

Abstract

The subject of this thesis is Emily Dickinson as a woman poet who focuses on the problems of women in a patriarchal society. Feminist literary discipline offers a fruitful study of Dickinson's mind and art. This new field of critical inquiry examines Dickinson's art and itemizes her feminine and feminist qualities of her self and art. One of the most important facts discussed is assuredly the fact of gender, the fact that Dickinson is a woman poet.

The first chapter **Theme of Love: Mystery of the Muse** scrutinizes Dickinson's varied perspectives on love, marriage and female friendship. Her art of love poetry exhibits her feminist attempt to portray female submission and male domination. Many of her love poems offer a finest expression to the masculine component of her female psyche. She adroitly advocates equality among both partners when she depicts the catastrophic aspects of married life. This chapter analyses Dickinson's friendship with women which serves as a protective device to stand against the androcentric society.

The second chapter with the title **Theme of Nature: Soul of Fire In a Shell of Pearl** discusses Dickinson's nature-based religion, one of the striking traits of Dickinson as a nature poet.

This chapter explores her unconventional approach to 'Mother-nature' and her art of using feminine images and metaphors in her solar poems, daisy poems and lunar poems. Her nature poetry epitomizes her divided self. Her nature poems deviate from the benign nature of Emersonian tradition. As a nature poet she offers feminist expression to the destructive power of nature which is identified with male supremacy.

The third chapter **Theme of Death and Immortality: Peril as Possession** analyses Emily Dickinson's obfuscating obsession with death. Feminist perspective on Emily Dickinson's poetry on death evinces that some kind of indefinable, unidentifiable masculine form dominates in her mind. This masculinity gets expression in many of her poems. This masculine power which is omnipotent, fascinating and deadly is named as death. Feminist literary criticism associates death with masculine power. Feminist critics feel that her preoccupation with death was caused by her experience of social powerlessness which was reinforced by the religious myths of the American culture of her age. Her obsession with death represents the awful vacuum in her mind which leads to the persistent expression of solitude, rage, insanity and renunciation.

The Fourth chapter **The Feminist Voice: Infection In The Sentence Breeds** portrays Emily Dickinson's feminist endeavour in her manipulation of words and construction of sentences. She manifests her female poetic freedom in undermining traditional patterns of language. Her linguistic violations aim at protesting against the patriarchal norms and patterns prevalent in an androcentric literature. Her disruption and distortion of words and grammar can be named as her revisionary activity which is the primary task of feminists.

The concluding chapter **Treading the Untrodden** discusses Dickinson's affinity with other feminist literary women and her intellectual capacity to use her gender as a positive and powerful factor behind her art. Her sense of herself as a woman amongst women is so central to both her personal and literary existence. She not only wrote consciously as a woman but she saw herself as part of a female poetic sisterhood.