

# Discussing a poem

Literature



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Critical essay From word “ and was I not a lady once”, it is clear that the persona of the poem is a woman. Actually this woman from mentioning the word “ tomb”, tend to be lamenting as a lamenting tone can be observed though the words that are mentioned or uttered by the persona. The persona in this case according to the words spoken, she seems to be in some kind of wonder, as she does not really understand where she is and how she ended up there. As it can be seen in this poem, there is some sense of contradiction as the persona claims to be in a tomb but at the same time describes her tomb to be so green. The condition in which the persona claims she is in, introduces some kind of paradox. Actually, the dead are not always believed to be speaking and there seem not to be any relation between the mortals and the immortals. In the first stanza, the persona is some kind of lamenting as she is deprived of some things she was used to such as tree shade. In the second stanza, the persona talks about the evening hills and the earth being in a mute state that tend to be different from the one she used to see before. She also claims not to be seeing any cloud as she was used to seeing it before. This shows how desperate the persona is and how lonely she feels. According to this stanza, the persona is lamenting and desperate though it is not depicted or given out from where is she lamenting from. From the first two stanzas of this poem, it is clear that the person uses words with hidden meanings to express herself. One cannot really understand the situation of the persona unless he or she exercises some keenness. In the third stanza, the persona asks herself questions on whether she was at one time a lady and even possessed a princely hall. Actually, in this stanza, the persona is in some kind of flashback trying to view her past life and how many respected her. In this paragraph, some sense of flash back is seen on how the persona

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tend to remember some of the events that took place while she was still alive. It is not also logical for the dead to think of the past events in life. The flashbacks of the persona lives a question in the mind of the audience as to whether there are some sense of regrets that the dead can be subjected to. Actually, who can really tell this? Nobody knows the secrets of the dead and it therefore becomes very difficult to believe or not to believe some of the persona's words. In the fourth stanza of this poem, the persona discusses how she perceives changes. Some of the changes that she is subjected to are not normal and this makes her think that her life is just like a reflection from the mirror (Chu po, 152). There are some things that the woman depicted in this poem tries to compare to the living world. Actually, in this paragraph, it is very difficult to understand what the persona is trying to say. There are some of the words with hidden meanings that according to me, shows that the persona still have some hopes though the kind of hope is not mentioned. According to the words and the logics that the persona is trying to bring into display, it is very clear that the persona may be in some kind of deep imagination or dream. Other stanzas of the poem focuses on the persona's lamenting state as she regrets and miss a lot in life. The audience are still not told the condition of the persona though they try to gaze based on the words spoken by the persona and the use past tenses in the poem. The past tenses actually show that the persona graduated or found herself in a certain condition in which she was not before. There are also some stylistic devices that have been used to give hints on the persona's situation. In reality, the persona can be said to be a woman due to the use of the word "Lady" in the poem. The according to my own understanding and may be other listeners or audience, might have been in a deep dream or

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imagination. She might have been in the process of figuring out how life could be when someone is dead or in another world where he or she is a distance away from the mortals. Work cited Chu Po, Ying. " Poems Of Xiao Tong And Liu Xiaocuo Compared With The New Literary Styles Of The Qi-Liang Period With A Discussion On The Editorship Of The Wen Xuan. (English)." *Journal Of Chinese Studies* 52.(2011): 149-164. Academic Search Complete. Web. 14 Dec. 2011.