Philip Larkin will lead us to the conclusion if there were no evidence for the existence or nonexistence of gods, atheism would be the only rational position to take.

Firstly, based on my analysis in the previous chapter I can conclude the definition of atheism as a disbelief of God existence. In order to move from the default position of atheism to theism, a rational person would require credible evidence for the existence of God. Similarly, credible evidence for the nonexistence of Gods would be required. Some people find that the evidence that God or Gods do not exist is convincing and that atheism is justified. The

consequences in rejecting God existence is a lack of belief about all the things which are illogic and abstract that derived from God and deliver through religion.

Their logical minds lead them in a term of disbelief about death. Atheism concept will never accept an experience without any evidence. The existence of eternal life after the death comes to end up somebody's life; atheism view is frightened with emptiness after death. The reasons are atheist imagined a never end sleep without nothing they can do, love, touch, or whereas link with somebody else.

This "sense of danger" inspires atheist to make preparations so that they are no longer in the danger. Similarly, they are aware to face a moment that they cannot do anything about the fact of death. However, the only choice they have is continue their life with a noble time, so that they can seize control over how they prepare for death and how they die. Keep in mind that Atheism is not a culture. As the word implies, Atheism is a lack of belief in God. People tend to make the mistake of thinking of Atheism as just another form of religion; we are all individuals and handle death in our own ways.

5.2 Suggestion

On the basis of the conclusion above, there are several suggestions that the writer wants to give to the readers. First, the understanding of belief in God is very important for any people, because human belief has been one of the central issues of self perception.

This study is also really suggested for those who are lacking in the similar belief. Moreover, this poem also conveyed us many moral values to which we can use as references. For example, how to use our lifetime to be not negligent and then God will do the rest.

Therefore, the explanation above is supposed to present a better description about concept of death towards atheism point of view. In addition, I do hope that there will be a further study and research about this topic. I recommend for the future research to talk about some other perceptions of atheism about religion and human life in general.



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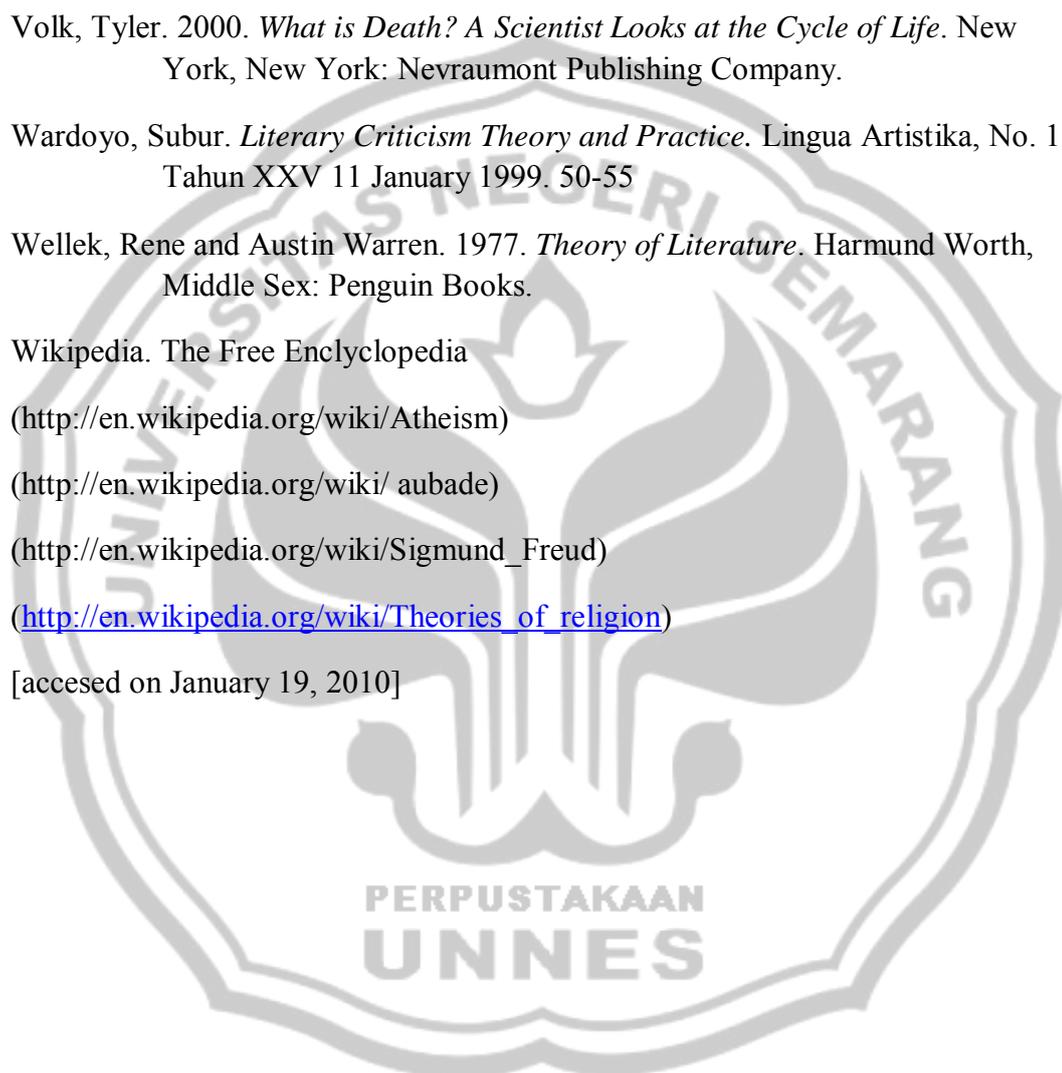
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APPENDIX I

The Analysis of *Aubade* Poem by Philip Larkin

NO	WORDS/ UTTERANCES	FOUND		MEANINGS
		stanza	line	
1.	<i>work all day;</i> <i>get half drunk;</i> <i>at the night</i>	1 1	1 1	The poem seems to compare the condition in the day and night. It shows very mundane routines. <i>I work all day, and get half-drunk at night.</i>
2.	<i>I see what's really</i> <i>always there;</i> <i>Unresting death;</i> <i>day nearer</i>	1 1 1	4 5 5	The poem seems to show an awareness that death is coming. <i>Till then I see what's really always there:</i> <i>Unresting death, a whole day nearer now,</i>
3	<i>How;</i> <i>Where;</i> <i>when</i>	1 1 1	6 7 7	The poem shows that it cannot think of anything else just wondering. <i>Making all thought impossible but how</i> <i>And where and when I shall myself die.</i>
4.	<i>the dread;</i> <i>dying;</i> <i>being dead</i>	1 1 1	8 9 9	Those lines indicates a condition that is being afraid about death. <i>Arid interrogation: yet the dread Of dying, and being dead,</i>
5.	<i>Lost;</i> <i>Not to be here;</i>	2 2	18 18	The poet they must die someday in and their perception of after life

	<i>Not to be anywhere</i>	2	19	is never happened in a negative term. <i>And shall be lost in always. Not to be here, Not to be anywhere,</i>
6.	<i>blanks at the glare;</i> <i>Not in remorse</i>	2 2	1 1	It makes clear that atheism are not being bothered by the ordinary life regrets just like the essential ambiguity of life and with fears of the unknown that exist in their unconscious. <i>The mind blanks at the glare. Not in remorse</i>
7.	<i>the total emptiness</i> <i>forever;</i> <i>The sure extinction</i>	2	6	There is nothing, nowhere to be, nowhere to go in the after life. <i>But at the total emptiness forever, The sure extinction that we travel to</i>
8.	<i>nothing more</i> <i>terrible;</i> <i>nothing more true</i>	2 2	10 10	The saddest part is that they are convinced this situation is coming, it is coming soon. <i>And soon; nothing more terrible, nothing more true</i>
9.	<i>a special way</i> <i>being afraid</i>	3 3	1 1	This line is about the fear of death being an irrational fear. <i>This is a special way of being afraid</i>
10.	<i>Not;</i> <i>No;</i> <i>Nothing</i>	3 3 3	26 27 28-29	These words clearly bring the meaning without any sense of belonging in rejecting the immortality after life.

				<p><i>Can fear a thing it will not feel, not seeing</i></p> <p><i>That this is what we fear - no sight, no sound,</i></p> <p><i>No touch or taste or smell, nothing to think with,</i></p> <p><i>Nothing to love or link with</i></p>
11.	<p><i>musical brocade; pretend we never die</i></p>	<p>3</p> <p>3</p>	<p>23</p> <p>24</p>	<p>Religion shows people's ignorance that their soul can never die.</p> <p><i>That vast, moth-eaten musical brocade</i></p> <p><i>Created to pretend we never die,</i></p>
12.	<p><i>specious stuff</i></p>	<p>3</p> <p>2</p>	<p>25</p> <p>12</p>	<p>To give fluency humanity believes that without immortality will have no awareness or consciousness.</p> <p><i>And specious stuff that says No rational being</i></p>
13.	<p><i>A small; unfocussed blur; a standing chill</i></p>	<p>4</p> <p>4</p> <p>4</p>	<p>31</p> <p>31</p> <p>31</p>	<p>Here the poet uses those phrases as a anaphors, because the poem give a restatement that they can never distract the death, but still they don't know when and where.</p> <p><i>A small, unfocused blur, a standing chill</i></p>
14.	<p><i>Courage and no goods</i></p>	<p>4</p> <p>4</p>	<p>37</p> <p>37</p>	<p>The poet seems to give up from their dread death that bravery and recklessness are pointless because there are no benefits.</p> <p><i>People or drink. Courage is no</i></p>

				<i>good:</i>
15.	<i>death and no different and whined and withstood</i>	4 4 4 4	40 40 40 40	These alliteration uses to make a contrasting vastly to the subject of the poem. <i>Death is no different whined at than withstood.</i>
16.	<i>light strengthens and the room takes shape</i>	5 5 5	41 41 41	The poet again using anaphors to contrast the subject from this poem. The poet seeks refuge in the mechanical routine of life to evade fears of death. <i>Slowly light strengthens, and the room takes shape.</i>
17.	<i>Work; Postmen and Doctors; go from house to house</i>	5 5 5 5	49 50 50 50	What is meant from those words is even though their fear of after life is cannot be solve but their routines also cannot be disturbed. <i>Work has to be done. Postmen like doctors go from house to house</i>

APPENDIX II

Aubade

by Philip Larkin

I.

I work all day, and get half-drunk at night.
 Waking at four to soundless dark, I stare.
 In time the curtain-edges will grow light.
 Till then I see what's really always there:
 Unresting death, a whole day nearer now,
 Making all thought impossible but how
 And where and when I shall myself die.
 Arid interrogation: yet the dread
 Of dying, and being dead,
 Flashes afresh to hold and horrify.

II.

The mind blanks at the glare. Not in remorse
 - The good not done, the love not given, time
 Torn off unused - nor wretchedly because
 An only life can take so long to climb
 Clear of its wrong beginnings, and may never;
 But at the total emptiness forever,
 The sure extinction that we travel to
 And shall be lost in always. Not to be here,
 Not to be anywhere,
 And soon; nothing more terrible, nothing more true.

III.

This is a special way of being afraid
No trick dispels. Religion used to try,
That vast, moth-eaten musical brocade
Created to pretend we never die,
And specious stuff that says No rational being
Can fear a thing it will not feel, not seeing
That this is what we fear - no sight, no sound,
No touch or taste or smell, nothing to think with,
Nothing to love or link with,
The anesthetic from which none come round.

IV.

And so it stays just on the edge of vision,
A small, unfocused blur, a standing chill
That slows each impulse down to indecision.
Most things may never happen: this one will,
And realisation of it rages out
In furnace-fear when we are caught without
People or drink. Courage is no good:
It means not scaring others. Being brave
Lets no one off the grave.
Death is no different whined at than withstood.

V.

Slowly light strengthens, and the room takes shape.
It stands plain as a wardrobe, what we know,
Have always known, know that we can't escape,
Yet can't accept. One side will have to go.
Meanwhile telephones crouch, getting ready to ring
In locked-up offices, and all the uncaring
Intricate rented world begins to rouse.
The sky is white as clay, with no sun.
Work has to be done.
Postmen like doctors go from house to house

