

Emily Dickinson's Unique Perspective on Death in Selected Poems

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Abstract. Death, a universal truth of life, strikes a chord of terror and curiosity as it arrives unexpectedly, without warning or preparation. It remains a mysterious and inevitable truth of the human life cycle, universally acknowledged yet universally feared. In literature, however, writers frequently explore this theme. Poets condense profound reflections on death into few words, inviting readers to interpret and connect with it through their own experiences and perspectives. Emily Dickinson, notably, presents death uniquely in her works. Poetry draws its strength from the intimate tapestry of personal experiences and cultural roots, a truth vividly embodied in the works of Emily Dickinson. Rooted in her New England heritage, her verses resonate with themes shaped by profound losses and the solitude she embraced. Preferring correspondence over social interactions, Dickinson delves deeply into life's complexities, pondering existential questions and grappling with uncertainties about the afterlife within the context of her Christian upbringing. Her poetry becomes a profound exploration of the human spirit navigating the realms of faith, identity, and mortality. Dickinson's most well-known poems dealing with death and mortality include "Because I could not stop for Death," "Death is a Supple Suitor," and "I Heard a Fly Buzz- when I Died." These poems delve into death's different aspects, its process, and outcomes, while also showcasing Dickinson's intriguing blend of religious skepticism and adherence to certain Calvinist principles. Her skepticism and curiosity about death's essence are deeply intertwined with transcendentalist philosophy and personal encounters with loss, whether of family members, mentors, or cherished friends. Rooted in her spiritual upbringing and rebellious temperament, Dickinson's exploration of mortality resonates as a profound and introspective journey into the mysteries of existence.

Keywords: Christianity, Death, Skepticism Transcendentalist philosophy, Calvinist Principles

1. Introduction

Death is a recurring theme in literature and religious texts, prominently explored in various forms like novels, short stories, dramas, and especially poetry. Emily Dickinson is celebrated for her profound exploration of death, influenced by her reclusive life and literary inspirations. She was among the most influential and eminent American intellectuals of the nineteenth century. She was an enthusiastic reader of the popular poets and fiction writers of her day and wrote several poems on topics responding or alluding to the work of her literary peers (Miller, 1989). Her famous poems “Because I Could Not Stop for Death” and “I Heard a Fly Buzz when I Died” serve as poignant reflections on life, death, and the afterlife. None of Emily Dickinson’s poems are macabre or depressing; instead, they almost celebrate the phenomenon of death. They describe its finality yet suggest that immortality is possible, offering a sense of hope even in death. Her verses suggest a familiarity with death, portraying it as a somber, enigmatic presence. Her fascination with death springs from a unique blend of her religious convictions and non-conformist spirit. This analysis seeks to unravel Dickinson’s unique perspective on mortality from multiple angles, delving into how her introspective and often haunting portrayal of death enriches our understanding of her poetic vision.

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) stands as one of the most transformative figures in American literature, whose quiet existence in Amherst, Massachusetts, belied an extraordinarily radical poetic vision. Though virtually unknown in her lifetime, with a mere ten of her nearly 1,800 poems seeing publication, her work is now celebrated as a cornerstone of the literary canon. Writing against the backdrop of nineteenth century social upheaval and the chaos of the American Civil War, Dickinson weaponized an inventive, highly elliptical style. She broke away from conventional Victorian aesthetics, favoring lean imagery, abrupt dashes, slant rhymes, and acerbic brevity to probe the outer boundaries of human perception in iconic poems like “Because I could not stop for Death” (c.1862), “Hope is the thing with feathers” (c. 1861), and “I’m Nobody! Who are you?” (c. 1861). At the core of Dickinson’s intellectual project was an unflinching obsession with mortality and the mechanics of death. Rather than treating death as an abstract theological concept, her poetry dissected it with startling, physical immediacy, capturing the terrifying stillness of a dying room in “I heard a Fly buzz - when I died” (c. 1862) or the eerie transition into the afterlife with astonishing psychological accuracy. When Dickinson died in 1886, her sister Lavinia discovered a secret archive of her work, prompting a long history of posthumous editorial alterations aimed at smoothing over her jarring stylistic innovations. It was not until Thomas H. Johnson’s 1955 restored edition that her raw, uncensored voice was fully recovered. Today, Dickinson is recognized not as a fragile

recluse, but as a fearless, groundbreaking artist who redefined the possibilities of language to give form to the unseen.

Emily Dickinson's approach to mortality distinctly contrasts with the sentimental and orthodox conventions of nineteenth-century verse. While prominent contemporaries such as Walt Whitman (1819-1892), Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) often framed death through grand elegiac gestures, romanticized mourning, or conventional Christian consolation, Dickinson rejected these tidy resolutions. Instead, she treated death as an intimate, psychological dialogue characterized by nuance and quiet horror. Where poets like Christina Rossetti (1830-1894) viewed mortality through a lens of spiritual transition, Dickinson rendered it with profound ambiguity, confronting the physical and existential realities of dying with unsettling detachment and enduring mystery.

Emily Dickinson's poetry has long drawn critical attention for the way it turns death into a central poetic concern rather than a final silence. Omana Antony, in "Emily Dickinson's Perspectives on Death: An Interpretation of Dickinson's Poems on Death" (2018), argues that Dickinson's poems on death reveal a deeply interpretive and philosophical engagement with mortality, especially in the way she reshapes death into a subject of reflection and meaning. This reading is especially helpful for understanding Dickinson's ability to make death both intellectually complex and emotionally resonant.

W. Cooney's "The Death Poetry of Emily Dickinson" (1992) presents death as one of the most persistent and defining themes in Dickinson's work, noting that a significant portion of her poems engage directly with mortality. The article also shows that Dickinson's death poems have often been interpreted in conflicting ways, with some readers seeing them as morbid and others viewing them as profound meditations on life, loss, and the unknown. This critical tension makes Cooney's study especially valuable, since it frames Dickinson's poetry as a space where fear and insight coexist.

A. Roy and A. M. Mahavidyalaya, in their article, "*The Theme of Death and Time in Emily Dickinson's Poetry*" (2015), expand the discussion by linking death to time, showing that Dickinson often treats mortality as inseparable from temporal experience. Their study suggests that Dickinson's poems do not simply describe death as an event but place it within a larger awareness of transience, duration, and the passing self. This approach strengthens the view that Dickinson's death poetry is also a poetry of existence and change.

L. E. Lambert's "Emily Dickinson's Joke about Death" (2013) adds another important dimension by drawing attention to Dickinson's subtle use of irony and humor in poems about mortality. Rather than reading death poems as uniformly solemn, Lambert shows that Dickinson often embeds playful or unexpected tonal shifts that complicate the reader's emotional response. This interpretation matters because it demonstrates that Dickinson's poetry resists simple categorization and instead presents death with both seriousness and wit.

Taken together, these studies show that Emily Dickinson's poetry presents death as a multi-layered subject shaped by philosophy, time, language, irony, and emotional depth. Critics generally agree that Dickinson does not treat death as merely an ending; instead, she turns it into a powerful means of exploring existence itself. For this reason, her death poetry remains one of the most significant areas of Dickinson scholarship. In other words, existing scholarship has examined Emily Dickinson's poetry through themes such as death and immortality, death as a metaphor, death and time, death as irony/personification and religious doubt, but much of this criticism treats these ideas separately rather than as part of one sustained reading of her vision of death. As a result, there is still room for a study that brings together Dickinson's selected poems, her personal and religious background, and the distinctive way she imagines death as both mysterious and intimate. The present study is fresh because it brings these ideas together and centers them on Dickinson's unique perspective, especially through a selected set of poems such as "Because I Could not Stop for Death," "Death is a Supple Suitor," "I Heard a Fly Buzz—When I Died," and "The Soul selects her own Society." That makes this paper more focused and interpretive than many of the sources cited. This paper argues that Dickinson presents death through a distinct combination of religious skepticism, Christian background, personal loss, introspection, and spiritual questioning. In this way, the study moves beyond a general discussion of death as a recurring theme and instead shows how Dickinson's treatment of death reflects a deeper emotional and philosophical vision.

2. Emily Dickinson's unique perspective on Death

Emily Dickinson's most intriguing poems revolve around these questions: 'what is death?', 'why is death?', and 'what it is like to die?' (Griffith, 1964) It appears that she studied death extensively from every angle, expressing her insights in numerous poems. Her profound perspective on death in her poetry is complex and deeply nuanced, reflecting

her deep introspection and unique understanding of mortality. Salamatullah Khan categorizes her death poems into two types: “where death is described by the external manifestations and signs, and where she imagines death happening to her as an experience (108-109). Emily Dickinson, renowned for her enigmatic style, delves deeply into the theme of death across her poems, offering a unique perspective that intertwines with themes of nature, spirituality, and existential questioning.

It is important here to shed some light on her unique multifaceted exploration of death which reflects her profound contemplation on the mysteries of life and the human experience of mortality. Here are some unique perspectives she explores:

2.1 Attitude towards Death

The poet’s fascination with death shapes her views on life, death, and the afterlife. She sees death not as the end but as a transition to eternal life. In “I Heard a Fly Buzz when I Died,” she portrays a state of existence after physical death, suggesting consciousness in a spiritual form. In “Because I Could not Stop for Death,” she highlights the continuation of existence beyond the grave, possibly influenced by religious beliefs in eternity. Dickinson’s view of death is marked by a cold, harsh perspective shaped by personal losses of loved ones. The loneliness and anguish from these experiences deeply influence her outlook. In “Because I Could Not Stop for Death,” she portrays death as cruel, interrupting her busy life despite her ironic gratitude for its patience. Yet, she laments death’s cruelty for robbing her of the opportunity to fulfill her ambitions and live fully. The poet describes death’s cruelty through the setting sun passing them, symbolizing discomfort in a cold world that contrasts with sunny days. The poet says:

The Dews drew quivering and Chill –

For only Gossamer, my Gown –

My Tippet – only Tulle –

In “I Heard a Fly Buzz when I Died,” the speaker delves into the cruelty of death, symbolizing it through the discomfort and coldness of her thin dress. This coldness reflects feelings of sadness, loneliness, and disillusionment. The poem skillfully employs natural elements such as cold to evoke and convey deep emotional pain.

2.2 Death as a Transition

Dickinson views death not as an end of life but as a transition or passage into another state of being. She employs death as a potent symbol or allegory in her poetry, including “Because I could not stop for Death,” where Death is personified as a courteous escort. The poem progresses through various stages of life before death, emphasizing the transition from the world of the living to eternal existence. She says:

We passed the Fields of Gazing Grain –

We passed the Setting Sun –

Notably, the speaker passes the setting sun rather than it passing them, symbolizing the timeless nature of eternity. Through this portrayal, she prompts readers to consider broader themes such as transition, spiritual transformation, and the passage of time. Beyond its literal meaning, Dickinson’s exploration of death invites interpretations that delve into metaphysical and existential dimensions, enriching her poetry with profound philosophical insights. Her portrayal of death transcends mere finality, depicting it instead as a transition to another realm in poem like “I heard a Fly buzz - when I died -.” She envisions death as a journey or passage leading to the afterlife or eternity, suggesting a serene acceptance of death as an inherent part of existence. Her perspective offers a profound contemplation on the continuity of life beyond earthly bounds.

2.3 Personal Losses

Emily Dickinson’s perspective on death often delves into its mysterious nature, sometimes portraying it as a transition or an inevitable part of life. Her personal losses brought depression into her life and inspired her poetic works, focusing on emotions such as loneliness, pain, and death. When she was alive, death was always beside her. Her life was deeply influenced and shaped by profound losses. She endures the death of close friends and family members. This includes the death of her nephew Gilbert Dickinson and friends like Charles Wadsworth, Judge Otis P. Lord, and Hellen Hunt Jackson (Norbert Hirschhorn and Polly Longworth et al. 310). She later lost her father, who died of a lonely death, and her mother, who died of a stroke that left her paralyzed for seven years before her death. These problems eventually brought Trauma to Emily’s life and are thought to have inspired the writing of his poetic works. The deaths of her brother Austin and sister Lavinia intensified Emily Dickinson’s contemplation of the nature of death. However, it was the death of her nephew that underscored for her the inevitability of mortality at any age. These experiences informed her exploration of death in poems. She says:

Because I could not stop for Death –

He kindly stopped for me–

The Carriage held but just Ourselves –

And Immortality.

In this Poem, she portrays death as a constant companion, reflecting her ongoing quest to understand its profound significance. Allen Tate (1899-1979), a distinguished American poet, teacher, and critic observed that “*Because I Could Not Stop for Death*” is an extraordinary poem. In fact, he said, it deserves to be regarded as “one of the greatest in the English language; it is flawless to the last detail.” (Tate, 436).

2.4 Social Isolation

Dickinson’s intense focus on death was shaped by her lifelong isolation and the depression that accompanied it, leading her to withdraw into a solitary existence within her home. Communicating mainly through letters, she immersed herself in reading and writing, finding solace in the quiet of her surroundings, especially next to her ailing mother’s room. This seclusion nurtured her fascination with death, which she personified with qualities like patience and civility in her poetry, notably in “Because I Could Not Stop for Death.”

We slowly drove-He knew no Haste

And I had put away

May labor and my leisure too,

For his civility-

Here, she portrays death as a patient escort through life’s stages, reflecting her view of it as a natural and familiar companion. John M. Greenberg claims that “*the poem is not about biological death at all, but about a vision of the rest of her life, a life of creative*

seclusion” (21). In another poem, “I Heard a Fly Buzz- when I Died,” she further explores death’s mysterious nature, depicting it through imaginative and metaphorical lenses. Dickinson’s unique perspective on death emerges from her isolated contemplations, revealing her profound engagement with life’s ultimate mystery.

2.5 Vision of Death

Emily Dickinson’s literature captivates with its nuanced exploration of death, portraying its diverse facets and profound impact on the human psyche. Her vision and exploration of death in her poetry is multifaceted. She portrays death from every possible angle – as a lover, as a companion, as a murderer, as a corrupter of the flesh and as a being always free in nature. She portrays death as a lover in poems like “Because I could not stop for Death,” where she personifies death as a kind and patient companion escorting the speaker towards eternity. She depicts death as an assassin in poems such as “I heard a Fly buzz - when I died,” where death interrupts the speaker’s final moments with mundane details like the buzzing of a fly:

I heard a Fly buzz – when I died –

Dickinson also presents death as an ever-free creature in nature, often connecting death with natural cycles and portraying it as an integral part of the larger cosmic order. She says:

**Death is a supple suitor,
that wins at last-**

Overall, Emily Dickinson’s portrayal of death is richly complex, blending metaphysical speculation with vivid imagery and personal introspection. Through her distinctive poetic lens, she intricately weaves a narrative of obsession with death, offering a profound meditation on the existential and spiritual dimensions of human existence. Dickinson’s ambiguous verses invite readers to interpret death uniquely, exploring both personal and universal experiences of mortality and the afterlife.

2.6 Life after Death

Dickinson's belief in life after death, shaped by Calvinist teachings, informs her exploration of mortality in her poetry. While her poems often depict death as a natural transition, she also grapples with the uncertainty and mystery surrounding what comes after life, reflecting her faith in God's providential care over the soul. In "I Heard a Fly Buzz when I Died," Dickinson portrays death not as an endpoint but as the threshold to eternal life. The poem vividly describes the speaker's awareness after death, including the decomposition process and her continued consciousness of her surroundings. Through communication from beyond the grave, the speaker suggests an existence after death.

I willed my Keepsakes – Signed away

What portion of me be

Assignable – and then it was

There interposed a Fly –

The pun in 'signed' and 'Assignable' ironically underscores death's ultimate authority, as only meaningless documents, hollow phrases, fleeting moments, and mortal bodies can be left behind. The irony intensifies as the soul meticulously organizes everything, confidently anticipating death's arrival. Despite hearing a fly buzz, the speaker narrates events that unfold beyond earthly life, offering a poignant reflection on the continuity of consciousness beyond the mortal realm. In another poem, "Because I Could Not Stop for Death," she depicts death as the conclusion of earthly existence and the gateway to eternity. The poem romanticizes death, personifying it with patience and reverence. It suggests the existence of an afterlife, where death awaits individuals to fulfill their life's purpose before transitioning them. Dickinson's evocative verses invite contemplation on the inevitability and profound significance of life after death.

2.7 The Mystery of Death

Dickinson's poetry often delves into the theme of the mystery of death. Her poems reflect her fascination with the unknown aspects of death, the afterlife, and the soul's journey. Her exploration of these themes often combines contemplation, curiosity, and a sense of wonder, portraying death as both a mysterious inevitability and a profound spiritual experience. She delves into the enigmatic and unknowable dimensions of death through her poetry. In works such as "I heard a Fly buzz - when I died -," she employs vivid and occasionally unsettling imagery to depict the moment of death and its aftermath. The poem meticulously captures the scene with attention to eerie details, including the presence of a buzzing fly, adding a haunting quality to the portrayal of this profound transition. Dickinson's "I've seen a Dying Eye" exemplifies her mystical exploration of death. She says:

I've seen a Dying Eye

Round and round a Room –

In search of Something – as it seemed –

The poem portrays a dying person's search for "something," a spiritual essence or understanding, which remains elusive to observers. It suggests that death defies human attempts to fully grasp its meaning or significance. Through such vivid imagery, Dickinson invites readers to confront the mystery and complexity surrounding the end of life, offering a glimpse into the ethereal realm beyond. "The Bustle in a House" reflects on the aftermath of death, exploring the impact on those left behind and contemplating the mystery of what happens to the soul after death. She says:

The Bustle in a House

The Morning after Death

Is solemnest of industries

Enacted upon Earth –

In the above stanza, 'Morning after Death' illuminates the profound mystery of what transpires with the soul following the cessation of life.

2.8 Death and Immortality

Dickinson grapples with the idea of immortality and the afterlife in her poems. While she contemplates the physical aspects of death, she also explores the possibility of spiritual existence beyond the earthly realm. Poems such as “I’ve seen a Dying Eye” and “Because I Could Not Stop for Death” touch upon these themes, suggesting a belief in a continued existence beyond death.

Because I could not stop for Death –

He kindly stopped for me –

The Carriage held but just Ourselves –

And Immortality.

James Reeves observes: “*This is one of the best of those poems in which Emily triumphs over death by accepting calmly, civilly, as befits a gentlewoman receiving the attentions of a gentleman. It is an essay in death-in-life*”(92). Jane Crosthwaite remarks, “*The poem is not a projection of the poet’s death but a record of her encounter with the fact or inevitability of death and the consequences of that discovery on the life remaining*” (215). Overall, the poem encompasses Dickinson’s mystical exploration of death and immortality, reflecting her diverse preoccupations with these profound themes.

2.9 Dissociation of Body and Soul

Emily Dickinson’s poem “I Heard a Fly Buzz- when I Died” delves into the experience of death and the separation of body and soul. The poet describes her awareness of events unfolding after her physical death, including seeing relatives who had passed away earlier. These relatives are depicted with tearless eyes, suggesting a serene acceptance of death. Despite her own death, the poet remains conscious of her surroundings, feeling her breaths slowing as she awaits her final moments. She cites that;

For that last Onset- when the King

Be Witnessed-in the Room-

Dickinson's poetry often portrays the soul's anticipation of death, using the term 'King' which can be interpreted as God, though her work isn't strongly religious. The poem suggests the soul persists until death. In Christianity, Jesus is the King, but in Dickinson's poem, the soul ceases when the body does, leaving the poet unable to see, a sign of the soul's death.

2.10 Personal Reflections on Mortality

Emily Dickinson's poems about death are profoundly personal and introspective, reflecting on her mortality and the transient nature of life. She often reflects on her own mortality and the fleeting nature of life. Her contemplations on death are not just philosophical but also deeply emotional, conveying a sense of longing, acceptance, and curiosity about what lies beyond.

2.11 Religious Influence

Dickinson's Christian faith was deeply personal, characterized by her individual quest for spiritual truth and communion with the divine. Her religious beliefs are rooted in Calvinism, a branch of Christianity that holds salvation is predestined for chosen individuals. Her poetry explores the complexities of faith, doubt, and the search for meaning in the context of her understanding of God's presence in life and beyond. Living in a rural environment a century and a half ago, she was aware of the cycle of existence, from birth to death and rebirth. Her interest in death was indeed influenced by Christian teachings, despite living in a time when religious adherence was waning. She grappled with the tension between faith and doubt, especially as scientific theories like Darwinism challenged biblical narratives. Though not devoutly religious herself, Dickinson was familiar with biblical teachings on life, death, and eternity. Her fascination with death stemmed from a quest to reconcile these teachings with her own understanding and observations, driving her to explore the truth behind religious perspectives on mortality and the afterlife. In the poem "I Heard a Fly Buzz when I died." Dickinson indicates that;

And Breaths were gathering firm

For that last onset-When King –

Be Witnessed in the Room

The poem references Christian themes and symbols, including Jesus Christ as a figure of spiritual authority and the concept of eternal life for righteous souls in heaven, as taught in the Bible. Her exploration of these themes reflects a nuanced engagement with religious ideas about the afterlife and the soul's journey beyond earthly existence.

2.12 Obsession with Death

Dickinson's obsession with death can be seen as an irrational fixation or a deeply emotional and almost compulsive focus on the topic. This obsession manifests in the frequency and intensity with which she returns to themes of mortality, dying, and the afterlife in her poetry. Her poems often confront death directly, sometimes with a sense of urgency or haunting imagery. This irrational obsession suggests a personal and perhaps psychological need to grapple with the concept of death repeatedly, almost as if it were a consuming force in her creative life.

2.13 Preoccupation with Death

Emily Dickinson, often characterized as a poet of introspection and contemplation, indeed showed a profound preoccupation with death in her poetry. Henry Wells remarks that "*It becomes her closest and dearest friend*" (113). Her preoccupation with death reflects her concern, curiosity, and deliberate exploration of the many facets of death. Unlike mere obsession, her preoccupation involves a deeper attempt to understand and make sense of mortality, often through philosophical inquiry, metaphorical exploration, and spiritual reflection. Her poems not only dwell on death but also contemplate its implications for life, existence, and the human soul. Several factors likely contributed to Dickinson's preoccupation with understanding death:

Personal Loss and Grief: Dickinson experienced significant losses throughout her life, including the deaths of close family members and friends. These experiences deeply affected her and fueled her exploration of death in her poetry.

Cultural Context: The 19th century was marked by high mortality rates due to diseases such as tuberculosis. This cultural backdrop would have influenced Dickinson's awareness of death and its prevalence in society.

Spiritual and Philosophical Curiosity: Dickinson's poems often explore spiritual and philosophical questions, including the nature of existence, the afterlife, and the soul. In Dickinson's life, her spirituality is presented by religious beliefs that she holds (Ambarwati, 2006). Her preoccupation with death was intertwined with her broader philosophical inquiries into life's meaning and purpose.

Artistic Expression: For Dickinson, poetry was a means of artistic expression and exploration. Her preoccupation with death allowed her to delve into the depths of human experience and emotion, using language and imagery to capture the complexities of mortality.

2.14 Transcendentalist Influences:

Dickinson's poetry was significantly influenced by transcendentalism. Her poetry indeed reflects transcendentalist themes and beliefs, although she approached them in a deeply personal and introspective manner rather than through overt social or religious activism. Here are some key points that highlight how Dickinson's transcendentalist influences shaped her poetry, particularly in relation to her views on life, death, and immortality:

Individualism and Nonconformity: Dickinson embraced individualism, a core tenet of transcendentalism, by expressing her personal beliefs and perspectives in her poetry. She often disregarded societal norms and conventions in favor of exploring her own spiritual and existential inquiries.

Spiritual Exploration: Transcendentalism encouraged a deep exploration of spirituality and the interconnectedness of all living things. In other words, transcendentalists believe *"spirituality isn't something you can explain; it's something you feel."* Dickinson's poems frequently engage with spiritual themes, including immortality, the afterlife, and the soul's journey beyond death. Her spirituality is influenced by her religious beliefs, which are based on Calvinism. As a Christian, she understands the process of dying and life after death, forming a connection with the power beyond comprehension. Her beliefs are based on the belief that salvation of the soul is given to selected individuals in society. Drawing from Calvinist philosophy, she embraced Puritanism, which posited the immortality of the soul. Her poetry, such as "I heard a Fly Buzz-when I died," mirrors her belief in an afterlife while also probing its uncertainties. The poem describes her deathbed

scene, with mourners acknowledging her passing. Dickinson's belief in an afterlife is clear in the speaker's communication from beyond the grave, while her uncertainty about eternity surfaces in the third stanza, where she mentions the return of the fly:

Assignable – and then it was

There interposed a Fly –

The Fly symbolizes both the decay of the body and the speaker's doubts about eternity.

Nature as a Source of Truth: Transcendentalists viewed nature as a manifestation of divine beauty and truth. While Dickinson's poetry is more focused on inner landscapes than external nature, she similarly sought truths about life and death through introspection and observation of human emotions and experiences.

3. Conclusion

Emily Dickinson's exploration of death in her poetry is distinguished by its profound depth, ambiguity, and spiritual contemplation. She not only challenges conventional views on mortality but also offers profound insights into the human experience of life's inevitable end. Through the effective use of metaphors and symbols, Emily Dickinson successfully transforms the negative image of death into something special and profound in human life. In her world, death holds a position second only to God. It is a relentless force, omnipotent and enduring. While man-made creations inevitably decay over time and kingdoms crumble, death remains untouched by the ravages of time, eternal and supreme. The most fascinating aspect of her poems on death is the presentation of death as a character (Khan, 121). In this paper, Dickinson's mystical views on death are explored through extensive quotations from her poems. This critical analysis demonstrates that she is not just a great poet but also possesses a mystical temperament. Her transcendentalist views encourage deep thinking about life beyond death. Critics and most of her biographers like Johnson, Salamatullah Khan, Clark Griffith, Richard Chase, etc. appreciate Emily Dickinson's nuanced and multifaceted perspective on death, acknowledging her talent for transcending conventional boundaries and evoking profound philosophical and existential questions through her poetry. Her succinct lyrics embody the wisdom of the Bible, the Vedas, and the pragmatism found in the Bhagavad Gita and Upanishads. Dickinson's poems on death offer profound insights into the purpose of life,

reflecting a mystical perspective throughout. In the modern American poetic landscape, Emily Dickinson holds a significant and multifaceted role that sets her apart from contemporary poets. Her original and powerful mind, coupled with her mystic imagery, has established her as an iconic figure in American literature. In short, her exploration of death remains a significant aspect of her literary legacy, inviting ongoing interpretation and discussion.

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