

DICKINSON’S POETRY: A RARE BLENDING OF METAPHYSICAL AND MYSTICAL NOTES

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ABSTRACT

Emily Dickinson, the very prominent American poetess, has appealed to poets and scholars of all persuasions from every decade of this century. It is because her poetry is like an ocean where one will surely get something worthwhile if he dares to dive deep into. Her rigorous intellectuality, her appreciation for definition and her sense of inevitability of the fact recommends her to an age dominated by science. In her finest poems one can see the paradoxical mixture of desire and reluctance, of will and withdrawal, and of hope and fear. In fact a keen study of Dickinson’s poetry suggests that it is a poetry wherein one can encounter a soul in agony struggling to come to terms with the brutality and savagery of life and in the process attaining a sense of enlightenment. As she grapples with the brutal heart breaking realities of life, she transcends from the world of gross reality into a world of spirituality. The quality of transcendence creates in her poetry a highly imaginative and mystic fervor. This paper titles “Dickinson’s Poetry: A Rare Blending of Metaphysical and Mystical Notes” is a mindful attempt to explore the metaphysical and mystical notes that are sprinkled in Dickinson’s poetry. It will open new realms to the study of Dickinson’s thoughtful lyrics.

Born on December 10, 1830 at Amherst, Massachusetts in the United States of America, Emily Elizabeth¹ Dickinson (1830 -1886) was the first woman poet of America who during her lifetime was little known; and it is after the publication of Thomas. H. Johnson’s third edition of Dickinson’s complete poems in 1955 that a renewed interest in her work was created in America as well as abroad. Her work along with that of Emerson and Whitman best defines the distinctive qualities of American experience, an emanation of liberal independent soul as against the dogmatic thought of religious dependence of Calvinism which her father and grandfather had nurtured.

Emily Dickinson's poetry deserves to be placed with the poetry of Metaphysical school of poets of seventeenth century England. Although Dryden gave them the title "metaphysical" in a derogatory sense – in the sense of their poetry being obscured, philosophic, showy, written to display the knowledge of these poets, yet metaphysical poetry was able to make its place in the history of English literature. T.S. Eliot appreciates this poetry as being a part of the rich tradition of English Poetry. To this thinking of Eliot, it has been added that Dickinson's poetry is also a part of the rich tradition of American Poetry.

Before discussing Dickinson's Metaphysics and Mysticism it is essential to throw some light on the various characteristics of Metaphysical poetry. Metaphysical poetry is concerned with the whole experience of man. In it the intelligence, learning and seriousness of the poets are reflected which means that metaphysical poetry is about the profound areas of experience especially - about love, romantic and sensual; about man's relationship with God - the eternal perspective, and, to a less extent, about pleasure, learning and art. Metaphysical poems are lyric poems in which there may be two or more kinds of argument. They are brief but intense meditations, characterized by striking use of wit, irony and wordplay.

It is amazing to notice that the poetry of Dickinson is 'metaphysical' in the sense of being philosophical, obscure, epigrammatic, like the poetry of John Donne, the pioneer of metaphysical school of poetry of England. Reared in the sternly religious society of the Connecticut Valley and in the rigorous atmosphere of the Dickinson household; Emily Dickinson learned early to meditate upon essentials: mortality, the temporal presence of God, man's relationship with God and His creation. Sharing the prime concerns of the seventeenth century, Dickinson also felt its passionate interest in the microcosm of the self whose 'polar privacy' was peopled with mystical thoughts and deep emotions. Since that self was poised between the skepticism and faith, desire and renunciation, optimism and despair, Dickinson sought a release in poetry of paradox, argument, and unifying conceits: "Much Madness is the Divinest Sense", "I cannot Live with you / It would be Life", "A Death blow is a life blow to some" etc.

Dickinson does not directly owe her poetry on the exact line of metaphysical poets but unconsciously she seems mentally related to the English metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century. As Theodore Spencer points out that if Emily "had lived in the seventeenth century, her position would have been somewhere between Herbert and Donne."³ In her poems like "One need not be a chamber to be Haunted," (670) and "Because I could not stop for death," (712) one finds the similar development of thought, to the metaphysical poetry. The chariot in "Because I could not stop for death", for example, is what the pair of compasses is in Donne's poem "Valediction: forbidding mourning". Without the image, the thought and emotion would not fuse into unity. The image is both a poetic mortar and a short cut to communication.

Like the poetry of the metaphysical school of poets her poetry is also a union of thought and emotion and is full of startling images. It possesses Donne's wit and epigrammatic quality. It has the metaphysical brevity and compactness. It is packed with intelligence, wit and controlled emotion rather than as an index to the homilies of religious and political thought. In her meters and broken rhythms too she resembles the metaphysical poets.

Dickinson packs momentum into short lines by carrying out violent transitions from image to image. The poem "One of the ones that Midas Touched" (1466) is full of images which are much like the images of the metaphysical poetry. The image from "Pleader" to "Dissembler", "Epicure," "Thief" and a whole "Oratory," and to "Jesuit of Orchards" all are used for the reeling "Oriole". There can be no doubt that this bird is baroque; the further fire-works aciculate, or

supersede one another, as they might do in Crashaw’s poetry. One can see the “splendor of Burmah”, “the meteor of Birds,” and finally a “Golden Fleece” as one might see in Donne’s poetry. The following lines from different poems of Dickinson are full of metaphysical images. For instance in the following short lyric fame has been compared with a bee having a ‘song’ and ‘sting’:

Fame is a bee
 It has a song –
 It has a sting-
 Ah, too, it has a wing². (1763)

And in the same way ‘hope’ has been compared with a glutton, a manifestation of gluttony, and the vice of Christianity:

Hope is a subtle Glutton –
 He feeds upon the fair –
 And yet – inspected closely
 What Abstinence is there – (1547)

Further ‘shame’, the divine virtue of women has been compared with a ‘shawl’ to conceal the soul from the public light:

Shame is the shawl of pink
 In which we wrap the Soul
 To keep it from infesting Eyes –
 The elemental Veil (1412)

Her poem no. 1331 clearly suggests that wonder is a bleak condition but it is at the same time tends to be beautiful. It is an excellent example of how Dickinson's illusion of formal constriction and her thematic handling of enclosed space interact to create a paradoxically expanded poetry. The images linger in their instability, solidify in their fragility and remain long after images of a more positive capability would have died. This open-ended wonder is the precondition for the kind of experience she writes about, and though it may seem small it has the power to overwhelm, even to destroy. As the poet says:

Wonder – is not precisely knowing
 And not precisely knowing not –
 A beautiful but bleak condition
 He has not lived who has not felt – (1331)

Dickinson describes ‘suspense’ metaphysically as a guest that mangles men:

Suspense – is his mature sister –
 Whether Adult Delight is Pain
 Or of itself a new misgiving –
 This is the Gnat that mangles men – (1331)

Many of Dickinson’s poems have an aphoristic pregnancy, “like those dry Japanese flowers which blossom out when put in water.”⁴ For example: The following lines from different poems are full of aphorisms. All these aphorisms (italicized words) are the product of the mystical mind of the poet:

Success is counted sweetest
 By those who never succeed
 To comprehend a nectar
 Require sorest need (67)

In the first stanza, Dickinson endeavors to define the true essence of success. The general impression is that success can be 'counted' by only those who have experienced it numerous times. Nevertheless, it is more precisely evaluated by those who have never succeeded as they can apprehend its true value. For the true experience of life, failures are inevitable. For, what one learns from his failures, success can never teach him.

Water, is taught by thirst
Land - by the Oceans passed
Transport - by the throe–
Peace – by its battles told –
Love, by Memorial Mold–
Birds, by the snow (135)

Success also tastes sweeter to the person who has persevered very hard for it, than to a person who has found success effortlessly. The former is also more thankful to God, and cherishes his accomplishment. The word 'nectar' here implies water. However, it is perception that renders it 'nectar'. To the thirsty ones with parched throats, a drop of water tastes as sweet as nectar. Here 'sorest' is utilized with reference to its old meaning - 'greatest'. Only the one in the direst need can treasure any sort of sanction. Dickinson's following short lyric is also an apt example of mystical aphorism:

The difference between Despair
And Fear – is like the one
Between the instant of a wreck –
And when the wreck has been – (305)

Here the poet contemplates two very common and very strong human emotions of fear and despair. She begins her poem by establishing the unique relationship of these two emotions to one another and continues to apply the concept of these two basic emotions to her struggle as a woman. As a result the poem is marked by duality and double meanings. It can even be applied to the general plight of all women. Dickinson creates the idea that as a woman she feels both fear and despair working in different ways to establish the dual nature as a woman in society. The poet further says in the same tone:

To lose one's faith – surpass
The loss of an Estate –
Because Estates can be
Replenished – faith cannot – (377)

Dickinson's poetry is full of mystical ideas. In fact most of the nineteenth century poets infuse philosophy in their work. They are more philosophers than poets. Tennyson is one of such great men. So are Milton and Donne, who were not spoiled for their true business by leaning on a rational system of ideas. They understood the poetic use of ideas. Dickinson like them would make only a poetic use of ideas and would not be lost in them. Her poetry constantly moves within absolute order of truths that overwhelmed her simply because to her they were unalterably fixed. The general symbol of Nature, for her, is death. Her weapon against Death is the entire powerful dumb show of the Puritan theology led by the idea of Redemption and Immortality. The Puritan ideas in her poetry are assailed momentarily by the disintegrating force of Nature appearing as Death. The poet attains a mastery over experience by facing its utmost implications. In her poem "The Brain is wider than the Sky" which has both mystical and metaphysical elements, Dickinson compares the brain with the sky, the sea and god. The first two stanzas tell

that the brain is superior to the sky and the sea, because it is the brain that contains the idea of the sky and the sea. These stanzas suggest that if the brain is capable of imagining what is sea and what is sky, the brain contains both the sea and the sky. The sea and sky refers to the outer world. The brain, being the container of thoughts about this outside world, represents the abstract and inner world. In a way the outside world and the inner world are put as counter opposites, which reflect upon each other like mirrors. It is the brain that gives identification to nature. This usage of language, thinking in words, suggests that the poet by putting the meaning into a form unites the abstract and the concrete in a word.

The Brain is deeper than the sea—
For—hold them—Blue to Blue—
The one the other will absorb—
As Sponges—Buckets—do— (632)

The consciousness through which one attributes meaning to the physical world is different from an ordinary consciousness. While the image of the sky enters into the brain and the brain identifies it as being the sky 'with ease-', 'You' is put aside. The ordinary everyday identity 'you' is detached from this state of consciousness. The 'you' is excluded; therefore it is a different consciousness that is 'involved' in this process. In this state of mind, there is no subject-object split. The world becomes entirely subjective and mystic. Just observe the mystical beauty of the following lines:

The Brain is just the weight of God—
For—lift them—Pound for Pound—
And they will differ—if they do—
As Syllable from Sound— (632)

Similarly Dickinson in her poem “This World is not Conclusion” states that there is a reality, which is beyond ordinary everyday reality. This experience of transition to a higher reality, she goes on to discuss, cannot be gained through scientific or philosophical knowledge. Like Emerson's 'over-soul' or the 'perfect whole' in his poem 'Each and All', the divine aurora can be grasped by imaginative and spiritual contemplation. In other words, both Emily Dickinson and Emerson deal with the state of being conscious of an external world, which implies the existence of an inner world. The mystic dualism between these outer and inner layers of existence and the transitory passage in between is often seen in Dickinson's poems, such as 'I've seen a Dying Eye' or 'I felt a Funeral in my Brain'. Take for instance:

I've seen a dying eye
Run round and round a room
In search of something, as it seemed,
Then cloudier become;
And then, obscure with fog,
And then be soldered down,
Without disclosing what it be,
'T were blessed to have seen (547)

Judith Banzer in her essay 'Compound Manner' compares metaphysical poets with Dickinson. She begins by saying that "the discipline that wrought many of Dickinson's poems was the metaphysical one of a 'Compound Vision' by which the eternal is argued from the transient, the foreign explained by the familiar, and fact illuminated by mystery"⁵ The definition of the opposites, which are dependent upon each other, shows the indivisible relationship between

counterparts and Dickinson usually writes about this paradoxical situation. The poem, 'The Opening and the Closure of Being' is a good example for this dualism, which concludes in being alike. Emily Dickinson in this poem doesn't openly say that these divisions of dualism at the end represent the same thing; that is they end up uniting each other. But she rather uses the metaphor of 'Syllable and Sound' in poem 632 or 'Bloom and Stalk' in poem 1047.

Dickinson's famous poem "I Cannot Live with You" shares logical sensibility of the metaphysical poets. It can be broken down into five parts. The first explains why she cannot live with her love object, the second why she cannot die with him, the third why she cannot rise with him, the fourth why she cannot fall with him, and the final utterance of impossibility. The poem begins with a form to the poetic argument of a classic Shakespearean sonnet.

I cannot live with You –
It would be Life –
And Life is over there –
Behind the Shelf (640)

Moving from the abstraction of the first four lines, the second and third stanzas enter into the domestic metaphor of china, which is described variously as discarded, broken, quaint, and cracked, put up on the shelf and forgotten. If life is "behind the shelf," it is completely outside the experience of the china, as is the speaker's life. The power of the first line is temporarily muted, and the reader is similarly trapped inside a haunting verse of cups and shelves, eerie in their quietness. That the china is locked away by the Sexton, a representative of the official or practical face of religiosity, seems to imply that it is not only the domestic sphere that the speaker is trapped in, but also the binds of the church, or at least the administrative daily function of the church, which Dickinson viewed as being quite separate from the passion behind it.

Moreover Dickinson's use of condensed imagery and language allows her communication to expand upon the portrayal of many of her poems. The imagery empowers readers to understand and reflect upon the poem, leading to them searching for deeper understandings as well as alternate meanings. For example "Boots of lead" is used to give the readers the connotations of drowning in her famous poem "I felt a Funeral, in my Brain". The poet says:

And then I heard them lift a Box
And creak across my Soul
With those same Boots of Lead, again,
Then Space - began to toll, (280)

The image becomes a parallel linking with depression. It is slightly like a metaphor appearing as something it is not. From being just a simple sentence within Dickinson's work one observes it turn into a human emotion. The variety of images one finds within her short poems alone allow depth and different perspectives from all readers. For instance when she wrote a poem about death, one can observe that the pain experienced by the characters within the poem, is let out into the reader. It means the reader not only relates himself closely to her work but he can also feel the physical pains felt by the characters present in the poems. Commenting on the aphoristic poetry of Dickinson Whicher rightly asserts:

Emily Dickinson, since she was not writing novels, seldom projected her thoughts in terms of characters, but she did not exteriorize and personify "ideas-emotions" or "ideas- forces," which people, as in a morality play, the stage of her soul. The drama there enacted is a chaotic and often unresolved clash of opposing principles, as in life itself, but she does not let the play end in ruin and the victory

of the conqueror worm. For her dramatic insights she found the brief lyric a suitable vehicle. A Melville or a Dostoyevsky might employ a novel, a Pascal or a Nietzsche an aphorism. It is not without significance that many of Emily's poems are aphoristic.⁶

Dickinson lacks almost radically the power to seize upon and understand abstractions for their own sake. She does not separate them from the sensuous illuminations at which she is a great expert. Like Donne, she perceives abstractions and thinks sensation. She cannot test anything by logic. She can only make use of her eye sight. She is in the words of Allen Tate, perhaps the "only Anglo American poet of her century." In whose work fusion of sensibility and thought is possible. This is very well illustrated in the poem "Because I could not stop for Death." Every image is precise, and not merely beautiful, but fused with central theme. Every image extends and intensifies every other. The third stanza, in particular, shows her power to fuse a heterogeneous series into a single order of perception. The children, the grain, and the setting have the same degree of credibility. The context of death in the poem eludes explicit definition. Death is a gentleman taking out a lady for a drive. Emily's restraint saves it from becoming ludicrous and incredible. The erotic motive is subtly interfused with the idea of death. The terror of death is objectified through this figure of the greatest driver. Here a construction of the human will, elaborated with all the abstracting powers of the mind, is put to the concrete test of experience. The idea of the immortality is confronted with the idea of disintegration.

Neither the feeling nor the style of Dickinson belongs to the seventeenth century Metaphysical poets; yet between her and Donne there are remarkable ties. Their religious ideas, their abstractions, are momentarily trapping from the rational plane to the level of perception. The ideas, in fact, are no longer the impersonal religious symbols created anew in the heat of emotion that one finds in poets like Herbert and Vaughan. In Emily Dickinson, as in Donne, one may detect a singularly morbid concern, not for religious truth, but for personal revelation.

Allen Tate observes: "Miss Dickinson and John Donne would have this in common; their sense of the natural world is not blunted by a too rigid system of ideas; yet the ideas, the abstractions, their education or their intellectual heritage, are not so weak as to let their immersion in nature, of their purely personal quality, get out of control".⁷ Personal revelation of the kind that Donne and Dickinson strove for, in the effort to understand their relation to the world, is a feature of all great poetry; it is probably the hidden motive for writing.

There is plenty of passion in the metaphysical poetry, but it is passion combined with intense intellectual activity. Dickinson's poem "Come Slowly Eden" deals with erotic expectations. The use of bee –flower image is made to express physical desire:

Come slowly – Eden!
Lips unused to Thee –
Bashful – sip thy Jessamine –
As the fainting Bee –
Reaching late his flower,
Round her chamber hums –
Counts his nectars –
Enters – and is lost in Balms. (211)

The metaphysical poetry is inspired by a philosophical conception of the Universe and the role assigned to the human spirit in the great drama of existence. Undoubtedly, its themes are simple human experiences, the joy and sorrow of love, the thrill of adventure and battle, the hustle and

excitement of the town and in addition the mystic experiences and inner conflicts known to the greatest thinkers and philosophers.

Dickinson is not the metaphysical poet in the full sense of the term. She is “metaphysical” in a restricted sense. She is metaphysical when she displays an extended use of imagery, structural use of metaphors, the quality of intensity and concentration, and the fusion of thought and feeling. Dickinson is aware of the clash between the old and the new, the world of faith and the world of reason:

“Faith” is a fine invention
When Gentlemen can see –
But microscopes are prudent
In an Emergency. (185)

The metaphysical poetry resolves itself into the two broad divisions of amorous and religious verse. The former was written largely by the court poets, Carew, Suckling, and Lovelace, and the latter by Herbert, Crashaw and Vaughan, who all dedicated their gifts to the service of their religion.

Dickinson has written many lyrics on the subject of love. But she does not at all follow the Petrarchan tradition of love poetry as one finds in Spencer and Shakespeare. She does not flatter her beloved or glorify the lover. In her poetry the lover is rather ghostly. Very little appears to happen to him. She possesses him and the experience is he loves her. She was unable to capture the scintillating joy of love in the real sense so she constructed her own private world where she poised her lover and thus, she built for herself what was denied to her by fate. And for this very reason she makes the marriage an integral part of her life. Undoubtedly, she pined for masculine love and missed it uncomfortably. She was deeply moved when separated from Wadsworth. The following lines convey this idea:

I got so I could take his name-
Without – Tremendous gain –
That stop – sensation – on my Soul-
And Thunder – in the Room – (293)

It is wonder to note that in the poetry relating to the theme of love and marriage, Dickinson displays her habit of maintaining two or more very different attitudes towards the same idea. Every poem written by her reflects her varied moods. A quiet different notion of the desired union of souls and the “new marriage” they will achieve after death is to be seen in such a poem as “There came a day at summer’s full” (322). The poem ends with the words:

Sufficient troth, that we shall rise –
Deposed –at length, the Grave –
To that new Marriage,
Justified- through Calvaries of Love- (322)

With a passionate declaration that a love so consecrated that each was to each a ‘sealed church’ can be finally, beatified only “At Supper of the Lamb.”

A characteristic feature of the metaphysical verse is indulgence in “dissimilar images of discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike.” A comparison often instituted between objects that have ostensibly in common with each other. Often ‘the figure of speech is elaborated to the furthest stage to which ingenuity can carry it.

The metaphysical poetry of Dickinson is full of far-fetched images (“conceits” as they are called) and allusions and references borrowed from branches of learning old and new. For example, in

‘My Life had stood – a Loaded Gun’ Dickinson finds an instrument adequate to render her need for fulfillment through absolute commitment to love’s service. The poem begins with a brilliant conceit fused from the ambiguous abstraction ‘life’ and the explicit concretion ‘Loaded Gun,’ (754).

The best function of the metaphysical conceit is to impart a unified experience what is significant is the feeling of imaginative pressure and intensity; it is only where this is missing that the ingenuity seems obtrusive and one feels impelled to speak of frigidity and fantastic hyperbole. Emily Dickinson has made a beautiful use of ideas and experience and the most startling connections are discovered between them.

Natural grace is often hard to find in the metaphysical writing, which abounds in artificiality of thought and hyperbolic expression. The writers probably deemed it a passport to fame to say something unexpected and surprising. What they wanted of the sublime, they endeavored to supply by hyperbole; their amplification had no limits; they left not only reason but fancy behind them and produced combinations of confused magnificence, that not only could be credited, but could not be imagined.

Though Dickinson is far away from artificiality of thought, the following poem is somewhere near the hyperbolic expression:

My friend must be a Bird –

Because it flies!

Mortal, my friend must be,

Because it dies!

Barbs has it, like a Bee!

Ah, curious friend!

Thou puzzlest me! (92)

But unlike Cowley, it is natural and passionate, and reflects the real emotion.

I taste a liquor never brewed –

From Tankards scooped in Pearl –

Not all the Vats upon the Rhine

Yield such an alcohol! (214)

In this poem, the poetess, drunk with the joy of living, expresses her feelings in terms of cosmic spree. She makes use of hyperbolic fantasy to convey her metaphysical feelings.

The metaphysical poets reacted against the cloying sweetness and harmony of the Elizabethan Poetry. They deliberately avoided the conventional poetic expressions. They employed very prosaic words as if they were scientists or shopkeepers. One finds rugged and unpoetic words in their poetical works. Their versification and their diction are usually coarse and jerky. According to Grierson, the metaphysical poets had two motives for employing very coarse and rugged expressions in their poetical works. First, they wanted to startle the reader. Secondly, they had the desire to make use of direct, unconventional and colloquial speeches.

In the modern era the readers are accustomed to the poetry of John Donne, and to the harshness, the verbal incongruities, and the strained and convoluted syntax which are its chief stylistic components of the metaphysical poets. They realize that Donne’s peculiarities of style serve as the exact reflectors of his philosophical position. And with Emily Dickinson, the background for a style is remarkably similar. It is on the basis of what she did see that her writing has to be comprehended, and on that basis the principal stylistic modes open to her can be defined rather readily:

Tell all the truth but tell it slant –
Success in circuit lies
Too bright for our infirm Delight
The Truth's superb surprise
As lightening to children eased
With explanation kind
The truth must dazzle gradually
Or every man e blind – (1129)

The emphasis is on truth, on furnishing a complete account of life's experiences to illuminate hidden areas of knowledge and beauty. Since man's understanding is finite, this can be done only by indirection, by the poetic 'slant' which shifts undifferentiated facts to uncover imaginatively truth's gold nuggets. Like Emerson and Poe, Dickinson felt that the poet was a specially endowed person who sought to discover "circumference" or the ultimate mysteries.

The metaphysical poets, in the view of Johnson, desired to express what was never thought of before; they hoped to discuss their own feelings and strove to be very loose in their diction. They did not attempt to walk on a trodden path. They professed to have their own exclusive thought and worked out their own manner of expressing them. Dickinson too had her exclusive thoughts which she expressed in a manner never seen before in poetry.

Looking from the above mentioned angles, one can say that Dickinson's poetry is metaphysical. It is very difficult for the average reader to grasp it. Even after repeated readings one is not able to comprehend its meaning as she says:

Essential Oils – are wrung –
The Attar from the Rose
Be not expressed by Suns – alone –
It is the gift of Screws –
The General Rose – decay –
But this – in Lady's Drawer
Make Summer – when the Lady lie
In ceaseless Rosemary – (675)

Emily Dickinson was confidently articulate about the psychic pressures that compelled her to poetic expression. Through an apt metaphor, she rendered her conviction in his remarkably compact form. Indian thought and sensibility has been, by and large, metaphysical. There is something intrinsically religious or spiritual in the very air one breathes in India; in the posture of the Yogi contemplating the divine, in the open vast spaces, in the blue sky, and in the heart of every man. In the sense every contemplative Indian is something of a metaphysical person, one who delights to see the spiritual in the physical. A serious perusal of the poetry of Dickinson impels the sensible reader to locate the spiritual in the physical objects she uses in her poems. Each and every poem of hers has at least three meanings – physical, mental and spiritual meaning. In this sense, Dickinson is out and out a mystical poet.

Notes and References

1. See The Oxford Companion to American Literature, 4th ed. by James. D. Hart, New York; Oup 1965, P-224.
2. The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson, ed. by Thomas. H. Johnson, Backby Books: Little, Brown and Company, New York, 1960, PP., 1-770. Textual quotations from Emily Dickinson's poetry have been quoted from this book with relevant poem no in parenthesis within the text of this paper.
3. Theodore Spencer, "Concentration and Intensity," *The Recognition of Emily Dickinson, Selected Criticism since 1890*, ed., Caesar Blake and Carlton P. Wells, Ann Aroor, 1964, p-131.
4. Ibid, p-132.
5. Judith Banzer *Compound Manner: Emily Dickinson and the Metaphysical Poets*, (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1990) p. 417.
6. George P. Whicher, *This Was a Poet: A Critical Biography of Emily Dickinson*, New York, 1938. p.73.
7. Allen Tate, *The Recognition of Emily Dickinson*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1964), p-73.