

THE IMAGE OF THE BULLFIGHT AND BULLFIGHTER IN 20TH CENTURY SPANISH POETRY: LORCA'S ELEGY *LAMENT FOR IGNACIO SÁNCHEZ MEJÍAS**

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Ebru Yener GÖKŞENLİ
İstanbul Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi
İspanyol Dili ve Edebiyatı
eyener@istanbul.edu.tr

Abstract

The Spanish people worship bulls with the characteristics like aggressiveness, power and fearlessness, and also worship the bullfighters that fight a duel with bulls. The tradition of bullfight defines the basic character of a nation which perceives life as becoming continuously face to face with death. This character makes the Spaniards consider bullfights as a form of art and the possibility of death becomes an inspiration of this deadly art. The famous Spanish poet Federico García Lorca calls as *duende*, the muse that comes up at the time when the bullfighter comes face to face with death. In this study it's aimed to indicate the roots of the Spaniard's affection for bullfighting. As in 20th century Spanish poetry bullfights theme and image of death is cultivated rather frequently, we'll take Lorca's poem *Lament for Ignacio Sánchez Mejías* as the object of the study and we'll intend to analyze this elegy in the aspects of Ignacio's bullfighter figure, the expression of death and mourning and also the symbolical images drawn by Lorca.

Key Words: Spanish poetry, bullfight, bullfighter, Lorca, elegy, death.

20. YÜZYIL İSPANYOL ŞİİRİNDE BOĞA GÜREŞİ VE MATADOR İMGESİ: LORCA'NIN IGNACIO SÁNCHEZ MEJÍAS'A AĞIT ÖRNEĞİ

Öz

İspanyol halkı, kızgın, güçlü ve korkusuz doğasıyla bilinen boğalara ve onlarla duello yapan boğa güreşçilerine karşı büyük bir sevgi duyar. Boğa güreşi geleneği, yaşamı sürekli olarak ölümlerle yüz yüze gelmek olarak algılayan bir ulusun temel karakterini tanımlar. Bu karakter İspanyollara boğa güreşinin bir sanat türü olduğunu düşündürmüş, ölüm olasılığı ise bu sanattaki ilhamı oluşturmuştur. Ünlü İspanyol şair Federico García Lorca boğa güreşçisinin ölümüyle yüz yüze geldiğinde ilham perisi olarak tanımladığı *duende*'nin ortaya çıktığından bahsetmiştir. Bu çalışmada da İspanyolların boğa güreşine olan sevgilerinin kökenine inmek amaçlanmaktadır. 20. Yüzyıl İspanyol şiirinde boğa güreşi teması ve ölüm imgesi sıkça işlendiğinden Lorca'nın Ignacio Sánchez Mejías'a Ağıt adlı şiirini inceleme nesnemiz olarak ele alacağız. Bu şiir aracılığıyla Ignacio'nun boğa güreşçisi imgesi, ölümün ve yas tutmanın şiirdeki ifadesi ve Lorca'nın resmettiği simgesel imgeler de irdelenecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İspanyol şiiri, boğa güreşi, boğa güreşçisi, Lorca, ağıt, ölüm.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Spain is in an important geographical region which has been the cradle of different civilizations throughout centuries and where various traditions collate. One of the most important cultural heritages of this passionate Mediterranean country is beyond any doubt man's struggle against bull. Today it is being assessed as the symbol of power and competence.

Although there have been different approaches to bullfights in Spanish History, the interest shown for wild bulls has always increased and is defined as the expression of Spanish way of existence. The figure of the bullfighter has been received as an epic hero and the loss of this worshipped hero had a negative impact on both folk and the artists of Spain. In this paper we will intend to trail the importance of bullfights and the bullfighters for Spanish folk and study these images through Federico García Lorca's unforgettable elegy for his bullfighter friend *Lament for Ignacio Sánchez Mejías*. Death and mourning are the basic themes of this long poem.

The first part of the 20th century was a hard period where Spain had to face a great human loss and soon after had to live the effects of the Second World War as scarcity. For this reason the mourning in the above mentioned period is a tone of expression also by the means of literature. The majority of the post-war writers and also some pre-war writers, dramaturges and poets have this mournful tone¹. In the novel *Five Hours with Mario* of Miguel Delibes, in the theatre play *The House of Bernarda Alba* of Federico García Lorca and also in Lorca's lament for his bullfighter friend, the theme of mourning is treated delicately. However to understand this long poem it will be useful firstly to know in detail the origin of the Spaniard's affection for wild bulls and what it meant for this people. Then we will try to trail the perception of death and the reflection of mourning through the verses of the poet.

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF WILD BULLS IN DIFFERENT CULTURES AND BULLFIGHTS IN SPAIN

In this section we'll try to portray bull's importance in different cultures and the evolution of the bullfighting tradition in Spain. Its origins, the spirit of the Spanish people and their interest for this challenge will also be explained.

2.1. The Importance of Wild Bulls in Different Cultures

The bull, which is the symbol of virility, fertility and bravery, has been a creature that men adore since ancient eras. 10,000 years before the bullfight, the people that were living in the prehistoric times, had respected the bull by drawing

¹ This tone is also reflected in the style of the poem *Lament for Ignacio Sánchez Mejías* that comes through in the poem's syntax, structure and vocabulary. The poem as a whole relays a depressive moment that is filled with sorrow.

it on the caves' walls. The Cave of Altamira, Cogull and Albarracín in Spain are the most outstanding examples with their wall drawings which are thousands years old (Rios Ruiz, 1990: 18). Many cultures on earth were fascinated by the image of the bull. In Egypt and India, in Mesopotamia, in Greece, in the Celtic world and Hispanic culture, this magnificent animal served as a mirror. Man saw his own instincts reflected on the bull. Bull is the symbol of an intractable violence and fury, at the same time of an unstoppable ardor. It is an uncontrollable power, a dark and destructive energy. On the other hand, in most cultures bull was considered as the representative of virility and also of burning desires. The Indian Nation went to the Shiva Temples to adore it and the Palaces of Crete were decorated by its drawings. Countless Pagans sacrificed it and offered to gods by ceremonies. In return for this sacrifice, they asked for forgiveness of their sins, and wished to be protected from diseases and death. The Romans continued these sacrifices with their games in the arena. Spain defended this belief of salvation by shedding blood with all the passion of mysticism. And the Spanish man challenges his bravery by wild bulls that live in the same land with him and satisfies his desire for deadly games.

2.1.1. The Spirit of the Spanish People

The Spanish people not only worship bulls that take place in mythology with such characteristics as aggressiveness, power and fearlessness, but also worship the bullfighters that fight a duel with bulls. The tradition of bullfight that the Spaniards call as National Fiesta, defines the basic character of a nation which perceive life as becoming continuously face to face with death. Spain had also its name written in history by some great explorations and won victories on many continents. For all these reasons Spain's spirit is rigorous, proud and passionate. The famous Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset defines the uniqueness of Iberian nation with its struggle with bull dating back to thousands of years. Ortega y Gasset also calls attention to the importance of bullfights for Spanish people with these words: "If bullfights can't be understood, to understand our people's psychology will get really harder" (Rios Ruiz, 1990:105). As a result of this intense interest of the society shown to this deadly struggle between man and bull, bullfight became a constantly organized activity in the Iberian Peninsula. The effects of this long-established organization are reflected in some fields, such as art, industry, commerce and language.

2.2. The Origins of Bullfights in Spain and Its Evolution as a Tradition

The thing that inspired Spanish bullfighting had been the games which were first performed in the Island of Crete and were to be called later as the art of *CurroCúchares* (Toro Buiza, 1969: 200). The duel done by a javelin on a horse is considered to be seen by Spanish raiders and carried to public celebrations as a game using the wild bulls that were living on the rural area of Spain. Fighting bulls

on foot was different from fighting on horseback. In the history of bullfighting the first name that fought bulls on foot was Pepete el de Ronda. This bullfight took place in the Arena of Seville in 1740 (Rios Ruiz, 1990: 37). According to the documents, the first bullfighting was organized in the 11th Century to celebrate a local or maybe a national event. Bullfights were also organized for some special occasions such as the birth of a prince or his baptism, the arrival of a consul or the wedding of some important people. Historical documents report that in the city of Avila and in Segovia in the 11th Century bullfights were organized in order to celebrate weddings. In the Middle Age, bullfights frequently took place in weddings. Moreover, bullfights had become a totem for men to perform their responsibilities of virility. Thereby bullfights also gained sacredness (Izquierdo, 1972: 12-13). Bullfights researcher Francisco López Izquierdo reports that these fights were being celebrated in Spain before the Muslims came to the Peninsula for the first time. Izquierdo also defends this thesis with these words: "Bullfights had been organized at least one and a half century before it was celebrated by the Muslims in Seville. This means that its origins are Spanish not Arabic."

2.2.1. The Interest of Spanish Aristocracy in Bullfights

Some imperial weddings had also been celebrated with bullfighting. In 1144, bullfighting was a part of the wedding celebrations of the king of Navarra Don García and Doña Urraca (Rios Ruiz, 1990: 36). The Catholic Kings of Spain considered bullfighting as an Arabian game and did not support it. The noble women of that period were avoiding going to bullfights as common spectators. They were only attending to this ceremony to give the awards to winners. Queen Isabella defined the bullfight she attended in Medina del Campo as a horrifying fiesta (Boado, Cebolla, 1976: 21). Nevertheless the Catholic Queen herself ordered a bullfighting festival with eight bulls for thanksgiving of his son's birth on the 1st of July in 1478, and one week later for celebrating his baptism (Toro Buiza, 1947: 26). While Spain was being governed by Austrian Monarchy a special importance was given to the bullfighting fiesta. Carlos I himself tried various times bullfighting on horseback. Felipe V, the first member of the House of Bourbon to rule as king of Spain, did not like this festival, so the nobles of that time abstained from bullfighting on horseback.

2.2.2. Bullfighting in the Age of Enlightenment and in the 18th and 19th Centuries

The Age of Enlightenment was an era that showed extraordinary conflicts about bullfighting in Spain. In this period the opponents of bullfighting appeared with a new attitude that would reach the present day. This attitude was the protection of animals. Due to this idea, that first began in France then spread to Europe and America, new sanctions related with the protection of animals could be proposed as laws. Cossio has mentioned in his studies on bullfighting in the 18th century about the ruler's confusion of thought about bullfighting (1981: 874-

877). Only Felipe V acted differently from the rulers before and after him by subsidizing bullfighters and persons working in the arena. But Carlos III and Carlos IV made laws against bullfighting between 1785 and 1805 by influence of France. Especially in the years 1804 and 1805 these laws were executed strictly. Count of Aranda and Queen Isabella were the frontiers of a group who were against bullfighting in their era. But José Bonaparte and Fernando VII lifted the ban and carried out new arrangements (Delgado Ruiz, 1986: 19). It is observed in the Spanish history that bullfighting was a thread or a usable subject for the politicians.

2.3. Coming Face to Face with Death in War of Courage: The Bull and the Bullfighter

With its image on the map, the Spanish lands seem like a bull's skin and they are also mentioned by the name of this animal's hard skin. The bull can lift up easily a rider with his horse by using its horns. With these properties, the wild bull is always ready to fight with his enemies till death. He is also so clever that, according to a Spanish saying, it is said that: "A bull can learn something in only 20 minutes, which a man cannot learn in his whole life". The courage of the bull and the bullfighter resembles with each other. The bull overcomes its fear for human being by its courage. Also the bullfighter can soothe his fear for bull by fighting bravely. A moment of carelessness of the bullfighter can result in a deathly end.

The writer Gregorio Corrachano describes a good bullfighter as "A person who has a fine observation ability and a sufficient angle of vision. He also must recognize the bull's race, have an adaptation capability and dominate the motions of the bull" (1969:270). The famous bullfighter Francisco Montes "Paquiro", who made reforms in bullfighting in the first half of 19th century, has indicated the characteristics of an ideal bullfighter as "a person who is brave, slim and should have a perfect knowledge about his profession" (1969:252). This definition is valid up to today. The only difference is that calmness has taken the place of being slim. The aesthetic appearance of the bullfighter had replaced the expectation of being slim in the 19th century. But it is not a coincidence that most bullfighters are slim. During the enormous fear and the inner struggle, the bullfighter sweats at least one liter in only ten minutes.

3. THE REFLECTION OF BULLFIGHTING IN SPANISH LITERATURE

Bullfights are mentioned to be taken place in important festivals in the frontier romances of the 16th century (Trujillo, 1981:8-11). Although there are some other literary works that mention the bullfight theme throughout centuries, especially after the 18th century, novels and poems adverting about bullfights can be observed in Spanish literature. Especially in poetry there were many poems

written by poets which were also bullfight admirers. Poetry seems more advantageous among the areas of literature based on bullfight theme. In comparison with novel and theatre, bullfight theme in poetry is much more in quantity and greater in quality. Related to this situation famous Spanish play writer Ramón María del Valle-Inclán commented this: "If in our theatre had been bullfights theme it would be brilliant. If we could have reflected the aesthetic wilderness to theatre it would be legendary like the Iliad. Bullfight is a fabulous thing " (Trujillo, 1981:10).

Much of the poets referring to the bullfighting theme are interested in the aesthetic aspect of this fight. The lecturers with lower level of sensibility can also receive this aesthetic aspect in much of them. For most of the people this aspect is the general sense of this so-called 'national fiesta' and also the sense of Spanish existence. Some poets focus on the color, the light, the movements and the dramatic performance of a scene that won't be repeated again.

3.1. Bullfighting Theme in 20th Century Spanish Poetry

20th century has an outstanding importance about the bullfights. General Francisco Franco, who became a leader in Spain after the Civil War in the 20th century, had declared bullfighting as a national sport for the Spanish public and paid great importance. He highly supported football and bullfights in which he saw no threat for the Francoism's ideological identity called; 'National-Catholicism' and these activities were driving the Spanish public to distraction (Yener Gökşenli, 2011: 28). Like higher levels of the society, lower classes also showed great interest in this spectacle. Franco gave bullfights so much importance that when famous bullfighter Manolete died, General Franco ordered three days of "national mourning".

The aesthetic movements of the bullfighter and the stages of the bullfight is for lots of people the most exciting spectacle that can be tasted in life. But it should also be mentioned that a considerable amount of people, including many writers, artists and intellectuals, think totally the opposite and are against bullfighting. In the 20th Century the Generation of 98² fought against this tradition and considered this as violent and an example of barbarism. Contrary of some writers of the Generation of 98 (Rios Ruiz, 1990: 98-99), the Generation of 27 touched on bullfights with its significant ambiance and fearless figure of the bullfighter. This generation's members were all poets and it's worth mentioning Gerardo Diego as the most enthusiastic among all the members of his poetic group (Cossio, 2007: 501). With his poems, collected in a volume titled as *Poesias y prosastaurinas*, he expresses his affection for the Spaniards' National Fiesta.

²The famous Spanish writers of the Generation of 98 were totally against bullfighting. For instance Miguel de Unamuno, Pio Baroja and Azorin, besides criticizing bullfights in their novels, they were also expressing their opposition in the journals or the newspapers that they were collaborating (Rios Ruiz: 1990: 98)

20th century is also the period in which many poets intended to write poems for some well-known bullfighters; some mentioning them as heroes and some expressing their sorrow for their sudden death. JaquesIssorel published the inedited manuscript of a poet and also a rancher Fernando Villalón titled *Semblanzas de matadores*. In these poems Villalón talks about the famous bullfighters such as Fuentes, Belmonte, El Gallo y el Papa Negro. But especially his comparison of Joselito with God is noteworthy.

We have to mention Aquilino Duque's *Epitafio* for the famous bullfighter Juan Belmonte, Juan Luis Panero's *Afternoon of a bullfight (Tarde de toros)* and Angel Garcia Lopez' poem for the natural death of Antonete. But nearly none of the poems about a bullfighter written in 20th century was as impressive as Federico García Lorca's lament to his bullfighter friend who lost his life in a bullfight. It's his masterpiece *Lament for Ignacio Sánchez Mejías*.

In his works, in poetry and theatre García Lorca also exemplified the bullfighters and in one of his essays *Play and Theory of Duende (Teoría y jugo del duende)* he mentioned that the muse *duende* (1942: 145) is coming up at the time when the bullfighter comes face to face with death. The famous playwright and poet felt admiration for this spectacle. According to him, the bullfight reflects with all its characteristics the spirit of the Spanish existence. He claimed that "The bullfight is at the present time the most magnanimous among the spectacles presented in the whole world" (Trujillo, 1981: 8). This spirit is described by Lorca in his mentioned essay as follows, "So in all ages Spain is moved by the *duende*, for it is a country of ancient music and dance where the *duende* squeezes the lemons of death..." *Duende* infuses much of the poetry of Lorca and is at the heart of this very long poem, a lament. In this work our study object will be the mentioned poem and we will intend to analyze the elegy for the loss of a beloved friend, also the bullfighter figure of Ignacio, the expression of death and the symbolical images drawn by Federico García Lorca³.

4. INTRODUCTION TO THE POEM

In *Lament for Ignacio Sánchez Mejías* (1935) Lorca wrote about his beloved friend, the well-known and excellent bullfighter, Mejías⁴. In this long poem Lorca reflected his "duende" spirit in the form of elegy⁵ and this cry of grief

³ Lorca was executed by the falangist soldiers in the beginnings of the Spanish Civil-War.

⁴ Sánchez Mejías was a respected bullfighter, also a man of intellectual interest, married to the sister of the bullfighter Joselito. He was seriously gored in Manzanares; although taken to Madrid, he died two days later in great pain.

⁵ The poetic form of elegy has ancient roots. In his book, Sacks refers to the elegy's origin in a phrase. Theocritus's (third century B.C.) "First Idyll," is commonly regarded as initiating the genre. According to him the word *e elegoi* was used to express "to speak well of". Sacks also notes an etymological link with *e elegoi*, connecting elegy to a "cry of grief over Hyacinth or that of Hercules over Linus" (Sacks, 1985: 331). This second meaning of elegy comes closest to the subject of this poem as a cry of grief of the poet.

can be encountered in each verse of the poem. This elegy accomplishes its tradition because of its skillfully exhibition of the long process of mourning. We see in this poem, divided into four parts, representing different phases of the experience at highest level of mourning. The mentioned process begins with the lost of someone loved. As mentioned by Benito Lobo (2000: 266) the mourning has three phases which can also be seen in Lorca's lament: denial, depression and acceptance. In the denial phase which is reflected in the first part of the poem, the psychologically affected person denies to accept the death. In Lorca's lament, the first part consists mostly of denial, all the second part and the third part consist of the phase of depression. In this second phase, the affected person is full of grief and anger about what had happened and rebels against the destiny with all his pain. Finally the last phase of mourning which is the acceptance appears at the fourth part of the poem. The poet is now more sad than angry, begins to realize that the loss is inevitable and the death is also a part of life. After understanding the effects of the death like oblivion, he presents his own verses written for his friend as a medium of his remembrance. The poem is divided in four parts. Each part has a different rhythm⁶ and reflects different aspect of the death of the bullfighter.

4.1. THE ANALISIS OF THE POEM

Lament for Ignacio Sánchez Mejías (Traduced by A.S. Kline)

1. The Goring and the Death

At five in the afternoon.
 It was just five in the afternoon.
 A boy brought the white sheet
at five in the afternoon.
 A basket of lime made ready
at five in the afternoon.
 The rest was death and only death
at five in the afternoon.

The wind blew the cotton wool away
at five in the afternoon.
 And oxide scattered nickel and glass
at five in the afternoon.
 Now the dove and the leopard fight
at five in the afternoon.
 And a thigh with a desolate horn

⁶ From the formal aspect, the first part of the poem is formed by short lines repeated like the tolling of a bell in the monotonous tone. In the second part it's encountered with the traditional Spanish ballad form. The third part is composed of long lines of Spanish alexandrines. And the final part is mainly blank verse.

at five in the afternoon.
The bass-pipe sound began
at five in the afternoon.
The bells of arsenic, the smoke
at five in the afternoon.
Silent crowds on corners
at five in the afternoon.
And only the bull with risen heart!
at five in the afternoon.
When the snow-sweat appeared
at five in the afternoon.
when the arena was splashed with iodine
at five in the afternoon.
death laid its eggs in the wound
at five in the afternoon.
At five in the afternoon.
At just five in the afternoon.

The first part 'the goring and the death' expresses the poet's perplexity and obfuscation by the recent news about his bullfighter friend. He deals with the actual physical reality of Mejías which is death. Equally with the emotions of the poet the time is also stopped in a specific moment: "at five in the afternoon". In the heart of the poet everything is perceived through the same pain: a pain that he cannot get over. The chanting of "five in the afternoon," occurs as a disturbing effect in the beginning, then shifts to a soothing feeling⁷ that effects the reader. In the beginning this repetition serves as a funeral bell that rings repeatedly, announcing the exact hour of Mejías, but as the first part continues this effect of preoccupation changes into the first resignations of the reality which is death.

Referring to the rich symbolism of the poem, the specific description continues with "the cotton wool" and with "arsenic bells" and "iodine" that are afloat in the air. Lorca, with these last two words creates the effect of being inside a hospital. "The cotton wool" may refer to the clouds and also to the hospital like "arsenic bells" and "iodine". The word iodine is directly related with the cleansing of a wound. The first eleven lines of the poem, stanza one and four lines in stanza two, are written in the past tense. He intentionally moves away the time that the incident happened. Then shifting to the present tense refers to the stages of the reality and the stages of the deadly wrestle between the bullfighter and the bull. The emotional climate changes with 'Now the dove and the leopard fight... And a thigh with a desolate horn.' The poet's description shifts to the situation of the

⁷ Gregory Or refers to the usefulness of incantation in his book *Poetry as Survival*: "the self discovers it can be sustained...through rhythmic repetition...like a woven raft of sound" (2002: 106).

bullfighter, emotionally getting close to him. Now life and death wrestle⁸ as in leopard with dove, and bull's horn with fighter's thigh. Then narrator shifts again to the past tense, a more distant position with 'the bass-pipe sound began'. This verse introduces the sound of death as a form of music. As readers we come more closer to death in the following lines 'When the snow-sweat appeared... when the arena was splashed with iodine... death laid eggs in the wound'. The physical description of the body facing death, in great pain the body shivers in shock, heat and cold come together as in the "sweat of snow" announcing the birth of death. This heart-wrenching description of the poet tells that it's also so late, the eggs have been "laid...in the wound."

A coffin on wheels for his bed
at five in the afternoon.
 Bones and flutes sound in his ear
at five in the afternoon.
 Now the bull bellows on his brow
at five in the afternoon.
 The room glows with agony
at five in the afternoon.
 Now out of distance gangrene comes
at five in the afternoon.
 Trumpets of lilies for the green groin
at five in the afternoon.
 Wounds burning like suns
at five in the afternoon,
 and the people smashing windows
at five in the afternoon.
 At five in the afternoon.
 Ay, what a fearful five in the afternoon!
 It was five on every clock!
 It was five of a dark afternoon!

In the last part of 'the goring and the death' the poet talks of the coffin and the agony. The reader can see reality and present tense is preferred again, "a coffin on wheels for his bed..." In describing Ignacio's hospital bed and the room which "was iridescent with agony..." invades the reader's mind as a sensory image. The luminosity of agony and the image of the wounds burning creates a feeling that the injuries are consuming Ignacio's life force taking him to death. Lorca was able to successfully portray the decaying of his friend's body to the reader. The

⁸ In explaining the wrestle between the leopard and the dove there are two different approaches. Some literary critics like Honig (1941: 408) take the leopard and the dove as the symbols of death and life and some like Benito Lobo (2000: 267) take the leopard as the bull and the dove as the bullfighter.

corpse of the bullfighter is seen lying in a coffin on wheels, the sound of bones and flutes in his ear, and the bull bellowing on his brow. One can feel, smell and see the agony in the air. By all these senses a multi-sensory imagining is achieved by the poet. The refrain "It was five on every clock!" is also important as Lorca here assumes the mentioned fatal hour as a universal event, felt by everyone.

2. The Spilled Blood

I don't want to see it!

Tell the moon to come,
I don't want to see the blood
of Ignacio on the sand.

I don't want to see it!

The moon wide open,
mare of still clouds,
and the grey bullring of dream
with osiers in the barriers.

I don't want to see it!
How the memory burns me.
Inform the jasmines
with their tiny whiteness!

I don't want to see it!

The heifer of the ancient world
licked her saddened tongue
over a snout-full of blood
spilled on the sand,
and the bulls of Guisando,
part death, and part stone,
bellowed like two centuries
weary of pawing the ground.
No.
I don't want to see it!

The description of blood and body's decomposition is understood through these verses. The risk of death always exists in the arena. Neither the death nor the existence of blood cannot be denied, which is the basic ingredient of bullfight (Claramunt López, 2011: 372). The blood of Ignacio is spilled but the poet does not want to see it, does not want to accept the death of his friend. He expresses

this negative feeling as "I don't want to see it". The poet does not want to see the blood and directly asks for it. But he has already seen Ignacio and his blood that illuminates the sand like it was illuminating the hospital room with agony in the previous part of the poem.

Ignacio climbs the tiers
 with all his death on his shoulders.
 He was seeking the dawn,
 and the dawn was not there.
 He seeks his perfect profile
 and sleep disorients him.
 He was seeking his lovely body
 and met his gushing blood.
 Don't ask me to look!
 I don't want to feel the flow
 any more, its ebbing force:
 the flow that illuminates
 the front rows and spills
 over the leather and corduroy
 of the thirsty masses.
 Who calls me to appear?
 Don't ask me to look!

The poet associates Ignacio more with death: "Ignacio climbs the tiers/ with all his death on his shoulders". As he moves toward his death the poet imagines Ignacio's seeking for "dawn"---a new beginning, a "perfect profile"---not a dying face, a "lovely body", not flowing blood. But blood is the physicality and reality of agony. So the poet begs "Do not ask me to look!"

His eyes did not shut
 when he saw the horns nearby,
 though the terrifying mothers
 lifted up their heads.
 And sweeping the herds
 came a breeze of secret voices,
 ranchers of the pale mist, calling
 to the bulls of the sky.
 There was never a prince of Seville
 to compare with him,
 nor a sword like his sword,
 nor a heart so true.
 His marvellous strength
 like a river of lions
 and like a marble torso

the profile of his judgment.
The air of an Andalusian Rome⁹
gilded his head,
while his laughter was a tuberose
of wit and intellect¹⁰.
How great a bullfighter in the arena!
How fine a mountaineer in the sierra!
How gentle with ears of wheat!
How fierce with the spurs!
How tender with the dew!
How dazzling at the fair!
How tremendous with the last
banderillas of darkness!

The expression of the blood turns into an elegy in which the best qualities of the bullfighter are mentioned. The poet talks of his bravery, his nobleness, his humanity and prudence. But the blood again appears through the following verses. It is immense for its quantity and nothing in the nature can be compared to it. In the beginning of the stanza 'terrifying mothers' appear as a mythological reference as they refer to the Parcae who controlled the thread of life. They lift their heads in attention due to the proximity of dead.

But now his sleep is endless.
Now the mosses and grass
open with skilled fingers
the flower of his skull.
And now his blood goes singing:
singing through marsh and meadows,
sliding down numbed horns,
wandering soulless in mist
encountering a thousand hooves
like a long dark tongue of sadness

⁹ Lorce here refers to the Roman influence in Spain which he reflected in his works by its prudence, manliness and intelligence.

¹⁰ The courage of the bullfighter should neither be "absent courage", nor "excess courage". Paquirri emphasizes that, "Both courage types can be deathly. Real courage is to stand calmly in front of the bull, as calm as if the bull is absent in front of him at the moment" (1969:252). According to this famous bullfighter, a bullfighter who is not standing calmly and is running from one side to the other is faulty and also a bad bullfighter model. In the beginning of this stanza with the verses "His eyes did not shut/ when he saw the horns nearby" the poet begins to show how courageous the bullfighter was and continues talking well of Ignacio in an elegy form. The word 'intellect' in the verse refers to Sánchez Mejías' intellectual identity. Besides being a bullfighter he also wrote some theater plays and was a friend of the Generation of 27.

to form a pool of agony
near the stary Guadalquivir.

Oh white wall of Spain!
O black bull of sorrow!
Oh hardened blood of Ignacio!
Oh nightingale of his veins!

No.
I don't want to see it!
There's no cup to hold it,
no swallow to drink it,
no frost of light to cool it,
no song, no deluge of lilies,
no crystal to silver it.
No.
I don't want to see it!!

Although the poet cannot accept the death repeating the verse "I don't want to see it", he begins to realize the truth and says: "But now his sleep is endless". This first acceptance prepares the third part which is more sensible and calm. Nearly all of the second part is written in the ballad form. This verse type is more lively and more appropriate for the expression of turbulent emotions. Lorca also utilizes two of the great symbols of the mythology of Crete and ancient Egypt which are cow and the moon.

3. The Body Laid-Out

The stone is a brow where dreams groan,
holding no winding water or frozen cypress.
The stone is a shoulder to bear time
with trees of tears, ribbons, planets.

I have watched grey rains running to the waves
lifting their fragile, riddled arms,
so as not to be caught by the outstretched stone
that unties their limbs without drinking their blood.

Because stone collects seeds and banks of cloud,
skeletons of larks and twilight wolves,
but gives up no sounds, crystals, fire, only bullrings
and bullrings, and more bullrings with no walls.

Now Ignacio the well-born lies on the stone.
Now it's done. What passes? Contemplate his form!
Death has covered him with pale sulphur
given him the head of a dark minotaur.

Now it's done! Rain penetrates his mouth.
Air rises mad from his sunken chest,
and love, soaked with tears of snow,
warms himself on the heights among herds.

What are they saying? A stinking silence settles.
We are with a laid-out corpse that vanishes,
with a clear form that held nightingales
and we see it riddled with countless holes.

Who disturbs the shroud? It's not true what he says!
No one's singing here, or weeps in a corner,
or pricks his spurs, or frightens off snakes:
here I want nothing but open eyes
to see that body that can't rest.

I want to see the men with harsh voices here.
Those who tame horses and subdue rivers:
the men who rattle their bones and sing
with a mouth full of sun and flints.

I want to see them here. In front of the stone.
In front of this body with broken sinews.
I want them to show me where there's an exit
for this captain bound by death.

I want them to show me grief like a river
that has sweet mists and steep banks
to bear Ignacio's body, and let him be lost
without hearing the double snort of the bulls.

Let him be lost in the moon's round bullring
that imitates, new, a bull stilled by pain.
let him be lost in the night with no singing of fish
and in the white weeds of congealed smoke.

I don't want them to cover his face with a cloth,
so he can grow accustomed to death that he bears.
Go, Ignacio: don't feel the hot bellowing.
Sleep, soar, rest: even the ocean dies!

Grieving and the consequent acceptance of Mejías' death deepened in this second part also continue in the third part. But in the third part "The Body Laid-Out" the poet seems to have left the historical and mythical reality of Mejías and passed to a spiritual position. The slow rhythm is adapted to the reflexive tone of the poem. And this part is more centered on anger. The poet focuses his anger on an inanimate object; the stone on which Ignacio is laid. Here we encounter the elaboration of stone as a symbol. The poet defines the death as a stone whose attributions are dryness, hardness and coldness, all that the life denies. Thus Ignacio is now upon the stone. The rain and the mad air and love full of frozen tears may stream over him, but even though he has become the victim of the stone. For the poet it is neither a solution nor an exit. The best qualities of man do not serve at that moment. The death is a definite state of being immobile, of ice and in nothingness. According to this part of the lament only that murderous solid, the self-repeating constant which is the stone, can endure death. In this moment only one poor consolation exists which is the fact that everything dies: "even the ocean dies!" With this last verse of the third part we see the poet accepts the death.

The last stanza is one of the most beautiful expressions of mourning. As the poet expresses his dilemma: "I don't want them to cover his face with a cloth/ so he can grow accustomed to death that he bears" as if the dead body needs time to get accustomed to death (or for Lorca to get accustomed to his friend's death). And then he continues "Go, Ignacio; don't feel the hot bellowing./ Sleep, soar, rest: even the ocean dies!" With these final verses we see the narrator giving permission to the bullfighter for his own ending.

4. The Soul Absent

Neither the bull nor the fig tree know you,
nor your horses, nor the ants under your floor.
Neither the child nor the evening know you,
because you have died forever.

The spine of rock does not know you,
nor the black satin where you are ruined,
Your mute remembrance does not know you,
because you have died forever.

Autumn will come with its snails,
grapes in mist, and clustered mountains,
but no one will want to gaze in your eyes,
because you have died forever.

Because you have died forever¹¹,
like all the dead of the Earth,
like all the dead forgotten
in a pile of lifeless curs.

No one knows you. No. But I sing of you.
I sing for others your profile and grace.
The famed ripeness of your understanding.
Your appetite for death, pleasure in its savour.
The sadness your valiant gaiety contained.

Not for a long time, if ever, will there be born,
an Andalusian¹² so brilliant, so rich in adventure.

I sing his elegance in words that moan,
and remember a sad breeze through the olive-trees

When the soul is gone, the death takes the only thing that is left behind: the remembrance. As the poet indicates, nothing stays in memory and for this reason everything that surrounds the bullfighter will be forgotten: the bulls that were his passion, the horses, the fig tree and the ants under his floor. But there is a way to beat the oblivion which is the ballad of the poet. Only the elegy, the art will rescue him from the oblivion and immortalize the figure of the bullfighter in a myth. Only the language and thinking are the possible solutions for the poet's sadness and the song of him provides solace in this last phrase of mourning. The poet expresses this solace with the verse, "No one knows you. No. But I sing of you." The last part of the poem is full of expression. It can be clearly understood that only the ones who can look behind the stone like the poet and the readers of this poem will remember Ignacio. They will witness the bullfighter's grace, beauty and also his courage.

¹¹ Here the poet accepts his friends death and now is more serene. In his seminal work "Mourning and Melancholia" Freud stated that "mourning impels the ego to give up the object by declaring the object dead and offering the inducement of continuing to live" (p.256). This phase of acceptance can be clearly seen in the last part of the lament.

¹² Andalusia, which is the homeland of bullfarming, is also the homeland of the famous bullfighters. Here the poet takes attention to the homeland of Ignacio. At the beginning of the 20th century, famous bullfighters of Seville; Joselito and Juan Belmonte became very popular. These bullfighters were followed by also andalusian Manolete, who was also named as "The mournful knight", due to his melancholic eyes. At the time when Manolete was killed by a bull in 1947, the Spanish public, who was already weak and sad by the Civil-War went to mourning. After Manolete's death, the corridors of the arena went into a stillness for a certain time. It was thought that the national festival became again very popular because of two reasons: Firstly, the television broadcasting, which spread the bullfighting shows to wider masses, and secondly El Cordobés (Lapierre, Collins, 1993: 17). A guy with shockhead who was born in Palma del Rio, a small city of Andalusia. Millions of tourists came to Spain to watch the bullfights.

5. CONCLUSION

In his long poem Garcia Lorca includes numerous symbols and imagery to represent a certain idea or mood that he was trying to create. He creates a mental picture and a deathlike mood. It is the mood of mourning. And also the subject of death is treated from many different aspects. By writing this poem, the poet also uses the culture of his homeland, Andalusia. He especially refers to the importance of the relationship between man and bull in the Andalusian culture. It is well-known that Southern Spain takes great pride in their bullfights and the loss of an admired bullfighter causes a strong effect of grief on Spanish People. In this lament Lorca reflects his pain for a friend and by the verse "It was five on every clock!", the fourth refrain of the first part, he also mentions that this grief belongs to all Spaniards.

The main theme of the entire poem, which is 'death,' is treated by the skillful verses of the poet. Even though Lorca accepts the death of his beloved friend and takes the death as inevitable for every human being, he reflects that it is also a thing that should be challenged. The repetition of Ignacio's exact death time that sounds as the funeral bells that ring repeatedly and the specifics of death in vivid detail are the most prominent parts of the lament. We can also find different phases of mourning in the poem, which is written in the form of elegy. These phases are as we have mentioned before are; denial (the first shock), depression, anger and acceptance.

The duel between the bullfighter and the bull and also the dramatic and realistic existence of blood in the bullring are portrayed in detail. The ideal characteristics of a bullfighter shown in the figure of Ignacio and also the importance of his remembrance that can be achieved by Lorca's lament for his friend are other subthemes that we encounter with. As a result the rich imagery of the poem, the reader remembers Ignacio Sánchez Mejías and knows what had exactly happened to him, like to many others destined to death on the sands of the bullring.

By Federico García Lorca's spirit of *duende* various aspects of the death are treated in the entire poem. But it should be remembered that the first decades of the 20th century can be defined with the words of *death* and *mourning*. And the most Spanish way to express these two concepts is the duel of the bullfighter and the bull as represented in these emotional lament.

SUMMARY

The Spaniard's affection for bullfighting is as old as human history. The tradition of bullfight defines the basic character of the Spanish nation which perceives life as becoming continuously face to face with death. This character makes the Spaniards consider bullfights as a form of art and the possibility of death becomes an inspiration of this deadly art. The famous Spanish poet Federico García Lorca calls as *duende*, the muse that comes up at the time when the bullfighter comes face to face with death. García Lorca's poem *Lament for Ignacio Sánchez Mejías* is also an ideal example for the analysis of death as the main subject, which is witnessed rather frequently in 20th century Spanish poetry. In this long poem the image of death in the bullfight theme and the form of elegy can be analyzed from different aspects.

The poet himself was executed by the Falangist soldiers in the beginnings of the Spanish Civil-War. He wrote this long lament full of sorrow and mourning tone for his bullfighter friend short time before his own death. This tone is also reflected in the style of the poem coming through in the poem's syntax, structure and vocabulary.

Garcia Lorca includes numerous symbols and imagery to represent a certain idea or mood that he was trying to create. He creates a mental picture and a deathlike mood. It is the mood of mourning. We see in this poem, divided into four parts, representing different phases of the experience at highest level of mourning. The mentioned process begins with the loss of someone loved. As mentioned by Benito Lobo (2000: 266) the mourning has three phases which can also be seen in Lorca's lament: denial, depression and acceptance. In Lorca's lament, the first part consists mostly of denial, all the second part and the third part consist of the phase of depression. In this second phase, the affected person is full of grief and anger about what had happened and rebels against the destiny with all his pain. Finally, the last phase of mourning which is the acceptance appears at the fourth part of the poem. The poet is now more sad than angry, begins to realize that the loss is inevitable and death is also a part of life. After understanding the effects of death like oblivion, he presents his own verses written for his friend as a medium of his remembrance. The poem is divided in four parts. Each part has a different rhythm and reflects different aspect of the death of the bullfighter.

By writing this poem, the poet also uses the culture of his homeland, Andalusia. He especially refers to the importance of the relationship between man and bull in the Andalusian culture. The repetition of Ignacio's exact death time sounds as the funeral bells that ring repeatedly. The loss of an admired bullfighter causes a strong effect of grief on Spanish People. In this lament Lorca mentions that this grief belongs to all Spaniards in the fourth refrain of the first part: "It was five on every clock!". Besides this effect of grief achieved by repeating the same verse through the first part, the specifics of death in vivid detail also form the prominent parts of the lament.

The ideal characteristics of a bullfighter shown in the figure of Ignacio and also the importance of his remembrance that can be achieved by Lorca's lament for his friend are other subthemes that we encounter with. As a result the rich imagery of the poem, the reader remembers Ignacio Sánchez Mejías and knows what had exactly happened to him, like to many others destined to death on the sands of the bullring. Regarding the rich symbolism of this lament, in explaining the wrestle between the leopard and the dove there are two different approaches. Some literary critics like Honig (1941: 408), take the leopard and the dove as the symbols of death and life and some like Benito Lobo (2000: 267) take the leopard as the bull and the dove as the bullfighter.

In the last part the oblivion appears as the most important effect of the death. But there is a way to beat it which is the ballad of the poet. Only the elegy, the art will rescue the dead bullfighter friend from the oblivion and immortalize the figure of him in a myth. Only the language and thinking are the possible resolutions for the poet and the song of him provides solace in this last phrase of mourning. The poet expresses this solace with the verse, "No one knows you. No. But I sing of you." The last part of the poem is full of expression. It can be clearly understood that only the ones who can look behind the stone like the poet and the readers of this poem will remember Ignacio. They will witness the bullfighter's grace, beauty and also his courage.

By Federico García Lorca's spirit of *duende* various aspects of death are treated in the entire poem. But it should be remembered that the first decades of the 20th century can be defined with the words of *death* and *mourning*. And the most Spanish way to express these two concepts is the duel of the bullfighter and the bull as represented in these emotional lament.

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