

**IMAGERY AND SYMBOLISM IN LOVE POETRY:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SELECTED POEMS OF EMILY DICKINSON AND
ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING**

BY

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Approval page

This project has been read and approved by the Department of English and Literary Studies as meeting the requirements for the award of Master of Arts Degree in Literature Studies.

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Declaration

I, **Fatima Abubakar** with registration number **SPS/14/MEN/00046** from the Department of English and Literary Studies, Bayero University, Kano, hereby declare that all the part of this research except where references were acknowledged, are genuinely my work.

Dedication

This research work is dedicated to my Late father Alhaji Dattijo Abubakar (Jarman Katagum) and my Late husband, Alh. Garba Ibrahim Bature (Magajin Gwanin Katagum) whose encouragement kept me to the end of this work and whose concern, Love and care will remain with me throughout, and to my late brother Ibrahim Dattijo, who inspired me not only academically but socially and many more and to my mother, Hajiya Fati Dattijo Abubakar whose prayers are always answered.

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ABSTRACT

This research analyzes selected poems of Emily Dickinson and Elizabeth Barrette Browning through the framework of formalism with the aim of highlighting the ways in which these poets used the unique devices of presentation in their poetry to express their emotions in an era, which did not approve of women openly expressing their desires. The research makes a comparative analysis by emphasizing the imagery and symbolism deployed by these poets, in their poems and ultimately concludes the poems far from being innocent depictions of the beauty of nature, words and images actually symbolize feelings and desires, even protests that are far more profound. The research concludes that Dickinson's of deployment of imagery and symbolisms are powerful and explosive while that of Barrett Browning is straight forward and abstract; and that both poets depict Nature in terms of their presentation of desire and fondness for the other. The research figures that themes of a poem do not determine the form of in one poet or that despites the sameness of theme by both poet; the form differs in some ways. This study argues that formalism is an effective tool in poetic analysis, since it not only isolates the formal features of a Poem and sets out its sound patterns, but it also shows the deeper significance of these when they are subjected to thematic analysis of the kind propounded by the formalist, Boris Tomashevsky.

CHAPTER ONE

GENERALINTRODUCTION

1.0. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Emily Dickinson and Elizabeth Barrett Browning are poets who have aroused interest both within and outside academic spheres. Scholars such as Kennedy and Gioia (2005), Macmonagle (2003), Stewart (2002), Stephen (2001), Hirsh (1999), Furniss and Bath (1996), McCulloch (1995) and Farr (1983) have regarded these poets among the best and pioneers of the English Literary artist. In this course of this study, these women, regardless of the “brutal power game” within the Victorian society, have managed to crawl out into the limelight of the literary world and fame. In Victorian times, love poetry was said to be the dominant type of poetry favoured by women and Dickinson and Barrette Browning fall under this category. Probably due to excess control over or the denigration of women, they were not allowed to express strong romantic feelings or emotions except through writing which is poetry. As the result of this, the women resorted to the use of “Substitution” (Symbolism) while expressing their feelings or emotions or fondness through the use of imagery and symbolism. This study examines a comparative formal analysis as well as the thematic concerns in the selected love poetry of Dickinson and Barrett Browning using the framework of formalism. It also investigates how these two Poets use imagery and symbolism to figure emotion, such as love, and the objects and icons they used in the process. Formalism is selected because the language of poetry is not ordinary but a condensed composition. Thus the formalist seeks to locate the artfulness or aesthetic features of an object in order to see the object as it really is.

Regardless of the limitations on women's education and authorship as well as other societal inhibitions in Victorian times, these women have sought comfort and delved into the poetic world, letting poetry speak for them: to give the meaning to life in their verses, to console and comfort themselves or to preserve their feelings, emotions, desires, fondness and Infatuation. Both Poets do not adopt the same poetic tradition as Dickinson used free verse while Barrette Browning was a sonneteer; four poems were selected from each poet. The following poems were selected as the primary texts from Dickinson's love poetry.

1. Poem (14) One Sister Have in Our House
2. Poem (1677) Volcano
3. Poem (158) Dollie
4. Poem (20) Bee

And Barrett Browning's selected love poems

5. Sonnet 43 How do I Love Thee
6. Sonnet 25 A Heavy Heart
7. Sonnet 14 If Thou Must Love Me
8. Sonnet 12 Indeed This Very Love

1.1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The central problematic of this dissertation is to explore the gap between the approaches of Dickinson and Barrett Browning to "Love" "Fondness" and "Desires" for the Other in their poems with a view to showing whether, despite the sameness of theme, the two poets deployed the same or different formal tools in their poems. In other words, the concern is to see whether theme determines form, In which case the formal features of the poems will be similar or

whether form is independent of theme, in which case the formal features of the poems of one poet will not necessarily display the same formal features found in the poems of the other.

1.2. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this study is to make a comparative analysis of the Love poems of Dickinson and Barrett Browning with the following objectives

1. To identify the symbols and imagery used by the two poets
2. To identify the differences of approach to love, fondness and desire for the other in the poems of the two poets.
3. To examine the nature of the relationship between Form and Content with a view to exploring how far, if at all, they impact on each other.

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

2. What are the symbols and imagery used in the love poems of Dickinson and Barrette Browning ?
3. What are the possible objects or icons that the two poets(Dickinson and Barrette Browning) used in their Poems to prefigure emotions, such as love or fondness?
4. Do these poets have peculiar styles techniques in writing their poems distinct from other poets and from other traditions?

1.4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is intended as a veritable investigation on how the poetic genre has been deployed by two women poets (Dickinson and Barrette Browning). This is achieved through the comparative analysis and the use of imagery and symbolism to prefigure positive emotions toward another;

that may not be a real human being but an icon. However, the study is significant in line with Dickinson's writing and modern interpretations. Dickinson, though a private poet who perceived writing as a passion and considered herself "as the representative of the verse", appears to have used language peculiarly as well as her techniques of poetry suited with fine systematic particularity to one subject or one addressee. Because of this uniqueness or particularity, I feel the study will be vital to the student of literature to explore.

Most importantly, as students of literature in Africa, African poems differ a lot from European Poetry in that the former are mostly in free verse, thereby neglecting other major formal aspects of Poetry, such as rhythm, rhyme, Imagery etc. However, most African Poems are analyzed or read in the content form, arguably. A poem is supposed to be essential for its form and not merely by its content. And these formal properties are what enrich and adorn a poem to make it literary and also distinguish it from other forms of writing or genres of writing.

1.5. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Out of Dickinson's 1,775 Poems covering various themes such as religion, spirituality or divinity, death and love, only her poems on love have been selected for this study even though thematically some of her love poems do have themes of religion or even death. Her love poems are concentrated largely in two of her major collections of poetry, given by Farr (1983:100) "The Narrative of Sue" and "The Narrative of Master". The poems for this study were selected from these two collections, because of their representative status on her perspective on love. The poems are: "One Sister Have I in Our House" and "Dollie" from the Narrative of Sue, and from the Narrative of Master – "Volcano" and "Bee".

And from Barrett Browning, Sonnets 12, 14, 25 & 43 were selected from her collection in the *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, the collection in which she immortalized her love for her husband, Robert Browning, another Poet from the Victorian Era. Like Dickinson, her poems also cover a wide range of topics from political issues, such as abolishing slavery, to the subjugation or maltreatment of women through the institution of marriage.

1.6. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical perspective for this study is formalism, which stresses the essentially formal aspects of literature, especially those features of the text that make a work of literature, or in other words, essentially and properly literary for example, Yuri Lotman (cited in Eagleton 2007:54) holds that a “poem is not just a structure or system of signs, but a system of systems – it is multi-systematic”, which consists of formal features, such as rhythm, rhyme, sound and meter within a given poem. Formalism has its roots in Saussurean linguistics which emerged in Russia and flourished throughout the 1920s. The major exponents of this theory are Roman Jakobson, Victor Shklovsky, Yuri Tynyanov, Boris Eichenbaum, Boris Tomashevsky and Osip Brick, who argued that literature transforms and intensifies ordinary language and deviates systematically from every day (ordinary) speech Eagleton (1983:2). According to a prominent formalist, Boris Eichenbaum, (1998:8) asserts that “the object of literary science, as literary science, ought to be the investigation of the specific properties of literary material, of the properties that distinguish such material from material of any other kind”. For Roman Jakobson, “the object of study of literary science is not literature but literariness”, that is what makes a given work a literary work. (1921;11). These formalists were indeed influenced by Kant’s critique of the Faculty of Aesthetic Ideas (Kant-1991:41), namely that, although the Poet is crucial in interpreting the rationality of the unknown, he does only with the help of the

imagination, which cannot be reduced to the sole activity of the poets. In this formation, there is a hint of theoretical anti humanist inspiration in formalism, for which the poet is not, in the last analysis, all important or primary and also for which it is not the poet or the author but poetic form and poetic language (or Kant's formulation, in Faculty of Aesthetic ideas) that is central. As a key figure of formalism, Shklovsky argued in his critically acclaimed essay, *Art as Technique*, that art exists and that one may recover the sensation of life. It exists to make one feel things and to make the stone stony. For him, the purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. And the technique of art is to make objects unfamiliar; to make forms difficult; to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged. For him in summation, object is not important but the artfulness of an object; so that the meaning of a work broadens to the extent that artfulness and artistry diminish. And that art removes objects from the automatism of perception in several ways (pp 49 – 52).

The notion of the above essay and for most formalists is the attempt to produce a systematic body of knowledge not on "literariness" (with a capital), but in Jakobson's word "literariness" that which makes a literary work different from ordinary writing (1921:11). This is, however, a valid sedimentation because formalism would not have been possible without what Derrida (1994:92) has called "Linguisticism" – the convergence of the autonomic hegemony of language and the exorbitation of the formal method based on language alone (the linguistic of poetic language). According to Eagleton (1983), Bertens (2001), and Barry (2002), the underlying effect of this "literariness" lies in poetry - ordinary language becomes de-familiarized; and that literariness was a function of the differential relation between one set of discourses or presentations and another. Most formalists conceptualize the literary work as an

“assemblage of devices”, such as sound, imagery, rhythm, symbolism, rhyme and other narrative techniques and or the whole stock of formal literary elements. To them, these devices or techniques “estrangle or de-familiarize objects (ordinary language) Eagleton (1983:3–4) and Bertens (2001:39-41). And that ordinary language is bent to do more laborious work than ever, or to use Eagleton’s words, “ordinary language is intensified, twisted, condensed, telescoped, drawn out and turned on its head”. For this reason, the formalists had to deviate from a normal or ordinary linguistic manner, a kind of “linguistic violence”.

These literary devices are the materials which the formalist used as a yardstick to measure and analyze the works of literature. Eichenbaum, for example, insists that the object of literary science, as literary science, ought to be the investigation of the specific properties of literary material, of the properties that distinguish such material from material of any other kind (Eichenbaum 1998:8-16). For them, the study of literature can be put on a scientific footing, that knowledge of formal effects, devices and technique is possible and even that ideas, emotions (feelings) reality (the content of literary works) have not any literary significance but only serve as context for the functioning of literary devices, so that what makes literature “literary is the sum of representational devices namely rhymes, alliterations, rhythm, imagery, repetition, plot, point of view” skhlovsky (2001:)

In other words, Barrette Browning and Dickinson’s expression of love for their lovers the(content of the Poem) remain mere writing without substance or a pillar to hold on to, but a historical context for their work. Rather, it is the technicalities in their writings, such as the so called bizarre use of dashes, irregular punctuation, heavy use of imagery and symbolism, rhyme use, glitch pattern or the whole hegemony of language and its formal method that makes the work literary and appealing as well as meaningful.

This study, however, is not restricted to only formalist analysis of the kind already mentioned, which is to do with merely the words of the poems or the rhyme and metrical arrangement of the lines; it is also concerned with the thematic aspect of the poems using the type of analysis propounded by the formalist Boris Tomashevsky. For him, a theme of any given work of art has certain unity that is composed of small thematic elements arranged chronologically. Tomashevsky (1998:25) distinguished these elements into two; that which causal – temporal relationship exists between them and that which the thematic elements are contemporaneous (a shift of theme without exposition of the causal connections). In other words, a thematic element or feature that does not reveal its causal effect or even those thematic features that do not contain “story”

For the purpose of this study, our concern is on the contemporary, based on the examples given by him and based on this study that presents poetry as genre. For Tomashevsky, those thematic elements that have no causal relationships or connection or even that have no story in them are mostly found in poems such as didactic poems, lyrics or descriptive poems. Thus, the chosen theoretical insight, formalism, that can lay bare, through the baring of the literary device, the loaded emotional and sentimental values of the poets, as expressed through their thematic and figurative expressions. These emotional expressions include emotions of love and affection for another person, as rendered in figurative and symbolic terms, or what may be called “literary language”. This study has deployed these insights in the very analysis of the primary poets, Dickinson and Barrett Browning, have sought to de-familiarize their conceptions of love or even emotional identification, such as Sue or Master.

A striking advantage of the formalist theory is that it would allow for a deeper examination of the formal features of the selected primary poems so that the emphasis is on the textual

dimensions of the poems-under-study, rather than on the authors themselves. As Barthes (2000:149) famously argued, the author is unimportant and that “to give a text an author is to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the reading”. This view is also supported by Derrida in his *Of Grammatology* (1976:158) that “there is nothing outside of the text”. That is why most critics juxtaposed for example, Dickinson poems with her letters and concluded that her reclusiveness resulted from her personal relationships, which are reflected in her letters as well as her poems. But anyhow, her letters cannot be used as a window unto which we can decipher through her poem or find meaning in her poems. Thus, Elliot (1972:72 – 76) writes that,

No Poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone...honest criticism and sensitive appreciation are directed not upon the poet but upon the poetry... To divert interest from the poet to the poetry is a laudable aim; for it would conduce to a jousting estimation of Actual poetry, good and bad.... (1919)

1.7. A BRIEF ON THE PRIMARY AUTHORS

I. Emily Elizabeth Dickinson (1886 – 1930) was the daughter of Edward Dickinson, a lawyer and a one time member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives. She was a life long spinster and a recluse who valued solitude so much that she never left her bedroom until her death at the age of fifty five. She was described by Mabel Todd as the lady calls “The Myth” (Farr 1983:2). During her life time, only eleven, others say seven or ten of her Poems were published anonymously. Not until four years after her death, was the first volume of her Poems, heavily edited and was published. Interestingly, it was instantly successful. Some critics see her language as that of a genius, while others sees it as that of an eccentric. Initially, Farr (1983:vii)

maintained that Dickinson's success was not because of her poetic style, but of her thought such as appreciation of nature, her tough and delicate emotional perceptions as well as her writing subject of the eternal life, But with the intense scrutiny of the New critics in the 1930s, her style paid homage as a Poet.

Dickinson's first poem was written at the age of twenty, *Valentine week*, in 1850. In her lifetime, she wrote 1,775 poems, all without titles, the poems are identified by their numbers. Macmonagle (2003:61-64) holds that more than one third of her entire poems were written during her thirties; such that in 1862, 366 poems were written and 141 in 1863, and 174 in 1864.

The first publication was done with the assistance of her sister, Lavinia, and two of Dickinson's friends – Mable Todd and of course Higginson. In 1890 – one hundred and fifteen Poems were published, as *Poems* by Emily Dickinson and within six months, it was reprinted six times. Then the second series, *Poems*, containing one hundred and sixty six poems and *Poem*, the third series appeared in 1896.

Dickinson's adult life is rather encrypted just like her poem, for not much is known to many people, her family inclusive. Macmonagle (2003:60-61) and Farr (1983:vii-x) argued that something “cataclysmic and decisive happened at the age of thirty or so, such that on the 25th April, 1862, she wrote to Higginson that I had a terror – since September – I could tell to none and so I sing, as the boy does by the burying ground because I am afraid....” It is for this reason Huggies comments on this view that the key event is but a final disappointment in love for someone. And it is around this time, in early 1860s that three draft letters were discovered, all addressed to whom she called master after her death.

Dickinson's biographer - Richard Sewall, holds a contrary view with regard to her singing. He maintains that, though Dickinson rejected the conventional religion, which is Christianity, she simultaneously never rebelled against it and so "she finds another way and one of the ways was undoubtedly the 1775 Poems", which she wrote (Macmonagle 2003:59).

Dickinson's poem and letters are similar in their nature. The heavy use of dashes, the capitalization of certain words or even the violation of the rules of grammar are grounded in both of them. When she writes to Higginson that "My lexicon are my only companion", this justified that the unusual technicalities is a deliberate, reflection and extension of her thought and mind "self-hood representation". Hughies (cited in Farr 1983) maintained that "Dashes have become an integral part of Dickinson method and style, and cannot be translated to commas, semicolons, and the rest without deadening the wonderfully naked voltage of the Poems".

ii. Elizabeth Barrette, Moulton Barrett (1806 – 1861) was the daughter of a wealthy business man, Edward Barrette, owner of Hope End, whose business was well established in Jamaica. She is the eldest of twelve children. Her family lived in Jamaica for so many years but evidence of her origin to African blood remains uncertain, according to her biographer, Julia Markus. She eloped and later married Robert Browning who was six years younger than her, for fear of her father's disapproval. Not surprisingly, following the wedding her father disinherited her and she later changed her name to Elizabeth Browning. They had a son Robert Wiedman Browning (pen) and she later died at the age of fifty-five in 1861.

Barrette Browning's first influence was her mother's collection and she started writing at the tender age of about six or eight years. *Avery (2016:2)* maintained that Barrette Browning's strongest influence was on Mary Wolstonecraft's "A Vindication of the Rights of

Women”(1792) and Donaldson (1997) maintained that Browning’s poetry is concerned about the Victorian woman question. Her first publication, “*The Battle of Marathon*”, was published by her father for the family’s consumption and he named her Poet Laureate of Hope End. Her critical acclaimed works on the reformation of child labour and abolishing slavery earned her Poet Laureate after the death of Wordsworth.

Her works that helped reform and abolish child Labor and slavery include “The Runaway Slave at Pilgrims Points”, “A Curse for a Nation”, “The Cry of the Children” and her well known poem, “On the Cruelty of Force Men to Man”. Her writing cut across many fields, namely that she questioned the role of women in their society in such works as “The Romount of Magaret”, “the Romount of page” and “A Romance of the Ganges” are some examples. Avery (2016:4) maintained that “betrayal, duplicity and loss are the dominant themes found in such Poems of the Romount”. By the 1840s, Browning’s vision had expanded and extended to view the role of her entire society and the very question of individual roles. For Donaldson, et al (1997) not only the society but poets are equally put down by her – A “Drama of Exile” and a “vision of Poets” are such examples. Browning progressively became bold, strong and confident by the time that “*Lady Geraldine*” appeared in 1844 Poems. In this and other sonnets – “*To George Sand: A Desire*” and “*To George Sand: A Recognition*” she Celebrated the Independence of Women. Barrette Browning’s most critical, popular and outstanding as well as her longest verse – novel, “*Aurora Leigh*” tremendously transformed and influenced the likes of Victorian women such as Elizabeth Stuarts Phelps (1860). McCulloch (1995) and Avery (2016:2) maintained that “*Aurora Leigh*” celebrates women’s right to work and personal achievement. This poem did not appeal to most men, such as Arthur Waugh, and his likes who hold that Barrette Browning’s

work failed due to the pressure she put on society in trying to make or refashion the woman's voice "thunder" like a man's.

1.8. A BRIEF ON THE PRIMARY TEXTS OF EMILY DICKINSON

The beloved Woman in the narrative of Sue according to Farr (1983:133) is associated with "birds and flowers" and that such pairing suggests ecstasy and transport of spring and young Love and "anxiety of gender" is located in her Poem (84), "Her Breast is Fit for Pearl" *as well as* oriented motifs, which connect her with Shakespeare's Cleopatra and Egypt. For Farr, she holds that this is what teams up the central theme of the "Sue" cycle or narratives. In the Poem, the "sensuous beauty of the beloved Woman" is so rare to the point of awarding of a "Royalty" and her loveliness testifies to her being Royal more so like "Queen Victoria". This royalty is inferred from the allusions of *breast and brow, pearls and thrones*, as these are presented in the Poem.

Poem (14) "*One Sister Have I in Our House*" is a Love Poem for Sue. Farr (1983:119) holds that the poem begins with "sweet compliment of a sister in law and ends as a personal declaration of feeling". It emphasizes the difference between Sue's nature and that of Dickinson's family. He also argues that this Poem is a recollection of their useful days (Sue and Dickinson) when their "hearts were built". However, this Poem was distasteful to Austin and Lavinia, so much so that the manuscript was mutilated and "scribbled" over. Thus, Bianchi published her mother's copy in appreciation of their relationship. Most importantly, Sue is compared to a bird, which nests in all their hearts. However, not only to birds, but Sue is also likened to or associated with a bumble bee, probably for its musicality (92).

Of the “*Dollie*” Poems, Farr (1983:135-136) holds that Dickinson speaks of Sue (Dollie) “cheating” her. In the textual analysis, she fears that her “Love” with its intensity and feelings of its effect to the “sunrise” could not be reciprocal or even Dollie (Sue) will not be faithful or as loving as she imagines or feels, thus unrequited (P135). Again and again, Poem (158) explores more on this explicitly-namely that on the verge of dying, in the poem. Dickinson never sought “Jesus Christ” as either her savior or his Love wanted, but that of “Sue,” a human Lover.

Farr (1983:194) maintained that the early “Master” poems are envisioned by “Dickinson’s speaker as a “child”, a girl, epitomized by that simple field flower, the Daisy” (an extract or epithet she uses of herself in a letter to Bowles). She maintains that “Daisy” is used in the Victorian tradition such that maids are changed into a Daisy or Sun flower out of Love for the sun in the 1860s art.

Farr (1983:226-228) argued that the most common theme in Dickinson’s Poetry is about “Love as an explosion, felt in the soul and echoed by the body” and that “volcano” is a symbol which she uses for “passion”, “suppression”, “love” and “rage” in her Poems-(178) and (1677). Bees are also associated with Dickinson’s love for both “Master” and Sue narratives. Examples of such Poems are Poem (211), Poem (230), Poem (869), and Poem (270) (pp 213-214).

ii. On Barrette Browning

Stedman cited in Kingma (2016:3) holds that Barrette Browning’s genius developed best in her “Sonnets” because of her representation of the concept love which is the greatest role for Victorian women. And Smith in the Cornhill Magazine (1874) placed Barrette Browning’s “Sonnets from the Portuguese” as equals to all of Wordsworth’s and most of Milton’s. This is because it presents a Woman’s perspective on Love, truly autobiographical. Many critics

juxtaposed Barrette Browning's poem (Sonnet) and her Letters and concluded that the two were synonymous and overlapped in several ways, such as the address of "Dear", "Dearest" and "Beloved". Mermain (1981:358) argued that the sonnet was an embarrassment because in Sonnets 18 and 19, the exchange of a lock of hair and references to pet names are more of an epistle rather than a poem composed upon an unknown lover. She felt this is the key factor why the "Sonnets" fell out of fashion. Leighton on the other hand, sees the works (Letters and Sonnets) as a "literary performance" between two "highly written texts". For her, converging them together is being aware of an intricately answering an over-wrought writing of love. Thus, the letters take the form of a dialogue between Barrette Browning and Browning while the Sonnets try to articulate love outside of the dialogue. Moreover, Sonnet 43 speaks from a woman's perspective by breaking the silence of a traditional female role of simply listening or receiving adoration from the male in the then Victorian society. Mermain (1981:358). According to Stephenson (1989:80) the Letters reveal some elements of sexual tension and sexual yielding in other words, that there is a longing and coyness in her response that exudes sexuality while the "Sonnets" are devoid of any sexual tension. (Kingma 2016:3-4).

1.9. A Brief on Love Poetry

Hancock (2007:97) holds that poetry was born out of love and that love transcends time and circumstance; so love poetry from diverse cultures display consistent feature which renders it to be seen as an artistic product that provides us with a particularly intimate link to the very foundation of human creativity. Carr (1982:491-495) juxtaposed love poetry and the Bible (Old Testament) and brings forth some areas where they are similar in their features. Most love poetry is relatively short, though there is considerable variation in the length of the individual poems. Thus, such analogy seems to reflect especially on Dickinson's fragmented poems. Out of the

many features he identified are the vocabulary items. Words such as “thou” “thee” “thy” and the identification of the lovers as “sister” and “brother” or “queen” and “king” or “prince” and “princess”. Likewise the use of imagery from trees, flowers, grasses or jewelery such as gold, silver, alabaster, amber, bronze; or various types of animals and bird imagery – dove, bees, wild goose; or even wolf-cub such as lion or domestic animals such as oxen, stallion, mares, etc; or specific regional or features such as lake, rivers, mountains, volcanoes, etc. Another feature of the love poem syndrome is the expression of sexual interest or sexual longing which differs from the bible. Thus, love poems are composed in erotic terms but Christianity dismiss erotic expressions because they believed such aspect of human nature was not worthy of God’s attention.

In love poetry, feelings and emotions are best explained poetically; such that “inexpressible is expressed”. It provides a language of feeling. In the view of E. Bain et. al., (1981) being in love is not an easy task that can be expressed in just a phrase or so. They asked further that how can you put into words what it means to be in love? To them, they believed that poetry captures exactly the shade of emotion that feels just right... When you read a poem and realized that, that is exactly what you have in mind but unable to express it that way or this way. They also put that love poetry can be the mouth piece of our feelings even when our minds are speechless with grief or joy.

Love poetry is usually addressed to one person and it is always anchored by comparison and issues of similitude. It enjoys making analogies between one thing and another. Hirsh (1999) has given us a good example such as *Song of Songs* which presented an imaginative power of language, “shall I compare thee do a summer’s day?” Or “I have compared thee, o my love, to a

company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots," or Dickinson's example "Shall I take thee to the propounded word?"

By typology, both Hirsh (1999) and Hancock (2007:199) have placed lyrics as the commonly used in love poetry. Love is easily expressed in lyrics than any other kinds of poetry, as it expressed grief or joy. Brodsky cited Hirsh (1999:115-116) maintained that love is a metaphysical affair whose goal is either accomplished or liberating one's soul... And that is and always has been the core of lyric poetry. Denis de Rougemont cited in Hancock (2007:199) argues that what lyric poets put into their finest flight is neither the delight of the senses nor the fruitful contentment of the settled couple, not the satisfaction of love, but its passion. This analogy is typified by comparing the beloved with other beautiful, inexpressible, simulated objects. In other words, the lover is been metaphorically substituted by the use of symbols and or images.

1.10. The Place of Women in Victorian Society and Culture

In Victorian society, women were generally relegated to the background, as they were expected to conform to certain societal standards and they were not allowed to venture out of their designated domain. Generally, women did no more than mothering, knitting and sewing etc, leaving the society outside the home saturated and dominated by the powerful male. Politics and education was meant for men, which meant that women, regardless of their intelligence and capacity, had to submit to being no more than mere "appendages". In other words, women were relegated to the background and marginalized politically, socially and educationally. With this strong demarcation between the male and female, women established a kind of sisterhood probably to seek solace from the "brutal power game". Elaine Showalter notes that females in

ancient cultures created a distinctive language in order to communicate without violating the silence imposed upon them in public life.(cited in Woodward 1987:147). Farr (1983) maintained that the Victorian era witnessed a cult of fond among the Victorian girls, which promoted Lilian Faderman to posit a tradition of romantic friendship and love amongst the 19th century women that was justifiable through epistle and precisely through poetic tradition. Presumably, this is why Dickinson's unrequited love for her sister in law Susan (sue) or for her master remained a speculative and academic topic. And it is part of the reason why Dykstra testified of the 19th Century, that the victorian woman was thought by the victorians to have much less of a capacity for individuation than man therefore, artist frequently presented love between women by vision of similar forces. However, when such relationships flourished in the society, due to the emphasis on this fondness and affection, seminars and lectures were established in order to curb the situation, though such strictness remained an invalid solution or was rather taken for granted or given not enough consideration (1983:103).

One restriction of women in the Victorian society was that women were not allowed to celebrate or affirm their love to another. This is because most of the girls were in love with married men, leaving most of the lovers jilted and frustrated or that puritanism and Catholicism would not permit such act from the female. The girls, however, had nothing to resort to except poetry writing through which they poured out their heart. It is for this reason that Farr (1983) opines that "broken hearts were a continual theme in most Victorian writing". And such despair and frustration can be seen in Dickinson's narrative of Sue or Master. Perhaps, it is also the reason why some critics denounced Barrett Browning's work on the grounds that it affirmed and celebrated her love for Robert Browning. Amazingly, this restriction further followed them even in the world of poetry. Themes such as religion, spirituality and love were the only permissible

topic they could write about and other significant issues in life are to be written by men not vice-versa. It is this kind of limitation that led the denunciation and condemnation of Browning's writing; as she writes more challenging issues in life than the restricted ones permitted by her society.

Consequently, religion and love became the dominant theme in poetry by women by which most of them distinguished themselves from male poets. However, these women poets being conscious of the barrier within and outside the literary domain chose, to use Leyda's phrase "omitted centre"; i.e their poetry is mostly encyptic. Typically, most of Dickinson's complexity about her poem resulted from this "omission of centre which increases the encyptic nature of her poem" (Farr 1983:ix and Hirsch 1999).The Victorian poets were heavily influenced by the ideology of the Christian marriage, the happy family and emotional fidelity in mourning all embodied by Britain's longest reigning monarch which provided a rich source of artistic material as well as a receptive readership of the middle class (Hancock 2007:199). And that Victorian society may have placed great value on marriage and on family relations but the fact is, love poems of celebrated authors such as Barrett Browning, Browning (her husband), Arnold, Tennyson and others speak the exquisite affliction of passion than any other issues of attachment (2007: 217).Regardless of any restriction, these women have been successful on making them unique identify in a literary world. That is why Carruth argued that poetry found conceptually stranded on an aesthetic plane of being, divorced from practical or moral responsibility, accountable only to abstract style or to some other aspect of imagined form (1976:305).

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter is a thematic review of the secondary literature on Dickinson and Barrett Browning. The first segment reviews scholars' perspectives on the reason for Dickinson's seclusion and its relationship to the writing of her poems; the second segment reviews the secondary literature on the poet's style and technique of writing; and the third segment reviews scholars' opinions on the major themes of her poetry. The other segment is on Barrett Browning whose secondary literature is based on her as a poet, her varying poems and or sonnet and its themes.

2.1 DICKINSON'S SECLUSION

Most of the critical works on Dickinson are context-based or author-based. The juxtapositions of her letters and poems have also been read from the perspectives of the reader - response theory or reader-based theory. Critics such as Kennedy and Gioia (2005), Macmonagle (2003), Stephen (2000), Hirsh (1999), Furniss and Bath (1996), and Farr (1983), argued that Dickinson's seclusion was as a result of her unrequited love for Sue and Master, which is reflected both in her non-fictional narrative (letters) and her fictional representation (poems). Richard Wilbun (1921 cited in Farr 1983) maintained that the greater part of Dickinson's poetry was an effort to cope with her sense of privation (isolation). He gave three reasons that resulted in her seclusion, namely that "she was deprived of an orthodox and steady religious faith, deprived of love and

literary recognition". It has been confirmed in a letter to her friend, Abiah Root, that when she was seventeen, Dickinson pursued to be a profession Christian, a female clergy and following series of meetings and seminars at Mount Holyoke, the position was denied to her. This denial according to the "modern minds" would have been a necessary and sensible step towards becoming the poets that she became. (Kennedy & Gioia 2005:414). According to Macmonagle (2003) and Farr (1983), such denial was the greater and "ultimate deficiency", disgrace, "a feeling of betrayal" she could ever feel or imagined. Example of such Poems were given by Farr (1980:31) to include Poem (273) "He put the Belt around my life", (271) "A Solemn thing-it was-I said" and (418) "Not in this World to see his face".

Another reason of her privation was ultimately love, which echoes throughout her poems and biographies. She had the opportunity in life to at least express her feelings the way she did or bestow her heart to either "Sue" or Master or even religion. Kennedy and Gioia (2005) maintained that Dickinson's life is a history of "loneliness, separation and bereavement".

The last reason is related to her literary fame, although some critics posit that Dickinson never wished or desired it, based on her statement that "publication is the action of the mind of Man" and following one of her correspondence to Helen Jackson- she wrote, "How can you print a piece of your soul?" and amazingly later on, Dickinson told Susan, her sister-in-law, that "she might make her Kinfolk proud of her". In this regard, Kennedy and Gioia (2005) argued that she was aware of her talent from the beginning of her career and that explained the reason for a "recognition". Again Farr (1983:19) maintained that the most common view about her retirement or reclusion, according to the Poet's sister, Lavinia, is just a happen", i.e things just happen the way it does and that is why critics explain her reclusion as chosen.

Further, the recluse of Dickinson was questionable, as her in-experience and innocence were undermined by Bello-Kano (2016:12-13), as he argued that Dickinson never married, but her passion for the male or female other never died out, as it can be seen in a passionate address to Sue, Wordsworth and Lord (or master) and that Dickinson was not an innocent recluse but a “full-blooded sensual and sexual agent”, at least in her active imagination and emotional temper through her poems.

Faderman (cited in Farr 1963:100) with regards to Dickinson’s narrative on Sue argued that Dickinson’s letters to Sue, even in girlhood, were “erotic” and clearly different from those addressed to other friends. However, Freeman contradicted this view that Dickinson’s biographer, Sewall did not regard her Love for Sue as erotic. The significance of Sue is so absolute to Dickinson that she equated her to “Eden” in one of her erotic Poems and addressed her as “her only woman in the world”. He further juxtaposed Sue and Dickinson to Cleopatra and Antony; when she declares that “Sue taught her more about life than anyone except Shakespeare” and that Dickinson called her Love for Susan Gilbert an “endless fire” thus endlessness and continuity is represented by a “circle”, and that her Poems for Sue are envisioned as circular images or construction.

2.2 DICKINSON’S STYLE

The techniques of her writing made it possible for her to be among the contemporary poets. Her commentators regarded her as a unique, gifted poet, as an “essentially modern” poet, even though she “violates” conventional syntax and ignored expectations to be more transparent (and) is simply irregular in her punctuation”. However, this is supported by, among others, Bloom and Blake (cited in Bello-kano 2016:12) had once praised Dickinson’s challenge to, and

deviation from, the poetic tradition, usually dominated by men. For him, Dickinson had slipped in something at odds with the tradition and purposely diverted from the tradition of poetry and given into it something new which made her an “impossible subject”. This view is also supported by Juhasz (cited in Belloh-kano 2016:12) in relation to her identity as a female Poet , especially her specific “feminine aesthetics”, that it is different from the dominant male poetic tradition.

In the techniques and styles of most poets, each adopts a certain style in composing poetry– some synthesize abstract ideas or express ideas that may appeal to all or one sense of perception to the other, all these are techniques used by varying poets. Stewart (2002:119) argued that Dickinson broke and interrupted the lines and the slanting of rhymes like a person breaking off the smooth flow of received language or emphatically singing off – key in a crowded church. Again, her use of hymn meters makes us hear “the individuality of her voice and the specificity of her words because of their dissonance from the habits of tradition. A succinct example is her famous poem on religion 1859 version of 216.

Dickinson is well known for certain breaks and interruptions in her poems by the use of long or short dash. Staff (2014) juxtaposed the life of working class people by constant interruption of hour(s) shift “no set schedule, no set patterns”. Instead their life pattern becomes “corrupted”, “blown-up”, “and destroyed” and finally becomes “glitch”; which is similar to the glitch pattern of Dickinson’s poetry. For her, this glitch pattern takes many forms such as halting line, breaks, broken rhythms, white space or most obvious amongst them is the use of punctuation as interruption. That Dickinson mastered this act of interruptions by the use of dashes, which forced the reader to reconsider meaning. Staff (2014:4) believed that many scholars have maintained that her dash is an act of “Violence”, for it forces unpleasant things to happen to the sound or flow of her poems. Therefore, they expressed “aching dissonance and

painful interruption” just like the emotional interruptions She has encountered throughout her life.

The use of the dash according to Denman (1993), suggests the result of great stress and intense emotion, as an indication of a mental breakdown and a mere idiosyncratic “female habit” arguably. She conducted an exploration of language, around the 1860s and used punctuation to disrupt conventional linguistic relations, whether in an attempt to express inexpressible or psychological states or purely to vivify language. Thus, both Denman (1993:1) and Staff (2014) believed that the dash is linguistically an act of violence.

To strike with violence so as to break into fragments; to drive impetuously forth or out, cause to rush together; to affect or qualify with an element of a different strain thrown in to it, to destroy, ruin, confound, bring to nothing, frustrate, spoil, to put down on paper, throw off, or sketch, with hasty and unpremeditated vigour; to draw a pen vigorously through writing so as to erase it; (is) used as a euphemism for damn, or as a kind of verbal imprecation; (or is) one of the two signals (the other being the dot) which in various combinations make up the letters of the Morse alphabet.

Not only her poems but even the letters she wrote to Susan contained these dashes. There is a long dash and a short dash both to mean different things or otherwise. The view of Ellis

(1996) goes a bit contrary, for it delves into the use of these dashes within some of her poems and argued that the dashes are used differently with a different purpose; that the short or lighter dash or lighter pressure suggests unease or insecurity within the mind of the writer.

The positions of the dashes too are in different places – some dashes come before a word or after it and it is sometimes accompanied by a dot. However, the long dash is an indication of a highly emotional state while the short dash suggests a lighter pressure emotionally. And the long dash at the end of a line may be completing her thought; that Susan will endlessly live in the heart of Dickinson. And the dash that comes in the middle of a poem is detached from both “emotion based” or “a completion of thought” but rather used to separate a continuing line of thought, such as the modern day use of ellipses (...) in text messages. However, for Ellis, the dash is not necessarily used in a correct grammatical construction, but rather as a means of continuation or a filler of space, similar to how “lol” is usually put at the end of text messages as filler for a blank space. Consequently, the dash is used as punctuations and “punctuation to Dickinson is emotional, not grammatical in nature”.

But the long dash, according to Bello-Kano (2016), is a “phallic symbol, symbolic of the instinct of the speaker to make her ‘Narration’ or writing eternal”. And that this phallus is not for creation or recreation or even of gendering, but rather one of annihilation. For him, the bliss and pleasure that the real poet and her poetic speaker did, could not have and perhaps (did not want to have) is now semanticized by these dashes and line breaks; the sexual encounter is differed and delayed. This desire is now sublimated by symbols or that the desire precipitates through such symbols or punctuations (Bello-Kano 2016:14-15).

Farr (1983:X) argued that Dickinson “compliments errors with adoration”. She devoted substantial space to Dickinson’s “homoerotic” love for her sister-in-law, Susan Gilbert Dickinson, and underlined the essentially erotic dimensions of the poet’s unrequited love for men such as Charles Wadsworth and Otis Philliph Lord. The unusual intensity of Dickinson’s homoerotic passion for Sue can be seen in the collection of her letters in Bianchi (1970) Franklin (1998) and Grabber, et al (1998). A typical analogy is Dickinson’s “Wild Night” and “Because I could not stop for Death” as well as “Come Slowly Eden”. However, such Poems depict the idea of Craig Raine in an interview where he said “Reading a Poem is like undressing someone you love-very slowly”. (Bello-Kano 2016:12 and 2018:1).

2.3 DICKINSON’S THEME

Stephen (2000) with regards to Dickinson’s themes figured that her favorite verses are from “Puritanism” and that most other work is envisioned by intense spirituality. For him, she saw God in every person, in nature and in the physical world, which is a feature that links her to Romantic Poetry. However, Farr (1983) shared this view and even identified several examples on Poem (375) *The Angle a Landscape*; (488) *Myself was Formed-a Carpenter*, (571) *The Sun and Moon Must Make their Haste-*.

Dickinson is known for her presentation of Love, Death and Nature in her Poetry out of which “flowers” are frequently adopted. She sees these flowers as emblems of her passion and thoughts, as well as her frustration and depression. According to Wang (2015), Dickinson reiterated nature’s beauty embodied in flowers and also employs flowers to speak for her, her Love of Nature, her passion for Love, her being overshadowed in the patriarchal society and her resolution and Will to hide herself in her poetry.

However, Victorian artists and poets usually depicts Nature such as flowers among others to convey love or admiration, but Dickinson used the flower (Rose) prolifically to denote an obscure and neglected existence; to unconsciously reflect her life just like the flowers which occupy a place not so conspicuous and grow and wither silently. She also used it to presents the status of women in a general sense within the Victorian time. A succinct example is her poem “Nobody knows this little Rose”, written around 1858 – 1861, which stressed that they are left lonely and ignored, easy to perish without being noticed. Another view is that Dickinson used the flowers to convey her frustration both in her life and poetic creation as well as her reclusion. However, beside any other type of flower-like Rose, Daisy, or any other one, in Dickinson’s Poetry it is like writing a blossoming garden, just like the big one in her backyard. (Jine 2015:50-51).

Statistically, according to Jine (2015:50-52) there are nearly 300 poems written about Nature, including natural phenomena and natural object amongst which flowers are commonly written about. As Mabel Todd observed, Dickinson’s letters speak of flowers, of pines and autumnal colours. Thus, flowers have become a hot topic even in her epistle. Again according to the concord once to the letters of Emily Dickinson it recorded 187 letters in which Dickinson mentioned “Flowers”. For this, she let the flowers speak for her; in essence the flowers are an emblem of communication.

According to Shelley Nituama (cited in Jine 2015) complies with this view by making reference to Dickinson’s letter written to Elizabeth Holland, that the flowers serve as a way to imagine a foreign place that one has not personally traveled to; metaphorically, suggesting that the flowers at her disposal has demolished the barrier between her location in Armherst home and spice Isles. In other word, the flowers were her connection to other place, a kind of

transcending her immediate environment. A succinct example is her poem “Between my country – and the others-“ .

Bloom in (Furniss and Bath 1996:32-323) claimed the statue of Emily Dickinson as a “strong poet” within the tradition of American Poets. By strong Poet he holds that he finds her Poems “powerfully moving-because it produces sublime effects”. Simultaneously, he acknowledged and praised Dickinson which surpassed anything he said about any male poets.

Her stance is rarely belated, because of her
Exquisite good fortune in having only precursors
who were merely male... what can our map of
misreading do to or for her originality. Extend so far
that she passes beyond our revisionary model?
Often she does (p184).

Furniss and Bath (1986:323) argued that Gilbert and Gubar’s the *madwoman in the attic* can be read as an extended account of how Dickinson related her personal (life) and the general circumstance of women Poets in the 19th C came to achieve such “Poetic Power”. However, her peculiarity or the bizarre poetic styles/techniques are rather a signatory or identity as a poet. And for this reason “the discovery of a Female Literary tradition was a significant factor for Women Poets because the image of women presented in male-authored text was disabling for the aspiring woman writer. And that Dickinson succeeded, for her poems are quite “dissimilar not only to Barrette Browning but other poets as well. The juxtaposition of Dickinson’s work alongside the “dominant male tradition” as well as the “fragmented tradition of Women Writers” helps to boost

her knowledge and capacity as well as flourished the tradition of women's Poetry in North America and Britain in the 20th Century.

Dickinson's choice of the title "Master" was deliberate, and meant to be coded. Both "Master" narratives are composed of passion and frustration and Farr (1983:194) maintained that the early Master Poems were envisioned by "Dickinson's speaker as a "Child", a girl, epitomized by that simple field flower, the Daisy" (an extract or epithet she uses of herself in a letter to Bowles). She maintained that Daisy or Sun flower is used in the Victorian tradition to mean maid out of Love for the sun in the 1860s art.

2.2 Barrett Browning'S SONNET

According to the commentary of Sue Grime, Elizabeth Barrett Browning did not have titles on the forty-four individual Poems in the "Sonnets from the Portuguese". However, each Sonnet is identified by its first phrase. As good as literary work is, the distinction between masculine and feminine should not be an examinable item, and rather the quality of the work of art should be able to erase this demarcation. However, Ashcroft (2016:1-3) placed Mrs. Browning below the highest and was pre-eminently a great woman poet and not simply a Woman who wrote great poetry. Though her works in external form "sometimes narrative and sometimes dramatic" treat things as a subsidiary to the imaginative utterance of a personal thought and emotion, he argues that in masculine work, the thought comes first and inspires the emotion while in feminine literary work the emotions are overruled the thought thus, Mrs. Browning's work possessed such masculine substance.

Sonnet as a form of poetry has been the most populous, dominant and well established genre especially in English literary writing. The Romantics recognized and dominantly used the

Shakespearean and the Petrarchan form of Poetry until the 19th Century. Furniss and Bath (1996:300) opined that Elizabeth Barrett Browning's Sonnets from the Portuguese, Celebrates her love for Robert Browning, consisting sequences of forty-four, which marked the beginning of modernity within the poetic world. Critics such as Gilbert and Guber argued that Barrett Browning invented or extended her Sonnets from the tradition of Shakespearean to about ten thousand lines as a way of escapism from the patriarchal tradition. For them, they maintain that the poetry of even the most prominent poets of the 19th century tended to comply with an "aesthetic of renunciation" as a way of coping with their exclusion from the patriarchal tradition. Thus, unable to have a role model from the Female Poets of the past or pioneering "Literary Grandmother", she established herself a new and unique identity of her own. For them, Barrette Browning's work equates to a "Female version of Wordsworth's Famous Poem The Prelude published in 1850".

Avery (2016) holds that in order to maintain some privation, the original name for the sonnets were "Sonnets From the Bosnian"; but after suggestion by her husband's use of the nickname "my little Portuguese", it becomes 'Sonnet From the Portuguese'. He further hold that even the opening line of the sonnets has become deeply embedded into the Victorian culture that people, who have never read the poem, know it. Barrette Browning's work is an art of Passion, Doubt and Fear and, above all, Love. Avery (2016:4) argued that some conservative critics find her use of imagery, which is derived from the female body, "shocking" and also maintains the Barrett Browning touched on all the major forms of poetry, ranging from lyrics, sonnets and ballad reflecting on topics such as Religion, Politics, Love, Gender Issues or Women.

Barrett Smith in The Cornhill Magazine (cited in Kingma 2005:3-4) placed Barrett Browning among the top three or four Poet of England, claiming that after Shakespeare, with regard to her

Sonnet from the Portuguese (Kingma 2005:3-4). Mernin held that Barrette Browning was a famous and respected writer whose work was considered “learned, innovative, obscure, different and expressive as well as moving.” Her popularity as a poet earned her the respect she deserves not only as a poet but as an individual that attracted Robert Browning and wrote “I Love your verses with all my hearts, dear Miss Barrette.” He went on to praise the fresh strange music, the affluent language, the acquisition pathos and true new brave thought” (1981: 351-367). Her work had an influence on the next generation of poets namely Christianity Rossetti, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the 20th Century feminist critics, who, according to Avery (2016:5), were keen to examine Barrett Browning’s thinking and ideology as well as her perception about love. This view is supported by Alice Wood in (McCulloch 1995:17). In Catholicism and the arts, it is maintained the Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s Love Poem is about her own deeply personal emotions, which was “inappropriate openness of expression for women authors in the 19th Century that was initially translated as Portuguese Poet’s sonnets and later changed to Sonnets from the Portuguese. This Sonnet was the “first significant” example from a Females point of view, namely that her desire and her worthiness “as a woman is treated” confidently. For Barrett Browning in the textual opinion, “her Poems elevated Love above earthly, bodily concern but re conceptualized it as a matter of the mind and soul”.

Gerald Massey (cited in McCulloch 1995) has retrospectively assessed Barrett Browning’s work to the achievement and manifestation of “Women Powers” in literature; with the exception of a few critics, such as Thomas De Quincy, who saw her work as “grotesque ideas, intolerable conceits and coarsely masculine” and prophesized that “there will never be a great Woman Poet”. Amazingly, later he admitted that in Mrs. Browning, we have a woman nearest approach to a great poet”

2.5 BARRETT BROWNING'S THEME

Hirsch (1999) maintained that Barrette Browning was considered to be a major or pioneering female poet. This view is in compliance with Avery's *Elizabeth Barrette Browning and the Woman in Question*, as well as from the feminist perspective that her work has influence on poets like Christiana Rossetti, Marry Coleridge and others. Avery (2016:2) maintained that the central argument in her work is about the "oppression of woman through the institution of marriage." In one of her successful poems *Aurora Leigh*, Browning through Aurora tells her cousin as sublimation to marriage that "Poetry has the power to transform opinion and bring about social change..." Other themes include love and sexual relation, which is sometimes grounded upon "disillusionment" problematic and "brutal power games; and betrayal." Examples of such Poem are the *Romaunt of the page* and *A Romance of the Ganges*.

McCulloch (1995) held that Barrette Browning like Eliot, was virtually concerned with the ways in which "the historical process is shaped by dramatic or subtle movement of consciousness in the minds of apparently insignificant girls" He further opined that *Aurora Leigh* has made a tremendous impact on young girls in the 19th Century that it underwent editions upon editions from 1860s on wards. And Elizabeth Phelps maintained that Barrette Browning's aspiration to become a writer was confirmed through *Aurora Leigh* and it influenced her to write or produce more "successful civil war novels such as the *Gates Ajar (1868)*", which made her become Emily Dickinson's contemporary.

Furniss and Bath (1996:321) argued that Barrett Browning's poems have attracted and made tremendous influence not only on the poetic-genre but on novel writing by contemporary writers. Such poets include Alfred Tennyson, Byron, and Arthur Hugh as well as Emily Dickinson; who as seen as her "spiritual mother" in literary tradition. And that, Dickinson was highly influenced

by Barrett Browning's work that she used her lines, images and phrase in her Poem *Echo*; also McCulloch (1995) and Furniss and Bath (1996) argued that Dickinson's *I think I was enchanted* was a cryptic response to Barrett Browning's writing (poem). This argument led Betsy Erkkila to point out that when Dickinson read Barrett Browning's work especially *Aurora Leigh* between 1857-1861, it was also the period in which her poetic output increased from about fifty to three hundred poems. However, not only Dickinson used Barrett Browning's technique/style but more important is her husband, Robert, who also happened to be another poet. The Victorian society was rumored that Robert copied his wife's style or that it was the wife who did copy his style. For this reason, the Guerilla Girls affirmed that "one of the pleasures for a Woman's creativity is seeing your ideas live on, in the works of others, unacknowledged" (McCulloch 1995:91).

2.6 BARRETT BROWNING'S STYLE

Susan Howe opined that Dickinson and Browning were both "instinctive masters of the art of dramatic monologue, so dynamic and powerful is their use of soliloquy as it does reveal message in its concealment". Hirsh (1999) maintained that their poems especially Dickinson's are a "monologue without a named narrator, thus the "unidentified narrator" in one of Dickinson's poem relates to or is the same as it is for the protagonist in one of Barrett Browning's dramatic monologue. However, the "unidentified narrator" is a projection of the "self" through the speaking voice. It is constructed "out of words, out of language, line by line, stanza by stanza". Here, poem or poetry is used as an agent of exploration within the human experience of the senses. He maintained that "selfhood is always a constructive process in poetry" and this is established with the convergence of the writer (poet) and the reader through

the speaking voice. However, both the monologue and dramatic monologue imagine a speaker in to being over the course of a poem (cited in Hirsh, 1999:130).

Kingma (2005:1-2) argued that, for the Victorian reader, the Sonnets were the epitome of appropriate poetry for women to write because they showed a woman in her best role – loving and expressing sentiments of love. And that the biography of Barrett Browning constitutes what the Victorians loved about her Sonnet. The earliest reactions of Barrett Browning's Sonnet around 1850 were "reticence, no praise" and the Sonnet's success was not until later after her death when her biography was connected to her poems (Sonnets).

An article from the Edinburg Review stated that "one of the most peculiar characteristic of modern literary taste is the interest that readers find, not so much in the positive beauty and attractiveness of the work of a Poet, as in the study of the character from which they spring. And in another article (1862), C.B Conant (cited in Kingma 2005:4) maintained that her Sonnets were juxtaposed with Aurora Leigh and described that the true story is more interesting than the poem "imagined tale" and that the *Sonnets from the Portuguese* is "without competition the finest Love Poem in our language," which provide lessons to any unsatisfied heart, who undermines the greatness of the power of womanhood may find peace, solace, hope and the straightening of faith.

K. M Rowland (cited in Kingma 2005:4-5) wrote in relation to the sonnets that "in that matchless series of sonnet through which Mrs. Browning has changed her life's apotheosis, we learn all we need to know of a poet's wooing and a poet's winning". And William Herridge said that with Barrett Browning's Sonnet, "no one can read these Sonnets without being stimulated to a truer chivalry (graciousness) and a more profound appreciation of the sacred mystery of a

Woman's Love`. That her writing is work of a poetess in the full maturity of her power – such power is writing as a Woman about a Woman's ultimate job, love. Scholars have varying arguments with regards t the publication of Barrett Browning and Browning's letter and felt that those were “very intimate” and “very long” as well as overtly simple with a “little variety of sentiment and not even contained a Lover's quarrel and so, this makes her Sonnet less and less valued. Instead the letters overshadowed the Sonnets (poem) which formerly earned praise. (Kingma 2005:5)

Because of this, scholars such as Porter Gould and Leighton see the publication of the letters as a “blessing” and that the Sonnets are the “lesser version of the story” Again, Leighton sees a connection between the poem and the letters as a “literary performance” between “highly written” texts. For her, the letters take the form of a dialogue and the Sonnets are Barrett Browning's own reflections outside of the dialogue. Again, where the two texts work harmoniously is that both convey the conventions of courtly love and its challenge from gender perspective (Kingma 2005:7-8). This in essence breaks the silence of the traditional female role of simply listening or as receptive agents.

However, the two texts differ in the sense that, the poem (Sonnets) is a bit condensed unlike the letters. In theSonnets,there was giving of a lock of hair, which was played out differently in the poem than the letters. The letters reveal elements of sexual tension and sexual yielding in the dialogue. In his request, he exhibited a “longing” and coyness in her response that exudes sexuality. Thus, the Sonnet never reveals such thing even the giving of a lock of hair was devoid of any sexual tension. And even in Sonnet (19) where he receives the lock of hair, the tone of the Sonnet is but joyful. (Kingma 2005:9)

On the contrary, Mermain (1981) argued that embarrassment is the key factor why the Sonnets fell out of fashion. For her, the two texts do overlap in several ways, such as the address to the Lover “Dear,” “Dearest” and “Beloved”, more or less like an epistle and the reference to her pet name, “my little Portuguese”, and the exchange of a lock of hair; all these seem too intimate and such courtship in a Victorian era by a Woman’s was a taboo. However, the modern artists find the Sonnet and all of Barrett Browning’s work an outstanding work, a unique poet in her own way, regardless of the pressures of her society.

This study has extended the range of concerns in the literature reviewed above in one special sense, namely that it has sought to either deepen their insight in relation to the primary texts or deployed their concepts in new and different contexts from the ones within which the insight of the received body of literature were first developed. In this sense, the present study has applied the key insight of the formalist understanding of interpretation in new and interesting ways that that were not anticipated by the literature reviewed above. In this context, this study is an important contribution to the examination of the relationship between textual properties and the writer’s unconscious expression of emotion that cannot surface but with the help of the very literary devices of presentation that all writers of fiction, especially poetry, must grapple with, namely the capacity of figurative devices such as metaphor and hyperbole. Finally, this study has vindicated the famous claim of the leading formalist theorist, Victor shklovsky that the meaning of a work broadens to the extent that artfulness and artistry diminish (“Art as Technique Trans. Lemon, L.T. and Reis, M.J. Lincoln, Russian formalist criticism: four Essay. University of Nebraska press, 1965, pp 25-35). One implication of shklovsky’s perspective for this study is that the primary texts themselves ‘allude’ to a dimension of emotional intensity

that the poets themselves could only express through their poetic manipulation of the devices of poetry, from metaphor and hyperbole to alliteration and euphony.

CHAPTER THREE

STRUCTURE AND THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF SELECTED POEMS OF BARRETT BROWNING

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is a formalist analysis of the selected poems of Elizabeth Barrett Browning. It also looks at the thematic concerns in the poems. In other words, it seeks to show how she presented the concept of love and fondness for the other. In doing this, the following poems are selected from *Sonnets from the Portuguese*:

- Sonnet 43
- Sonnet 25
- Sonnet 14
- Sonnet 12

The Sonnet form was invented by the Italian poet, Petrarch. It consists of fourteen lines of iambic pentameter with a rhyme scheme of ABBA ABBA CDCDCD. Shakespeare introduced the English or Shakespearean sonnet, which was also in iambic pentameter but with the rhyme scheme ABAB CDCD EFEF GG. The Italian or Petrarchan sonnet is divided into an “octet” (8 lines) and a “sestet” (6 lines). The beginning of the sestet marks the “turn” or “envoi”, which usually signals a shift or change in perspective or introduces an argument. The Shakespearean sonnet, on the other hand, has three quatrains (4 lines) and a rhyming couplet (2 lines), which mark the “turn”. Barrett Browning’s sonnets are a blending of the two types of sonnet, so that it becomes difficult to identify her poems with either or to locate satisfactorily the “turn” in her

sonnets. Indeed, some of her sonnets do not have a turn, with the effect that the emotion in the poems becomes more and more intense as the poem progresses towards its end.

3.2 THE FORMAL STRUCTURE OF THE SELECTED POEMS

SONNET 43:“How Do I Love Thee?”

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.

I love thee to the depth and breadth and height

My Soul can reach, when feeling out of sight

For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.

I love thee to the level of everyday's

Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.

I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;

I love thee purely, as they turn from praise.

I love thee with a passion put to use

In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.

I love thee with a love I seemed to lose

With my lost saints,... I love thee with the breath.

Smile, tears, of all my life!... and, if God choose,

I shall but love thee better after death.

Like the traditional Sonnet, this poem is written in iambic pentameter. All the lines consist of 10 syllables except in lines 3 and 10 which have 11 syllables. The rhyme pattern is ABBA ABBA CDC DCD. There is the technique of repetition in lines 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11 & 14 where the poetic speaker repeats the phrase, "I Love Thee..." to build intensity and show emphasis. This technique of repetition is based on the interplay of rhymes and the alternation of end-stopped and run-on lines gives this poem powerful emotional intensity and formal sophistication.

In "How Do I Love Thee," it is not the idealized woman that is the subject of desire and a man in the active, passionate love of a woman. In this poem, a woman is the active, feminine source of desire with a passion for a man. Here, a woman is the active subject of speech and desire, and she addresses not a dead but a living lover; she speaks openly of her own feelings, which was not conventional in 19th century Europe.

Elizabeth Browning was among the first poets to use the Sonnet (which was traditionally a form in which a man was usually the speaking, active lover while the woman was the silent, passive beloved) to take up the image of a specifically female voice and an active lover as the centre of poetic expression and meaning. This Sonnet is the most passionate and emotional of the entire Sonnets, expressing her intense love for Robert Browning repeatedly.

The "turn" is a very important formal device, which marks a change of direction in the thought or feelings of the poem or the lyric narrator and can also reverse what has already been said in the octave or it can intensify an existing statement or even it can move the Poem towards a summary or conclusion. But in this Sonnet, it is ineffectively silenced because there is no argumentation but an impassioned declaration of love, which runs across all 14 lines. However,

the possible Envoi (the turn) in this Sonnet may fall in line 9-“I Love thee with a passion put to use” where “old grief’s” and lost “childhood faith” occurred.

The poem consists of image and symbols that appeal to the sense of sight, such as “Sun” and “candle-light” this makes the atmosphere bright and full of happiness. Words, such as “count” in line 1, undermine even the emotion or love she has written about. In line 10 “my childhood’s faith” now lost to his love leads up to the undermining of her love for the passive lover (Browning). In other words, the word “count” also suggests love could be counted in different ways and so this, to a certain extent, limits or restricts the flow of love. Thus, love is reduced to a number of things, such as “height”, “breadth,” “candle,” “light,” etc. Other words, such as “saint”, “faith”, “God” or even “purely”, give the speaker a dedication, submission and /or loyalty as well as innocence to her lover.

The “s” or hissing sound, such as “ways”, “praise”, “grace”, gives the rhythm a low profile beat like the flow of a river. The whole stock of the poem is full of enjambment: line 3-4 “when feeling out of sight” and “for the ends of being an ideal grace” likewise line 11-14.

I love thee with a love I seemed to lose

With my lost saints,... I love thee with the breath,

Smile, tears, of all my life!... and, if God choose,

I shall but love thee better after death.

SONNET 25 A Heavy Heart

A heavy heart, Beloved, have i borne
From year to year until i saw thy face,
And sorrow after sorrow took the place
Of all those natural jots as lightly worn
As the stringed pearls, each lifted in its turn
By a beating heart at dance-time. Hope apace
Were changed to long despairs, till God's own grace
Could scarcely lift above the world forlorn
My heavy heart. Then thou didst hid me bring
And let it drop adown thy clamly great
Deep being! Fast it sinketh, as a thing
Which its own nature cloth precipitates,
Which thine doth close above it, mediating
Betwixt the stars and the unaccomplished fate.

The poem consists of 14 (iambic pentameter lines) ten syllables except line 7, which has twelve syllables with an intricate rhyme scheme of ABBA ABBA CDC DCD. The poem is almost in enjambment throughout from 1-6 and then from lines 6 to 9, giving it an intensity of emotion that

leaves the reader out of breath. This sonnet again touches upon the sorrow and depression that Barrett Browning said she experienced most of her life due to her illness. She expressed that she had lost her childhood or natural joys as her sorrows had added in number. Though the Sonnet starts in a very melancholy tone, it takes a drastic turn in line 9 where she mentioned “My Heavy Heart. Then thou didst bid me bring”. Barrett Browning is meticulous in the selection of words, as simpler and direct words are chosen for simpler Imagery. Words such as “heavy heart” in line 1 and “sorrow after sorrow” in line 3, “long despair” in line 7 and “forlorn” in line 8 as well as “unaccomplished” in the last line (14) conjured up to suggest that the speaker is lonely, unhappy, incomplete and without the beloved. And it is followed by a string of similes in line 4: “as lightly worn” and line 11: “as a thing”. The speaker chooses the repetition of the “heart” in line 1, 6 and 9 for emphasis and that she bottled up so much passion and so much emotion for her beloved that left her in agony and pain “the heart beating” and “my heavy heart”.

However, this is a Love-sick Poem, nostalgic about her beloved, a kind of melancholy and despair. She has no choice but to “mediate” and hope and pray that God would “lift her” up from the “long despair” and bring her forth “calmly”. These words make the atmosphere of the poem “forlorn”, weighed down by a “heavy heart” and full of “despair”. Imagery and symbols used appeal to the sense of sight- “pearls” “star” are adopted to reflect on the rainbow-like picture or the glittering of the stars in a galaxy.

SONNET 14 If Thou Must Love Me

If Thou Must Love me let it be for nought

Except for love's sake only. Do not say

I love her for her smile -- her look her way

Of speaking gently, for a trick of thought
 That falls in well with mine, and Ceres brought
 A sense of pleasant case on such a day
 For these things in themselves. Beloved, may
 Be changed, or change for thee, - and love, so wrought,
 May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
 Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry.
 A creature might forget to weep, who bore
 Thy comfort long, and lose they love thereby!
 But love me for love's sake that evermore
 Thou 'mayst love on through love's eternity.

The poem is a sonnet of iambic pentameter except lines 7 and 8, which are in twelve syllables- (hexameters) with an alternate rhyme scheme of ABBA ABBA CDC DCD of 14 lines. Run-on is cut across the whole poem, such as line 3-4 “I Love Her For Her smile-her look-way” “of speaking gently,-for a trick of thought” even the poem begins with an end-stopped “if thou must love me, let it be for nought” “except for Love’s sake. Do not say”

The use of the dash is also adopted here by the poet but used in a different way than Dickinson. For Barrett Browning, the dash in line 3 “I Love her for her smile-her look-her way” suggested a comma and the dash also in line 4 “of speaking gently,-for a trick of thought”

suggests a semi-colon; an additional information on the thing she listed and that all of them can be “a trick of thought” unwise. The dash in line 6 signifies continuity “a sense of pleasant ease on such a day-” this day is not a particular a day, which come in the later years of their time, i.e. old age; the day is referred to the days they will spend together.

In line 8 “Be changed, or change for thee,-and Love, so wrought” the dash in this line is suggesting a therefore, so that when the beloved changed towards his attitude to the new ways of loving her, therefore love can have a new dimension. And finally, the last dash in line 10 “Thine own dear pity’s wiping my cheeks dry-”. This line too is presented as an aftermath of something that surely some things must continue after wiping the cheeks dry, probably a smile.

The turn of this poem falls on the last two lines and not on line 9, which reads “But Love me for Love’s sake, that evermore/Thou mayst love on, through Loves eternity”

There is a sound device used through the alternate rhymes-nought/thought/brought/wrought, which gives it a play on the words (pun) or that /o: / adds up the beat of poem and made the rhythm quite interesting. Finally, this poem is Barrette Browning’s declaration of love devoid of any idiosyncratic or materialistic reason. Tears or “weep as wiping thy cheeks dry” are such imagery that signifies pitifulness of the personae, so that the object of desire should love her not for anything but for her sake alone.

SONNET 12: Indeed this Very Love

Indeed this very love which is my boast,

And which, when rising up from breast to brow,

Doth crown me with a ruby large enow.

To draw men's eyes and prove the inner cost,
This love even, all my worth, to the uttermost,
I should not love withal, unless that thou
Hadst set me an example, shown me how
When first thine earnest eyes with mine were crossed,
Of love even, as a good thing of my own:
Thy soul hath snatched up mine all faint and weak,
And placed it by thee on a golden throne,
And that I Love (O soul, we must be meet!)
Is by thee only, whom I love alone.

Barrett Browning's "Sonnet 12" in *Sonnets from the Portuguese* portrays the speaker as she depicts the happiness of having fallen in love with one so illustrious and accomplished as her suitor. The speaker is becoming more comfortable, realizing that she is truly loved by her suitor. Still she gives him all the credit for her ability to love as deeply as she does and it is expressed with a great sense of pride.

The poem has ten syllables in each line (iambic pentameter) except lines 5, 10 and 11, which have twelve and eleven syllables respectively and line 14, which has eight syllables. The intricate rhyme scheme is also ABBA ABBA CDCDCD added with enjambment or run-on lines running through the whole Poem. Lines 3-4 "both crown me with a ruby large enow/To draw

Men's eyes and prove the inner cost", lines 6-7 "I should not Love even withal, unless that thou/Had set me an example", lines 9-10 "and Love called Love, and thus, I can-not speak/Of love even, as a good thing of my own..."

A turn occurs in line 9 "and Love called Love and thus, I cannot speak". This is suggesting that when the two love birds meet words are not necessary. The speaker tells that this intense passion for him was the result of his teaching her how to love him or the ways to love him which in all the ways-speech becomes worthless, not necessarily an antidote for lover's expression. And on the other hand, she sees the other dark side of love such that she cannot speak about it as a good thing; from the beginning she is boastful, and even made him a king but then at the end, she feels she cannot speak about love as a good thing.

The dash in this sonnet comes only in two places-line 4 "to draw men's eyes and prove the inner cost,-" and line 12- "and placed it by thee on a golden throne,-" For Barrett Browning, the dash is always accompanied with a comma apart from the rest of the commas that come at the end of each line, thus suggesting eternity and/or continuity. To "prove an inner cost", has to take a price and struggle, Likewise, to be on a "golden throne" so this probably suggests a lifetime struggle and achievement and thus, continues till eternity.

The diction used in this sonnet are drawn from Royalty, words such as "crown", "ruby" "golden throne" and even "boast" conjure up to give a heavy imagery of a Royal palace. A little trick of a rhythm is played from the beginning of the Poem, through the bouquet of /b/ sound. Boast-Breast to brow is a bit tipsy.

3.3 THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF BARRETT BROWNING'S *SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE*

3.3.1 Love expressed through Religion

Besides love, religion is another recurrent theme in Browning's poetry. She was known for her religious poetry, a fact that makes her poetry so Victorian in nature. Although her poetry often deals with religion, she uses religion less as a sign of her piety than as a means of expressing her love for the beloved. This is because as one reads through her poems, one realizes that she superimposes the beloved upon the religious. That is to say, the beloved ends up in the position of the worshiped object, rather as her God; and other conventional religious artefacts such as the ruby are shown in the poems to be merely symbolic of her desire.

Most of her Sonnets are in line with this notion, but a more succinct analogy is her "A Musical Instrument", which deals with the idea of what true religion is by narrating a tale about the fall of the old order and the inevitable rise of the new. In Sonnet 12, Barrett Browning equated or linked her love to religion, which she saw as pure or sacred. She linked her love to be a thing of value just like religion. The word "Boast" in sonnet 12, "Indeed this very Love which is my boast", is linked or echoed to the Apostle Paul's notable statement, "May never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ". This is in the same way that Paul's only cause for boasting is God's grace that covers his own weakness, the speaker's only cause for boasting is "this vindicating grace (sonnet 12) of Love that covers her own weakness".

Another biblical image is the ruby in line 3 "Doth crown me with a ruby large enow" to recall the picture of the ideal woman as depicted in proverbs (31:10) "A wife of noble character, who can find? She is worth far more than rubies". And (31:11) "her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value". This depicts a self-denying, hard-working wife and mother, who

increases or adds value to the materiality of the household, a patriarch's dream and notion. And as the speaker expressed "draw men's eyes and prove the inner cost", this suggests that the basic position of the female as a valuable object and not only an object of desire. In this situation, Barrett Browning portrayed herself as the ideal wife mentioned in these chapters.

However, the biblical interpretation echoed is endorsing the patriarchal interpretation, and yet their use here reveals the anti-female assumptions of that interpretation. The purpose of the speaker's love is to draw men's eyes and so prove her inner worthiness or value. The speaker continues to state that her "ruby", this love, only exists as a result of his love. He has set her an example, shown her how, recalling the words of Christ, "I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you" (John 13:15). Now the lover is presented as a Christ figure.

3.3.2 The Concept of Love and its Nature

Barrett Browning is known for her wild romance with Robert Browning, her husband, and the sonnet is read through such analogy. The sonnets were viewed as "the sincere and spontaneous expression of Barrett Browning's personal emotional experiences" and that many feminists have found the *Sonnets from the Portuguese* as something of an embarrassment amongst her other more 'Politically correct Poetry' (Simonsen 1993: vi). Whatever the reasons are that made her sonnet embarrassing are equally worthy of praises, especially from the modern form of reading.

This compassion within the Sonnet brought about another theme of intense love. The whole or out of the selected sonnets talk about intense love for the object of desire, who happened to be a man. Sonnet 43 especially speaks of the intensity of love, she has for Robert Browning, so intense is her adoration and love for him that it rises up to the spiritual level in line 3-4 my soul

can reach, when feeling out of sight "for the ends of being an ideal Grace". And that she loves him "freely" without coercion (force). She loves him "purely", without expectation of personal gain. And that she even loves him with an intensity of the suffering resembling that of Christ on the cross "I Love thee with a passion put to use". And again that she loves him in the way that she loved "saints" as a child. More, so she expects to continue to love him after death.

However, Barrett Browning continues to explore on this intense love that in Sonnet 14, the intensity differs, so that she explained even the nature of this intense love. So, in other words, Sonnet 14 leads us to the theme of the eternal nature of love for Barrett Browning. If a lover loves the other for earthly or temporal reasons, then that love should not be regarded as eternal. In this Sonnet, she does not only receive his love but rather makes demand regarding the nature of that Love. She stated the reasons which she does not want to be loved for "Do not say I Love her for her smile, her look, her way of speaking gently". And that all this earthly reasons fade and so do human beings. But that only love alone, which do not fade and die, he should love her for "Love's sake only".

The word "must" suggests that their love is important and mandatory, thus "Eternity"; and so since, they are fated together then his Love for her should be lifted out of the realm of human passion into the realm of eternal, heavenly passion. This is justifiable with the last line in Sonnet 43 "How Do I Love Thee?" where the speaker says "I shall but Love thee better after death". In other words, the poet insists that if he must love her, it must be a love of Eternal Power. For Barrett Browning, love is given a new direction and that she has high expectations of her love. If she loses it, she wants to lose for no less a reason than that the love could not attend to itself on its own course. It would fail because the lovers loved for less than the idea for earthly and temporal. Another theme of love has a different phase, not its Nature or Intensity but its

acceptance with fulfillment and, as such, that love is linked to biblical language or reference. Sonnet 12 dwells on the submission of the female adulation which remained her pride and joy.

3.3.3 Gender Sensitivity

The sonnet is marked as the first time the subject of desire is from a woman's perspective and this is one of the important themes to note in the Sonnet from the Portuguese. Love is explored, celebrated and expatriated, elaborated from a woman's perspective; Barrett Browning celebrated her- love for Robert Browning. The Victorian society was a patriarchal one such that Women were restricted and subjugated in terms of socio-political issues; that a Woman is solely a recipient of a man's adoration and not the giver or celebrant of love. However, such restrictions were fuelled by the Christian clergies, who believed that a woman should remain silent in terms social relations, such as Love. But for Barrett Browning, it is the first time a woman celebrates her love for a man. The first time, the object of desire is a Man and the subject of desire is a woman. The sonnets speak about Love that comes from the domain of Woman.

Both women have established themselves through poems which were fuelled by the theme of love. In other words, the strong compassion they both had for the object of desire made them express themselves from a woman's point of view, in such an Era where Women were not on the flat form of the society. In an era where the woman subject is silence but managed to crawl out of the lime light, with a new or strange compassion.

Other themes which the poems of Barrett Browning delve into (although it is not necessarily part of my primary work yet will be vital in an extension of the research the study worked on) is the political engagement which disclosed issues for abolishing slavery, social injustice and the role of artist within the Victorian society; *Aurora Leigh* best depicts women

subjugation. She is mostly interested in Women's secondary role; the ways in which the institution of marriage oppressed them and above all, she believed in the idea that love and sexual relations are often grounded in problematic and often brutal power games in the Victorian era. Thus, not only the Sonnets talk about that but other poems which explore on the above themes include a "Romance of the Ganges", "The Romance of the Swan's Nest" and "The Romaunt of the Page". Nevertheless, betrayal, duplication and loss are the dominant themes in such poems, which often see the woman silenced or even dead at the end. Another theme which the sonnet talks about is the tone of sadness and negativity.

However, many have not regarded the Sonnets as poems of love alone or abiding joy. They believed that she expressed a wide subtle scope of feeling, ranging from sadness to depression, fear, anger, sarcasm and even outright rebellion. This morbidity may have resulted to the general complex matter of gender relations or women's subjugation and the suggestion of her weakness/sickness probably hypochondria (a situation where someone worries about his health and believes that he is ill while he is all right or a feeling of believing that one is ill when actually he is all right).

Sonnet 25 is shot through with images of sadness, yearning and dashed hopes. Despite her lover's affection, which she "boasts" about still, she was lonely and depressed. The speaker mentioned in line 3-4 that "sorrow after sorrow took place" and natural Joys are lightly worn and this left her into a long despair learning her world "forlorn" With such a "heavy heart". The speaker felt incomplete even with the assurance of her beloved's love. Still she mediates and worries over her health or otherwise.

CHAPTER FOUR

STRUCTURE AND THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF SELECTED POEMS OF

EMILY DICKINSON

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is a formalist and thematic analysis of the selected poems of Dickinson. Each poem is analyzed after which the study seeks to see the presentation of the concept of love and fondness for the other. The selected poems are:

One Sister Have I in Our House

Volcano

Dollie

Bee

4.2 STRUCTURE OF THE SELECTED POEMS

4.2.1 One Sister Have I in Our House

One sister have I in our house,

And one, a hedge away.

There's only one recorded,

But both belong to me.

One came the road that I came

And wore my last year's gown

The other, as a bird her nest,

Builted our hearts among.

She did not single as we did

It was different rime

Herself to a music

As Bumble bee of June.

Today is far from childhood

But up and down the hills

held her hand the tighter

Which shortened all the miles

And still her hum

The years among

Deceives the butterfly

Still in her eye

The violets lie

Mouldered this many May

I spilt the dew

But took the morn-

I choose this single star

From out the wide night's number-

Sue-forevermore!

This poem has six stanzas comprising four quatrains and two stanzas, which consist of six and five lines, respectively. Almost all the stanzas are run-on lines. The first stanza consists of a mixture of eight syllables (iambic tetrameter), four syllables (diameter) and a six-syllable (trimeter). But the second quatrain comprises an equal number of six syllables and all the rest of the stanzas are ranged from four to eight syllables. Again, Dickinson's use of imagery did not end on the bird but more so is linked to the musicality of both the singer and the image of a "Bumble Bee" For her, Sue's song is different from their own and so, Sue's song is comparable to the music or sound of the bumble bee. Dickinson's use of a complex rhyme falls within the third stanza-aba;


It was a different a tune A

Herself to her music B

As Bumble bee of June A

And a near rhythm occurs in the fifth stanza, which makes them closer "Eye/lie". This has the feel of a popular song, particularly if it is followed by the alliteration in the last verse of the same stanza-Mouldered/Many/May. Symbolically, the "hills" are referring to height (↑) while the



“miles” suggesting to space or distance () covered; Thus, it is represented more of the
Christian cross ()

4.2.2Dollie

Poem 51

So when you are tired-
Or perplexed-orcold-
Trust the loving promise
Underneath the mould,
Cry “it’s I”, take Dollie”,
And I will enfold!

Poem 156

You love me- you are sure-
I shall not fear misktake-
I shall not cheared wake-
Some graining morn-
To find the sunrise left-
And Orchards- unberef-

And Dollie – gone!

I need not start-you're sure-

That might will never be-

When frightened-home to Thee I run

To find the windows dark –

Quite none?

Be sure you're sure-you know –

I'll bear it better now –

If you 'll just tell me so –

Than when-little dull Balm grown –

Over this pain of mine –

You sting-again!

Poem 158

Drying! Drying in the night!

Want somebody bring the light

So I can see which way to go

Into the everlasting snow?

And “Jesus” where is Jesus gone?

They said that Jesus-always come-

Perhaps he doesn’t know the house

This way, Jesus, let him pass!

Somebody run to the great gate

And see if Dollie’s coming; what!

I hear her feet upon the stair!

Death won’t hurt – now Dollie is here

Dickinson wrote three Dollie Poems dedicated to her sister-in-law, Sue (Dollie is her pet-name for Sue). In the first Dollie Poem or “You Love Me-You are Sure”, the first stanza consists of six syllables in two lines (line 1 and 3), eight syllables in three lines (line 2,5 and 6) and a diameter in line 7, the last line of the stanza.

The diction is drawn from associations with nature, such that words such as “morn”, “night”, “sun rise” and “orchards” are deployed to depict nature and create the imagery of a green field or depict the time between night and day or dark versus light, much like a game. The techniques of repetition, are also used rarely by Dickinson-in line 2 and 3 “I shall”, suggested the egocentric presence, which appears four times; “I need” in the second stanza and “I’ll bear it”. And the turn is deliberately delayed until the last line: “Dollie is gone”. The whole stanza is an enjambment, which begins from line 3 and ends in line 7:

I shall not cheated wake –

Some graining morn –
To find the sunrise left –
And Orchards – unbereft –
And Dollie – gone!

The last stanza also has run-on lines like the previous Dollie – “You love me- you are sure”. This enjambment can be seen in lines 1-6:

So when you are tired –
Or perplexed-or cold –
Trust the loving promise
Underneath the mould,
Cry “it’s I” take dollie

And again in lines 9-11:

When frightened-home to thee I run-
To find the windows dark-
And no more Dollie-mark-
As well as in lines 15-18:
If you will tell me so

Than when-little dull Balm grown

Over this pain of mine-

You sting-again!

This last stanza clarifies Dickinson's fears that Dollie would not be faithful and that she has asked of her a momentous, impossible night: to become a magical mother, always at home for her to "run" to when "frightened" but (Sue) Dollie "stings" and is "gone," making her need a "Balm" or remedy or cure. And the second pain would be worse for it will be the sting of betrayal.

Dollie might insist that she surely loves the narrator. This loving assurance provides a "Balm"- a soothing ointment that provides a pleasant relief from the pain of insecurity and rejection. But should Dollie "sting-again", the pain will be worse. However, sting offers a sharp acute pain instantly, whereas insecurity is a chronic pain. Betrayal would cause the first pain and increase the second. As Dickinson writes "just tell me so now and save me that grief".

This poem presents Dickinson's sister in-law as an object of intense desire with possible romantic, possibly physically, and possibly just intense love. This possibility is acknowledged throughout the poem by the techniques of repetition "you are sure" and the slant rhymes too" are not forgotten- "mistake/wake", "left/unbereft", "morn/gone" and "dark/mark". Dickinson further embarks on the image of darkness such that, after the "sunrise left", darkness overcome the windows.

Simultaneously, poem (158) another Dollie poem is a more explicit exploration on such imagery. Dickinson demands light, the comfort of love as she dies during the night but she wants it from a human lover, not Christ. Though Dickinson usually writes poems presenting Jesus as a Savior in this poem she treats him scornfully. And the name of Jesus is in quote, suggesting

doubt as whether he is real or whether he is indeed the savior. Later on, she associated him with “they”, clearly suggesting doubt and untrustworthiness. However, in this poem Dickinson clearly condemned “Jesus” artistically even though in her life time, she never rebelled against the religion of Christianity. In other words, she was in a dilemma about the acceptance or rebelling against the religion of Christ, and the word “perhaps” in the poem suggested further and so is “he doesn’t know the house” (it is now up to Sue) “Dollie to come pass” the great gate- the gate of heaven joined with the Dickinson’s gate so as to find solace, peace and comfort.

Around 1862, when Dickinson was at the pick of her creativity and writing or career, she wrote a Poem “A wife at day break i shall be” (461). Here, it is concerned that the poem ends as her “future climb the stair of the Dickinson’s house. This is however, a more prominent architectural feature by the way of a ready metaphor of sexual feeling, poetic elation and supernatural fulfillment (Farr1983:135). However, Dickinson’s last moment as the eternity descends on her up to her bedroom; she already concluded with “I’ve seen the face- before” and as the matter of fact, Sue was her endless, her eternity. And by a comparative analysis even “Christ” pales (fails) for “Death won’t hurt-now Dollie is here”. Again and again, being influenced and familiar with the narrative of Barrette Browning’s dramatic personae she concludes a colloquy in stanza two between them, this way Jesus and herself, but Sue is chosen over Jesus.

Farr (1983:137) argued that most of the Sue’s narrative was written while Susan was married to Austin and so Dickinson knew Sue would fail her and, therefore, the anticipated “Nest” image turns into a coffin. A succinct example is “Poem 39”. It begins with discontentment as the speaker describes herself as weary, “tired” or fatigued. This is a frequent euphemism for sexual longing and despondency. Dickinson portrays her weariness not only in her poems but even in

several letters that she wrote to both Sue and Master: “I got tired” she tells master in a letter in 1861 (L2.372), and “how weary I grow” she wrote to Sue in 1852 (L1.125) (cited in Farr (1983:138-139).

In the Dollie poems, Dickinson imagines embracing “Dollie” in the only place convention might allow; a grave. She feels the grave is the only place where she can be with Sue but even the grave, Sue seems to be forbidden to Dickinson because the two women were not even buried in the same grave yard unless the relationship is mother and daughter. And so because of this, she paraphrased the Bible, Ruth Chapter II: verse 16-27 and sent it to Sue in a letter around 1852 “where thou diest, will I die, and there will be buried” more of the “Wuthering heights” my father will be your father, and my home will be your home, and where you go, I will go and we will lie side by side in the Kirkyard (L.1201) (Farr 1983:138-139).

This poem clearly reveals necrophilia in Dickinson since she opts to follow Sue even after death. This she presents by making the poetic speaker (her alter-ego) a dead person, who will receive Sue’s corpse. Dickinson “promises” to “enfold” Sue. In this regard, sexuality is masked as a sisterhood just like in the poem “One Sister Have in Our House”.

“Poem 20” is a poem that has left scholars arguing whether it is a Dollie Poem or not. This is because in the first stanza leaves a dash (hyphen) for the name in question “Weary for my –) and so Mrs. Todd (cited in Farr 1983:138) suggested that the name in question should be “Susie” not Dollie due to the intended application of alliteration proceeding the S’s in her following words – “I will singing go - /I shall not feel the sleet/ I shall not fear the snow.

4.2.3 The Volcano Poems

Volcano Poem 175

I have never seen “Volcanoes” –

But, whom travellers tell

How those old-phlegmatic mountains

Usually so still –

Bear within – appalling Ordnance,

Fire, and smoke, and gun

Taking villages for Breakfast,

And appalling men –

If the stillness is volcanic

In the human face

When upon a pain Titanic

Features keep their place –

If at length the smouldering anguish

Will not overcome –

And the palpitating vineyard

In the dust, be thrown?

If some loving Antiquary,

On Resumption Morn,

Will not cry with joy “pompeii”!

To the hills return!

Volcano Poem 1,677

On my Volcano grows the Grass

A mediatative spot –

An acre for a Bird to choose –

Would be the General thought –

How red the fire rocks below –

How insecure the sod

Did i disclose

Would populate with awe my solitude (1677)

Volcano Poem 1601

A still – Volcano – Life

That flickered in the night –

When it was dark enough to do

Without erasing sight

A quiet – Earthquake Style –

Too subtle to suspect –

By natures this side Naples –

The North cannot detect

The Solemn – Torrid – Symbol –

The lips that never lie –

Whose hissing Corals part – and shut –

And Cities – ooze away –

The Volcano Poems usually appear in the Master narratives. Most of Dickinson's letters to "master" or Bowles or Lord Phillip reveal a love that has its roots in errors and admiration. An American critic, Robert Bridges Droch, argued that Dickinson's love poems are not solely on Sue; due to the consistent imagery that is linked to those numerous letters to Bowles, the poems must be for Master. Droch pointed out that the Master letters and poems are similar and possess an awe for "loved person" a man towards whom the awe is enhanced or fuelled by respect, fear and a little gratitude. Dickinson's images for master or Bowles are those of resurrection. She associated him with Christ and the Sun (cited in Farr 1983:181-183).

Due to the excess of her letters, Dickinson had told Bowles' wife that her "Cheek ... red with shame" because I write often (L2.388). So probably, she feels the need to conceal not just the name but herself upstairs behind closed doors or behind a metaphorical "Veil". However, it was in such letters written to master or Bowles that Dickinson confessed by not denying her feelings for Master. Therefore, by this confession about her passion; she seeks metaphors that are explosive, not merely electric. In other words, her love and feelings for master are more of an explosion that is left in her soul and felt as well as echoed by her body such explosion is probably what explains her poems on Volcano.

However, another reason for the choice of a volcano may be her knowledge on the themes of the then painting, of particularly the painting of the Chimborazo that was showcased around (1859) in a Bosnian newspaper. Nevertheless, Dickinson used volcano not only as a passion for suppressing love but rage. As she disclosed it in one of the volcano poems; consisting of only five quatrains, followed by the repetitions of "appalling" (extremely bad or shocking). The first volcano Poem- I have never seen volcanoes, consists of five stanzas of four equal lines each. The longest syllables are eight and the shortest is a diameter that appeared in first and fourth stanzas and all the rest are in form of trimeter and tetrameter

The diction too is quite associated with nature as "volcano" "mountain", "phlegmatic"(calm) and "still:" added up to the Image of the mountain; that lays still and calm across the earth or field. Therefore, the diction is substituted with Nature. And the repetition of "appalling" (extremely shocking) in the same stanza is not accidental but deliberations of the technique.

Other words (diction) or symbols used are associated with the Imagery of a disaster, a war or an aftermath of explosion just like the volcano itself. Words such as "gun", "smoke" or

“appalling”, “smouldering”(burning slowly without flame) and “anguish” (severe pain or unhappiness or mental suffering) suggest the disastrous nature of the place or city- “Pompeii”.The rhyme is in triple rhyme because it consists of a three-syllabic word Volcanic/Titanic and a two-syllable word in face/place. Thus, it gives rise to three successive of a hypothetical (if... if... if...). A turn falls on line 13 “if some Loving antiquary”, a deliberate diversion from talking about the suffering of men “appalling men” to a study with “Loving antiquary” this takes a complex journey. Dickinson was unorthodox and this she extends to her writing; she avoids “Resurrection Morn” in favour of “Resumption Morn”, suggesting not a transfiguration in some imaginary heaven, but a restoration of a community (Pompeii)/ To the Hills return

Volcano – My volcano grows the grass

The poem is just two stanzas and the lines are end-stopped ones of equal lines in each stanza because it begins with a thought and ends in the last line of the stanza. Line 3-4 “an acre for a bird to choose” “would be the general thought” is an end-stopped line. Again, the choice of word is also associated with the Nature after volcano is “grass”, “bird”, an “acre”. A rhythm is rarely found, -in the beginning of the first line “grows the grass”.

A turn falls on line 6 “how insecure the sod” such that the first line up to line 5 talks about nature or field where “grass” are grown, and a field for a “bird” to play or “choose” and a “sod” (a person, especially a Man, that you are annoyed with).

A Still Volcano

This poem is not a Sonnet because it consists of twelve lines, so it is referred to as a free or blank verse. All the lines are either (trimeter), six-syllables or (tetrameter), four-syllables word except

line 1 and 5 which are (diameter) two-syllables. The turn is a little bit delayed until line 10 “the lips that never lie”. The rhyme in this poem is a para-rhyme because all or most of the consonants are the same but with different vowels-“sight”, “style”, “subtle” and “suspect”. On the whole of the volcano poem, the /s/ sound is adopted probably to give an auditory Imagery through the hissing sound-“Still”, “Sight”, “Solemn” and “Symbol.” However, this is more like the music she sang silently in her upstairs. The rhythm “subtle to suspect” too is another one.

The use of dashes were not cut across all the verses rather she chose three verses out of the twelve “when it was dark enough to do” “too subtle to suspect” and “the north cannot detect”. In the archive of Dickinson Poems, she tried to substitute ‘S’ words into a process such that in searching for the right verb she jots down the words ‘slip’, ‘slide’ and ‘melt’ before preferring the much more carnal ‘ooze’ (in her jottings, this word is partly obscured). And in the first verse instead of A Still-Volcanic-Life, she tried the adjective “Volcanic” before volcano as a subject and “life” as a predicate “Volcanic life” and in the fourth line ‘erasing’ is finally promoted ahead of the more ‘endangering’. And the technique of a half rhyme is also a continuous style in the Poems-Night/Sight, Style/Naple, Suspect/Detect.

4.2.4 The Bee Poems

Bee Poem 869

Because the Bee may blameless hum

For thee a Bee do I become

List even unto me.

Because the flowers unafraid

May lift a look on thine, a maud

Alway a flower would be-

Bee Poem 211

The Bee is not afraid of me,

I know the butterfly;

The pretty people in the woods

Receive me cordially.

The brooks laugh louder when i come.

The breezes madder play.

Wherefore, mine eyes. Thy silver mists?

Wherefore, O summer's day?

The Bee is not afraid of me

The bee is not afraid of me

I know the butterfly.

The pretty people in the woods

Receive me cordially –

The brooks laugh louder when i come-

The breezes madder play;

Wherefore, mine eyes. Thy silver mists,

Wherefore, O summer's day?

Bee Poem 230

We-Bee and i – live by the quaffing

Tis'nt all Hock – with us –

Life has its Ale –

A bee is another image used by Dickinson. She is fond of using bees as prototypes of God, the father or as types of the eager lover. This imagery she adopts to the extent that she humorously equates herself in “Comes Slowly Eden” with the bee.

We-Bee and I – live by the quaffing

Tis'nt all Hock – with us –

Life has its Ale – (230)

Yet, the bee of “Poem 211” is but a means of exploring the experience of Eden, the nectar squeezed from flowers. According to Farr, Dickinson's poems and letters are mostly consumed by the word ‘Eden’, which is a reflection on the famous scientific explorations in Mexico and South America in the 1830s, which were considered by writers and painters as a new Eden (1983:226).

Because the Bee may Blame Less Hum (Poem 869)

This is in two stanzas delicately designed in triplet verse, with rhymes and/ or alliterations of Because/Bee, Blameless/Become and because/be and Thee/Bee. In this poem, it viewed Bee more intimately than Poem (230) Come slowly-Eden. And it translates the ‘maid’ into both bee and flower, thus perpetuating the imagery of girlhood romance. And the I/Me is a ceremonial for it dwells or centered on her, the maid, the I or me. The imagery is so powerful- “flower/bee” so intimately clears. All the lines are six syllables except line 1 and 4 with eight syllables. And a little rhythm is played out well in the second line for “thee a Bee do I become”.

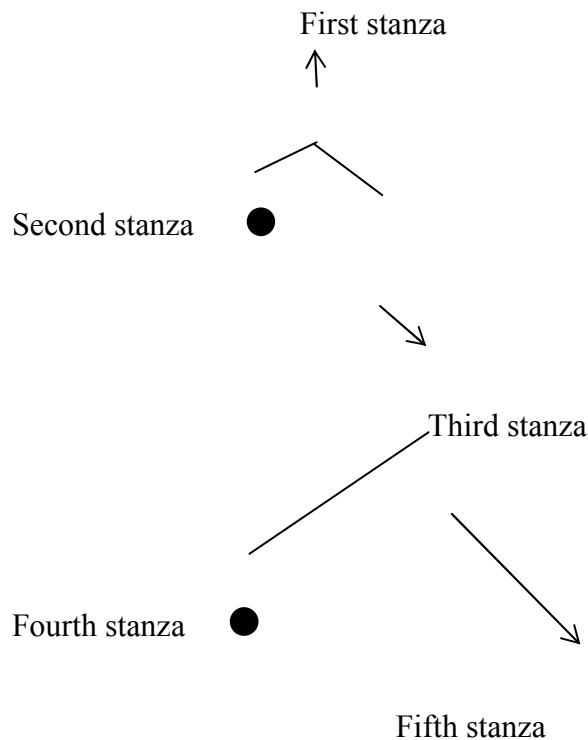
The Bee is not Afraid of Me

This poem is an iambic tetrameter from line 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 14 and 16 (eight syllables) and trimeter begins from line 2, 4, 6, 8, 11, 13, 15 and 17 (six syllables). The arrangements of the number of lines begin with odd numbers and end up with even numbers. Similarly, the trimeters begin with even numbers and end up with odd numbers. This is another exceptionality of Dickinson which differs from Barrett Browning. There is a touch of an identical rhyme in line 9 and 10, which added up to the technique of repetition and the turn- is in line 9 “the bee is not afraid of me”.

This Poem begins by juxtaposing the poet and Nature in a friendly accord and happy moment; so the mood is quite a friendly one. We have the bouquet of “b” sounds again; Bee, Butterfly, Brooks and Breezes – as if they are dear friends and playmates. The “b” alliteration, alongside the “p” sounds of “Pretty People” keeps the tone bouncy and rhythmically tipsy. But not all is well in her “paradise”, as the poet finds herself weeping; such that all the glories of a summer day are not enough to overcome grief or even melancholy-wherefore, oh summer’s day?

In one way, she is consumed by the glories of summer and then the question mark (?) suggested its probability. However, still her presence and possibly nature with Sue in mind makes “the Brooks laugh louder”

The whole of the Poem is in four stanzas and with subsequent repetition, for emphasis and for presenting an image of girlhood life. This asymmetry between the two stanzas is quite important, for it paves the climax of line 8 - where – fore, O summer’s day? It is noticeable that the first stanza consists of a four – beat lines and the music is broken after the second and falls on the third stanza and continues on the fourth like the previous one and two and got broken again in stanza five. Symbolically, this is presented as a roadmap to ensure the level of her originality in art. The flow of music in the poem begins in the first stanza and gets broken in the third stanza, which is represented by an arrow. Similarly, each dot is presenting the position of the flow of music while the arrows indicate the fall or broken music of the poem.



In other words, the music or beat in the first stanza got broken in the third stanza and continues until the fifth stanza it got broken again while the music in stanza two tallies with the beats in stanza four; and continues until sixth stanza. Thus, it is more of a game between odd numbers verses even numbers. Indeed, Dickinson proves to be an innovator and her poems, too, an authenticated version of her desires.

However, Dickinson is possibly a bit radical for these shifts are all artifacts of proximity and her little roadmap to the egocentric predicament “makes brooks laugh louder” and “breezes madder play”. However, the bottom line is that she is perhaps presenting or questioning emotion itself as a picture or film or state that places the world in an obscuring hothouse of her own making, then leaves the poet looking for where the objective reality of that object is (a summer’s day) when she now cannot see beyond the panes surrounding her. And even more, perplexing is the interior object that eludes her from within this metaphorical hothouse (as Dickinson once, said to a friend “Art is a House that tries to be haunted”).

Not surprisingly, the dashes in this Poem are quite few. As mentioned before, Dickinson’s dash is in two ways – the long and the short dash. The former indicates or conveys more emotion and stronger eruption, while the latter signifies a lesser emotion. Dickinson’s dashes are a reflection of her thoughts, emotions and feelings for her beloved and such emotion that is bottled up is punctuated or interrupted with the dashes. In the poem, the 13th verse in the third stanza “Receive me cordially –” and line 14 “the Brooks laugh louder when I come –” are the only two places that the long dash appears.

However, this poem refers both to Sue and the Master as her lover or object of desire and that is why she places them in a friendly setting, with the use of the word “Cordial” in the poem.

Dickinson is more compassionate, highly emotional in the anticipated union of their heart, body and soul. (Cordial is a pleasant and friendly manner) when it is juxtaposed with the word “come” alongside a dash (-), this image supersedes the girlhood image in the woods. (Come in the dictionary meaning indicates to move to or towards a person therefore, come – with a long dash, literally means come-on; referring to action which is intended to attract somebody). Therefore, Dickinson’s use of the two dashes symbolized her emotional state.

And the short dash conveys a lighter emotion which appeared in the fifth stanza of the second and fourth lines is more of a rhyme dash.

The Bee is not afraid of me

I know the butterfly-

The pretty people in the woods

Receive me cordially-

The active lover is presented in an agonizing manner such that none of the objects of desire desires her in return. This resulted in the crisis of imagery due to the intensity of the love and emotion she bottled up ; where bees, volcanoes, and other natural objects or Nature are being used to present such intensity.

4.3 Thematic Analysis of the Love Poems of Dickinson

This section is a thematic analysis or rather analyzes the concepts of Love and Fondness that Dickinson treated in the selected poems. In these poems, Nature is used to refer to her emotions and more. In a letter to a friend, Dickinson wrote "Nature is a Haunted House-but art – a House

that tries to be haunted". This statement suggests that she Juxtaposed Nature and Art in a friendly accord. For her, Art and Nature are closely interwoven. Although the selected Poems have no titles, they are addressed by their numbers or by the symbols commonly used in the poems, such as "Volcano" "Bird" and "Bee" or several names of "Flowers". It is obvious from these titles that Nature is at work or that Nature is an important symbol in her writing, which she deploys to explain the complexity of her relationships. Out of the four selected poems, two refer to Nature - Bee and Volcano.

4.3.1 Love Expressed Through Nature

The statement: "Nature is a Haunted House-but Art-a House that tries to be haunted" implies that the natural world is consumed with mystery and false signs, which deceive human kind as to the purpose of things in Nature as well as to God's purpose in the creation of Nature. However, some might stop to think about the Volcano and why she relates it to her Emotions. And the second part of the sentence, "Art- a House that tries to be haunted", implies the poet's role. For her, the poet does not exist merely to render aspects of Nature, but rather to ascertain the character of God's power in this world. Thus, Dickinson used Nature in her art differently and for different reasons. She used her imagination of nature to depict not just the intense passion she felt for Sue but that a piece of Nature can act as a way to imagine a foreign place that one has not personally travelled to or used certain names of flowers amongst the Nature in particular as a form of communication.

However, the depiction or characterizing God's power in the world is rather complicated because she sometimes abstained from using the established religious symbols for things in Nature. Such absenteeism is mostly evident in the Volcano, Bee or Bird(s) Poems, especially "A

Bird came down the Walk" or even "A Narrow fellow in the Grass", in which she retrains from the easy reference to Satan in Eden and mostly the symbols (Nature) adopted were rather flexible as well as incomprehensible and thus need to be haunted.

In the Bee Poem, she sees herself as the representative of the Bee "We-Bee and! - Live be the quaffing" and in another, she sees Bee as prototypes of God or as a type of the eager lover that appeared in her work. Similarly, the volcano is used solely for its feature and how it erupts like the compassion she felt for her lovers. However, the intensity of her passion is compared to the heavy imageries of the intensity of the sunrays or the luminous morningdews alongside orchards and Stars while in darkness.

4.3.2 Love Expressed Through Religion

This theme of Nature leads to another theme of the individual's struggle with God or religions. Dickinson is known for her aspiration towards becoming a clergy at Holyoke and later the position was denied to her which, according to Macmonagle (2003), resulted to her frustrations. However, she neither denounced the religion nor affirmed it, rather she devoted a great amount of work exploring on the relationship between an individual and a Judeo-Christian God. Many of her poems described a rebellion against the God whom she considered scornful and indifferent to human suffering, a divine being that is perpetually committed to subjugating human identity. The Volcano while "taking the Villages for breakfast" simultaneously becomes aggressive to "appalling Men" because such men at some length are in agony or in "smouldering anguish"(this shows signs of repressed anger or strong emotion such as passion). In another instance, the Volcano is not only the place where grass grows, but is a dangerous place, its "red fire" below destroying human "bodies".

Dickinson was a religious poet. Unlike other poets who inevitably saw themselves as subordinate to God, she was dissatisfied with the notion that the poet can engage with God only in so far as God ordains the poet as his instrument. Through her compassion for the other, she challenged God's dominion, refusing to submit to his divine will at the cost of herself. Thus, Dickinson's poetry criticizes God not by speaking out directly against him, but by detailing the causes and his various affronts to an individual's sense of self.

4.3.3 Love Expressed as the Assertion of Self

Another theme Dickinson's poem dwells upon is the relationship of the self to itself. Because she lived in isolation most of her life, Dickinson's poetry focuses on the inner struggles of the individual mind. She questioned God and wrote of her own struggles with faith, particularly her suffering (emotion) and the confusion with self-identity. For Dickinson, the "Self" entails an understanding of identity according to the way it systematizes its perceptions of the world forms its goals and values. This perception of the self is more closely associated with the censure of God, as can be seen from her work. For her, the mere act of speaking or writing is an affirmation of the will and the call of the poet is the call to explore and express the self to others, as she did with the 1,775 poems that she wrote. This struggle of the self is what explains the flexibility of the symbols or imagery or even Nature she used in the Poem. Dickinson sometimes saw herself as the representative of the verse or more so the "Birds" and "Bee" imagery she adopted. However, in addition nearly all Dickinson's speakers behave according to the primary (most important person) of the self, despite the efforts of others to introduce on them. We saw the presence of self in almost all the primary poetry from Dollie, Bee, and Volcano to One Sister Have I in Our House. The "I" was a significant factor in these Poems. Her

passion for the object of desire is what accelerated the I to be a significant factor in her expression of love.

4.3.4 The Nature of Love in Dickinson's Poems

Love is one of the most essential ingredients she wrote about, Macmonagle (2003) and others have argued that fondness or emotional instability led her to isolation and later to sing (poetry). Two-thirds of the Poems were written about her intense passion for her sister-in-law, Sue, and for Master, though most of her poems often converged two or more themes within a poem. Like *One Sister Have I in Our House*, it started - as a Poem of a sweet compliment of a sister-in-law and ended up with adoration "I chose this single star" and "Sue-forever more". Dickinson was not assured of Sue's love, she felt that Dollie was neglecting her or that she is cheating her "You love me -you are sure" and when Dickinson needed her (Sue) "and Dollie - gone" she is gone, gone deep into her marital relation and other social activities. Again, where Dollie is a sweet darling she simultaneously becomes dangerous for "You sting-again" over the "pain" she experienced; and so needed a soothing "balm". For Dickinson, love or passion is sometimes erotic and nostalgic while for Barrette Browning it is eternal.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.0 CONCLUSION

Elizabeth Browning was among the first female poets to use the Sonnet form (which was traditionally a form in which a man was usually the speaking, active lover while the woman was the silent, passive beloved) to take up the image of a specifically female voice and an active lover as the centre of poetic expression and meaning. Barrett Browning is known to have deviated from the Shakespearean rhyme-scheme of ABAB CDCD EFEF GG to ABBA ABBA CDCDCD rhyme pattern. Her choice of the Sonnet form is quite important and conforms to the English tradition of Love Poetry writing. Conventionally, the Sonnet form is employed in poems about love or desire. In this regard, Barrett Browning conformed to tradition. However, the closed nature of the sonnet form limits the free-flow of poetic emotion, which is constrained into the fixed 14 lines and metrical pattern of the sonnet. It is in this regard that this dissertation argues that in the poems of Barrett Browning, form definitely determines, shapes, and decides Content. This can be seen from the realization that, although the poems are meticulously shaped and structured, meaning or content is narrowed down or restricted into a limited space.

Dickinson does not follow any certain convention of a fixity or otherwise. Her poems show little uniformity or consistency in rhyme pattern, as this appears rarely in her work. Rhyme patterns are important in poetry in that they give the poet a focus and a form around which a poem may be organized, but Dickinson is an original poet, conforming to neither rhyme nor pattern in her poems. For this reason, her poems range across a variety of forms, showing both rhyme and free verse styles in which there is no discernible rhyme pattern. She neither adopted

single type of poetry (Sonnet or otherwise) nor even adopted a full rhyme scheme pattern. Most of her poems are in a single stanza and sometimes appear in fragments or fragmented forms. They are free or blank verse and sometimes in stanzas or near Sonnet form only stopping at twelve lines instead of the conventional fourteen lines. An example is “Volcano 4”. The freedom of her verse allows a free-flow of emotions or content, making these limitless and vast. This is why she connected her fondness for freedom and flexibility with nature.

On this view, this dissertation argues that in the poems of Emily Dickinson, unlike in those of Barrett Browning, form does not determine content. On the contrary, it is the other way round. The freedom in her verse informs the freedom in her content reflecting perfectly the *nature* of Nature itself. It comes as no surprise then that the poems of Dickinson are full of images from nature and this makes the imagery more concrete and more powerful, as opposed to the imagery in Barrett Browning’s Sonnets, which is more abstract.

Generally, Dickinson’s diction is condensed, complex and sometimes contradictory, because she sometimes drew her vocabulary from the field of science while at the same time making biblical references in her aim to depict her love for the object of desire. In contrast, Barrett Browning’s diction is more lucid, concise, brief and simpler and rarely contradictory. In her Sonnet 43, the word “count” almost contradicts the love she claims she has for the object of desire, but in all, the rest of the poem is straightforward.

Enjambment is a feature that appears in most of Barrett Browning’s poems, if not in all the Sonnets. The run-on lines of her sonnets serve to add intensity to the emotions expressed, leaving the reader almost breathless, echoing the sentiment in the heart of the poetic speaker. Dickinson’s poems, on the other hand, have end-stopped lines, with complete thoughts and

emotions at the end of each line. However, this is not, strictly speaking, the case, since she tantalizingly ended many of her lines with the long dash, signifying either incompleteness or suggestibility, almost playfully promising *something*, a something which is unknown, because it is unarticulated. In effect, Dickinson does not leave her reader breathless; she leaves the reader hanging, yearning for more. This reflects the true nature of her love for the other which, to the end of her life, remained largely unreciprocated, unfulfilled, even unacknowledged.

This dissertation has shown how Barrett Browning has taken a poetic form conventionally used by male poets to celebrate their love and desire, and subverted this to suit her own aims. This can be seen from the way she first of all subverted the traditional rhyme pattern by changing the structure of the sestet in her poems and by combining both Petrarchan and Shakespearean forms of the sonnet in her poems. Then she changed the roles of poetic speaker and love-object by making the speaker an active *female* voice, and the love-object a passive *male* one. This means that love is celebrated from a woman's perspective and the object of desire is a male lover. Indeed, this not only subverts form, it also subverts Victorian convention as well since it was a time when the woman was not expected to articulate her love, much less celebrate it in a poem.

This is different from what one finds in the poems of Dickinson, who rarely used a rhyme scheme and is well known for putting certain breaks and interruptions in her poems by the use of long and short dashes. In other words, where Barrett Browning is known for the use of a peculiar rhyme scheme of the sonnet form, Dickinson is known for glitch pattern that takes many forms, such as halting line breaks, broken rhythms or, most obvious, punctuation as interruption. Thus, it is the argument of this dissertation that the dash is an act of violence that forces unpleasant things to happen to the sound or flow in her poems. And as such, whether it is an act of

violence or interruption, this glitch (broken or interruption) pattern is a formal feature, which makes her distinct not only from Barrett Browning but from most Victorian poets as well.

In expressing her desire, Dickinson used aspects of Nature to depict strong emotions, such as volcano, bee, birds, and butterfly. Each object has certain attributes, which she links to her passions. Sometimes these imageries are flexible, for she often sees herself as a representative of or resembling the Bee or Bird that both sing in their own peculiar way and, therefore, point to her own profession as a poet, a kind of singer in her own right. And sometimes, these imageries are representative of the object of desire or adoration which is either Sue, her sister-in-law, or Master (Lord Philip). Unlike the poems of Barrett Browning, her images are static not dynamic and are not explosive. However, Browning also deploys some images from nature, such as pearls, rubies, the sun, orchards and many other images. In this regard, Nature unites the two poets in their bid to depict their desire and fondness for the love-object.

Most important is the way the two poets treated the religion of Christianity: both were good Christians but Dickinson certainly questioned the image of Christ in her poems, especially in the Dollie poems. However, her poetic form, with her customary four-line stanzas, ABCB rhyme schemes, and attestations in iambic meter between tetrameter and trimeter is derived from psalms and protestant hymns and not only this derivations, but presents the image of Jesus Christ as a saviour while simultaneously treating him with scorn. In one of the Dollie poems she rejected the comfort of love and Light from Jesus and called for a human lover instead and also placed his name in quote marks, suggesting that she had doubts about whether he is real or indeed the savior. Again, on the verge of dying, Dickinson preferred Sue to Jesus Christ and claimed that Death won't hurt now that Sue is here.

Barrett Browning, on the other hand, is submissive for she often linked or connected her love and passion to biblical references. Not only are words such as "boast" ruby" or the ideal house wife echoed in biblical chapters, but she juxtaposed her sense of Love, Passion and Dedication with that found in the Bible. In short, where Dickinson is slightly dismissive about religion, even if she does recognize some elements in the Bible, Barrett Browning is wholly submissive and even equates her own passion for the beloved to the type found in the Bible – specifically, (John 13:15).

Another theme that binds the two poets is the theme of love, though each presented a passionate and an intense love for the other. But they differed in the nature of love or fondness they had. Intense love is what unites them but its nature and the object of desire is where they differ. When Barrett Browning's love is raised up to a spiritual level, according to her Sonnet, Dickinson's love was, unrequited and painful. Where Barrett Browning object of desire was a man, a male Love who eventually married her, Dickinson's object of desire was a female, a woman and her sister in-law. Thus, her own love was nothing but pain, un-reciprocal and eventually died without actualizing her dream. Again, the second object of desire happened to be a man but not single, a married man who never returned that passion she had for him and eventually married someone else.

Comparatively, Barrett Browning's story was a joyous one while that of Dickinson was bizarre and in sadness. Thus, this sadness and pain was a reflection of the bizarre style and technique that her Poetry conveyed. Dickinson did not just project herself through the poems and letters she had written, but that she adopted the use of objects or symbols as a form of communication. She let certain objects and icons speak or convey her message like the flowers among natural objects. Thus, the flowers are an emblem of communication. Again, the intensity

of her passion for Sue and/or master led her into a wild imagination and, as such, explosive and bizarre as well as powerful symbols were adopted.

By typification, Dickinson is such a unique poet that it is very difficult to place her in any single tradition, for she seems to come from everywhere and nowhere at once. She is a poet with wild imagination whose poems simply record thought, and feelings experienced naturally over a course of a life time devoted to creativity, (*Art is a Haunted House*). Any attempt made to orchestrate her work would have ceased the pleasure of her bizarre, compelling Poems.

Barrett Browning is noted for the articulation of intense love and/or ideas and emotions through the voice of the sonnets. In the interest of art, the sonnets should be noted and appreciated for a series of finely crafted poems rather than the documentation of actual romance. After all, the formalist aspects she adopted were unique in its own ways, and therefore, should be appreciated for its form not for its content or any other reason.

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APPENDIX

Sonnet 43 (How do I Love Thee)

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.

I love thee to the depth and breadth and height

My Soul can reach, when feeling out of sight

For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.

I love thee to the level of everyday's

Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.

I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;

I love thee purely, as they turn from praise.

I love thee with a passion put to use

In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.

I love thee with a love I seemed to lose

With my lost saints,--- I love thee with the breath.

Smile, tears, of all my life!--- and, if God choose,

I shall but love thee better after death.

Sonnet 25 (A Heavy Heart)

A heavy heart, Beloved, have i borne

From year to year until i saw thy face,
And sorrow after sorrow took the place
Of all those natural jots as lightly worn
As the stringed pearls, each lifted in its turn
By a beating heart at dance-time. Hope apace
Were changed to long despairs, till God's own grace
Could scarcely lift above the world forlorn
My heavy heart. Then thou didst hid me bring
And let it drop adown thy clamly great
Deep being! Fast it sinketh, as a thing
Which its own nature cloth precipitate,
Which thine doth close above it, mediating
Betwixt the stars and the unaccomplished fate.

Sonnet 14(If Thou Must Love Me)

If Thou Must Love me.let it be for nought
Except for love's sake only Do not say
I love her for her smile -- her look her way

Of speaking gently for a trick of thought
That falls in well with mine, and Ceres brought
A sense of pleasant case on such a day
For these things in themselves. Beloved, may
Be changed. or change for thee, - and love, so wrought,
May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry.
A creature might forget to weep, who bore
Thy comfort long, and lose they love thereby!
But love me for love's sake. that evermore
Thou 'pays(love on. through love's eternity.

Sonnet 12 (Indeed This Very Love)

Indeed this very love which is my boast,
And which, when rising up from breast to brow,
Doth crown me with a ruby large enow.
To draw men's eyes and prove the inner cost,
This love even, all my worth, to the uttermost,

I should not love withal, unless that thou
Hadst set me an example, shown me how
When first thine earnest eyes with mine were crossed,
Of love even, as a good thing of my own:
Thy soul hath snatched up mine all faint and weak,
And placed it by thee on a golden throne,
And that I Love (O soul, we must be meet!)
Is by thee only, whom I love alone.

Poem 51

So when you are tired-
Or perplexed-orcold-
Trust the loving promise
Underneath the mould,
Cry "it's I", take Dollie",
And I will enfold!

Poem 156

You love me- you are sure-

I shall not fear mistake-

I shall not cheer'd wake-

Some graining morn-

To find the sunrise left-

And Orchards- unberef-

And Dollie- gone!

I need not start-you're sure-

That might will never be-

When frightened-home to Thee I run

To find the windows dark-

Quite none?

Be sure you're sure-you know-

I'll bear it better now-

If you 'll just tell me so-

Than when-little dull Balm grown-

Over this pain of mine-

You sting-again!

Poem 158

Drying! Drying in the night!

Want somebody bring the light

So I can see which way to go

Into the everlasting snow?

And “Jesus” where is Jesus gone?

They said that Jesus-always come-

Perhaps he doesn't know the house

This way, Jesus, let him pass!

Somebody run to the great gate

And see if Dollie's coming; what!

I hear her feet upon the stair!

Death won't hurt-now dollies here

Volcano Poem 175

I have never seen “Volcanoes” –

But, whom travellers tell

How those old-phlegmatic mountains

Usually so still –

Bear within – appalling Ordnance,

Fire, and smoke, and gun

Taking villages for Breakfast,

And appalling men –

If the stillness is volcanic

In the human face

When upon a pain Titanic

Features keep their place –

If at length the smouldering anguish

Will not overcome –

And the palpitating vineyard

In the dust, be thrown?

If some loving Antiquary,

On Resumption Morn,

Will not cry with joy “pompeii”!

To the hills return!

Volcano Poem 1,677

On my Volcano grows the Grass

A meditative spot –

An acre for a Bird to choose –

Would be the General thought –

How red the fire rocks below –

How insecure the sod

Did i disclose

Would populate with awe my solitude (1677)

Volcano Poem 1601

A still – Volcano – Life

That flickered in the night –

When it was dark enough to do

Without erasing sight

A quiet – Earthquake Style –

Too subtle to suspect –

By nature's this side Naples –

The North cannot detect

The Solemn – Torrid – Symbol –

The lips that never lie –

Whose hissing Corals part – and shut –

And Cities – ooze away –

Bee Poems 869

Because the Bee may blameless hum

For thee a Bee do I become

List even unto me.

Because the flowers unafraid

May lift a look on thine, a maud

Always a flower would be-

Bee Poem 811

The Bee is not afraid of me,

I know the butterfly;

The pretty people in the woods

Receive me cordially.

The brooks laugh louder when i come.

The breezes madder play.

Wherefore, mine eyes. Thy silver mists?

Wherefore, O summer's day?

The Bee is not afraid of me

The bee is not afraid of me

I know the butterfly.

The pretty people in the woods

Receive me cordially –

The brooks laugh louder when i come-

The breezes madder play;

Wherefore, mine eyes. Thy silver mists,

Wherefore, O summer's day?

Bee Poem 230

We-Bee and i – live by the quaffing

Tis'nt all Hock – with us –

Life has its Ale –

Poem 14

One sister have I in our house,

And one, a hedge away.

There's only one recorded,

But both belong to me.

One came the road that I came

And wore my last year's gown

The other, as a bird her nest,

Builded our hearts among.

She did not single as we did

It was different rime

Herself to a music

As Bumble bee of June.

Today is far from childhood

But up and down the hills

I held her hand the tighter

Which shortened all the miles

And still her hum

The years among

Deceives the butterfly

Still in her eye

The violets lie

Mouldered this many May

I spilt the dew

But took the morn-

I choose this single star

From out the wide night's number-

Sue-forevermore!