

Chapter I: Introduction

Emily Dickinson and her Works

The daughter of a New England family and long connected with Amherst College, Emily Dickinson was born in Amherst, Massachusetts, on December 10, 1830. She was the second child of Edward Dickinson and Emily Norcross Dickinson. She earned much popularity and occupied wider space in America as a poet in the nineteenth century. Her exact contemporary friend was Christina Rossetti. When Dickinson was growing into maturity, she was in company with Emerson, Thoreau, Poe, Whitman, Melville and so on. She died in 1886.

Her family picked topmost position in Amherst. During that time, Edward Dickinson was a man of letter and a treasurer of Amherst College from 1835. His nature and habits were unlike his personality however. She was fixated on her father. Simply, she appeared that she desired a similar independent male will-to-power. She saw her own being within culturally conditioned mind. She knew her mother not as her own self. That is why, she dismissed her. Once she wrote, "I have no mother" (qtd. in Wilner, 128). She seems working on her father's model even if this "Master" is the tyrannical force of her soul. Unlike father, her mother was devotee of husband, self-effacing nature was an inextricable feature of her. Formally, her education began only in 1835; she spent her early four years for primary school education. Modern curriculum of science and English along with Latin, and others were the areas of her interest; she got her education in Amherst Academy from 1840 to 1847. She joined Mount Holyoke Female Seminary at South Hadley in 1847, where she encountered many religious questions. A large number of creative works: science, literature and history were interrogated and

given no consideration by New England orthodox - religious system, Puritanism - which was assumed only a way to approach salvation and destiny. In spite of her passion for learning, unsound health compelled her to shorten the journey of formal education. As a result, she passed her only one year's stay in 'Mount Holyoke female Seminary'. Learning at Unitarian church was unlike her interest since she was agonistic. To describe her anti-feeling toward religion of that period, a critic George Frisbie Whicher said, "Emily, alone of her family, never became a church member, but she was a regular attendant at services until at least her twenty-fifth year" (9).

Even if her effort to write and passion for creativity was high and boundless, the oppressive social, political and cultural milieu had bracketed her role in writing. In the mid nineteenth century, women writers would be called "poetess"– which would be used for void and embarrassment. "Poetess" was mainly used to express general feeling that female nature lacked qualities essential to the creation of great poetry. Green Elsa views, "Emily Dickinson worked under the psychological and social handicaps imposed by that sexist concept of her inherently limited potential as an artist" (63). In order to elect poetry, Emily Dickinson had to defy Emerson's definition of the poet as one who relives the role of Adam in the Garden giving symbolic identity on all the objects in nature. To describe Dickinson, Mabel Loomis Todd's states that,

[Austin's] sister Emily is called in Amherst "The myth". She has not been out of her house for fifteen years. One inevitably thinks of Miss Havisham in speaking of her. She writes the strangest poems, and very remarkable ones, she is in many respects a genius. She

wears always white, and has her hair arranged as was the fashion fifteen years ago when went into retirement. She wanted me to come and sing to her, but she wouldn't see me. She has frequently sent me flowers and poems, and we have a very pleasant friendship in that ways. (qtd. in Peter, 578)

For nearly about thirty years, Dickinson indulged in solitude. The retirement from the outer world has picturized her as a New England nun. She settled quietly in her parental home. An act of withdrawal from the world outside was also ensued by a number of unmarried gentle women; these spinsters stayed self-effacingly at home. Her life of retreat and recluse is pointed out by Whicher in the passage:

By 1862 her retirement from the world had become marked but was not absolute. Higginson reproached her for shunning men and women, and she admitted that a chestnut tree in blossom, in countered on her walk, was better company. But she was ready to go to Boston for the care of her eyes in the summer of 1864 [].
(135)

Dickinson adopted complete seclusion only in 1870. So, Betsy, Erkkila argues: "And it was after the civil war, and especially after the death of her father in 1874, that Dickinson's reclusive tendencies and her habit of dressing in white increased" (163). During this period she suffered from the eyes and mental problem. Her seclusion became a conscious resolution in 1870. Even if she withdrew herself from the outside world, psychologically, she was in touch. Relation with family and friends was normal; violent retirement from the world

outside was beyond her expectation. During her lifetime, she published only about ten of her nearly two thousand poems in newspapers, civil war journals, and the poetry anthology. The work of art for her is the manifestation of high culture and order. To get relief from pain and suffering, art is the modest form. The relief released through art and pain resulted from civil war on April 12, 1861 is described by Erkkila in the following lines:

The massive carnage, suffering, and death of the civil war propelled Dickinson into further doubts about republican destiny, divine providence, and the nature of things, a fuller withdrawal from society, and a renewed dedication to art as a higher order of culture.
(156-57)

The first volume of *Poems of Emily Dickinson* was edited by Thomas Wentworth Higginson and Mabel Loomis Todd, which was carried out in 1890 (a period after her death). In one hand, Some volumes were published such as *visiting Emily: Poems Inspired by the Life and Works of Emily Dickinson*. On the other hand, three volumes of her letters were published. About her attitude toward poetry, Dickinson views, "Poetry was her playmate, not her taskmaster, and she came to it with a sparkle in her eye and mischief on her lips" (qtd. in Whicher, 306). Letters are important guides to her writing and reading. In both poems and letters, the Bible is her quoted source. Poetry of her maturity is conventionally dated from 1850. Manuscripts were untitled and undated. Her curious friendship with colonel Higginson provided her a new platform. He would inspire her to write and point out the flaws in her writing. Indeed, he gave her new life. That's why, Dickinson said once: "Of our greatest acts we are ignorant. You are not aware that

you saved my life (qtd. in Wells, 249). Book one contains twenty-six poems connected with the issue of life; similarly the next part, Book two comprises of eighteen poems that deal love; in Book third is seen thirty-one poems talking about nature whereas the last part, Book IV discusses upon time and eternity-the number of these poems is forty.

Her works define the distinctive features of the American experience. Epiphany is another feature. Richard B. Sewall says "About Dickinson's sense of what poetry is and why she writes: Poetry is revelation, poetry as epiphanic" (qtd. in Fast and Gorden, 33). Out of all poems, only twenty-four of them are given titles, and nearly about seven of eight were printed during her life. Her poems are about 'Life, Nature, Death and Immortality' that remain untitled yet. Several letters were also written. From 1858 to 1862 was her creative period that ended with her nervous breakdown. Her latest poems are "A Route of Evanescence", "How Brittle Are the Piers" and so on. She emerged as a supreme ironist. Writing is witty. Poems are difficult and accessible, intellectually challenging and emotionally intense. She wrote most powerfully during the civil war. She debated hotly about the meaning of life when pressured by death. Because of being a poet of civil war, she used images of death.

In her literary career, Lavinia was a worthwhile and trustworthy character because she did not flash any of her works till death. For a long time, she absorbed to basic theme that figure in her early poems. Her early poems tend to be descriptive or to forward stock conclusion but the later poems use compression and a shift in symbolic direction to cause problem of interpretation. Regarding her style of writing poetry, Timothy Morris argues: "over, the course of Dickinson's career,

she returned again and again to the basic themes that figure in her early poems—hence the observation by many critics that her subject matter remained static" (36). Out of ten poems, only seven were published in the Massachusetts newspapers *'The Springfield Republican'*. Friends coaxed her into print, but she demurred. She sent three of her poem of family and friends in letters. Poem 72 makes comparison between a human death and the death of a flower but poem 978 meditates on the death of the flower and removes the human death.

Poems are the mixture of ordered thinking and sublime poetic technique. Her poems are imagistic, metaphysical and stylistically slant. Adrienne Rich was influenced by her work. Thus, Betsy Erkkila says:

"More than any other poet, "she says,"Emily Dickinson seemed to tell me that the intense inner event, the personal and psychological, was inseparable from the universal; that there was a range of psychological poetry beyond mere self-expression". In redeeming and validating female psychic experience for universal purpose, Dickinson aided Rich in the process of giving birth to herself as the source and subject of her poetry. (546)

Her poems often depict mysticism. Thus, some critics called her a mystic-poet. Her works are also based on the four major sources: Bible and the protestant hymn, Shakespeare, Emerson and Hawthorne. Here, Walter Fuller Taylor has stated about the influence of Emerson in his *History of American Letters*: "Upon her [Emily Dickinson's] mysticism there rests unquestionably the stamp of Emerson" (qtd. in Humilita, 281)

Irony and Ironic Sensibility

Generally, irony refers to double meaning. In addition, it is a way to conceal what s/he means to say. Despite its complexity, it has a frequent but common definition: saying what is contrary to what is meant; it is not only an act of lying or deceit but a complex rhetorical practice also. Because of this nature, one can say one thing but mean just opposite. As per postmodern irony, everything is supposed to be quoted that displays the lost sense of what is generally called 'true' or 'original', it ruptures immediacy and sincerity of life; in terms of irony, meaning is not only set in but it can be questioned too. It directs to the competing and discontinuous contexts. Ironic reading demands no one-to-one correspondence. To define irony, Clare Colebrook says:

A text is never just what it says, it also displays the production and force of different ways of speaking. According to Stephen Greenblatt, the Renaissance was an era of competing and contested representation (Greenblatt, 1988). Texts were anything but sincere, they presented standard? Elizabethan myths of power as myth. The very practice of re-reading the past and of suspecting that all those texts that were once read as sincere might actually be critical of the power they describe depends upon the structure of irony. (4)

As many twentieth century critics have argued, any work of art – whether it is drama, poetry, essay or anything else – is characterized by its potential for irony, its capacity to mean something other than it means. Ironic sensibility in Dickinson's poetry stands for the feeling of a radical ambivalence, life's

contradictions, double identity as well as ironic awareness within her writing. In regard to it, Vivian R. Pollack asserts the view of Shira Wolosky that,

Emily Dickinson's texts are battlefields between contesting claims of self and community, private and public interest, event and design, metaphysics and history, with each asserted, often against each other. The contest finally penetrates the very construction of her poems, in their contentions image systems, their ambivalent and conflicting stances []. (qtd. in Pollak, 127)

Though she was unable to accept the orthodox - religious faith of society, yet she longed for the comfort and stability that such belief could bring. Her poem admixtures such two opposite parts of reverent sentiment and rebelliousness. It portrays her feeling toward and understanding to society and religion to the problem of living in secular world: a world which is suspicious of and nostalgic for the very doctrine. Her irony secures balance of faith and skepticism and the will to negate and to master experience. Her ironic personality inaugurates sensibility that directs her not to accept everyday values and concepts but live in a state of perpetual question. It engenders the proper understanding of self and others. Her works seem exploring her sequestered self, bounded gender role, encroached life but actually they generate and explore her self and world. Outwardly, they show her silence but inwardly pain and protest is echoed.

Images like "The Rink", "the circle shaped sun" and "Helios" are equivocal and ambiguous. The repetition and movement of these things across the sky is circular and moving through each day, season and life that comes once to an end. They seem to come to an end so as to repeat. Thus, Ken Hiltner views that:

Though days, season, and lifetimes seem to come to an end, they merely turn back on themselves to circularly repeat. Night and winter are not ending, but rather preludes to morning and spring. Similarly, when maturity leads to a new birth, life continues past death. (This last circular notion of life living past death through birth, is an important one to which we need returns.) As Benitta Knapp has further noted, in the third quatrain" the parataxis ("We passed . . . We passed . . . We passed") and the alliterations ("Fields of Gazing Grain "and" the setting sun") depict a continuity of scenes, thereby emphasizing the notion of never-endingness." (27)

It is manifested in her poetry through a certain formal features that is irony. As such is her major weapon as well as a strategy. Through a series of ironic involutions set in the course of symbolic action, she directs readers from appearance to reality. Reality of silent pain is made more horrendous by ironic representation in her poem like 'After Great pain, a formal feeling comes'. Francis Manley makes it clear in the following passage:

In its fullest extent pain produces internal paralysis, but ironically, this numbness is not itself a pain. It is no feeling, "an element of blank", which gradually emerges from the poem until at the end it almost engulfs it is white helplessness. (263)

Literature Review

Acutely intellectual writings of Dickinson, particularly poetry deal the significant issues – which cope with humanity – that are pain, sexuality, meditation

on death, terror of war, orthodox- religious values, God and love. On the other hand, her way of retreat and recluse is another pivotal subject of literary field. Concerning upon these subject matters a number of critics have asserted their critiques on her poems; source of them veer around sociopolitical, cultural and historical aspects while the others mark out the structural aspects.

A response of Dickinson to American civil war and the causes of seclusion are the major issues introduced by a critic, Vivian Pollak. He argues:

Emily Dickinson's response to the racial rhetoric of the American civil war has received comparatively little attention. The reclusive Dickinson, it is often thought had turned inward to pursue no cause but her own or not much of one, for after all she did write a demonstrable handful of poems about the war itself, and she was in active correspondence with an Abolitionist hero for some of it. Yet her primary concern, many of us have said, was with an inner civil war, with the struggle to articulate herself, and to discover in art what she called "The art of Peace." (84)

Another critic, John F. Mcdermott, M.D. examines her withdrawal from the outside world, acute anxiety and behavioural theme. He states:

In recent years, biographical probes have examined the letters for patterns and events in Dickinson's life, and certain generally accepted behavioural theme have emerged, i.e. Dickinson's self described reclusiveness. Scholars have puzzled over it's meaning. For example, some feminist authors have interpreted Emily

Dickinson's withdrawal from the outside world as a conscious decision, "to practice necessary economics" in the service of her work. (71)

Intensely felt anguish, psychic catastrophe and the state of mind are other burning problems brought out by Manley. He says:

Between 1860 and 1862 Emily Dickinson is commonly believed to have experienced a psychic catastrophe, which drove her into poetry instead of out of her mind. According to her explanation, she was haunted by some mysterious Fright, and her fear, whatever it was opened the floodgates of her poetry. But despite their overwhelming number, the poems she produced under these conditions are not an amorphous overflow from a distraught mind; they are informed and well wrought. (260)

Another critic, Peter Stoneley talks about the real condition of Victorian women in America. He argues:

Women were supposed to deny themselves at the behest of a patriarchal sexual economy as Burbick argues, describe was "managed" as much as other resources. This form of self-denial – a remaining private and non-productive, a restraint of vulgar appetite – signified gentility. Dickinson, however, in gestures that abound in subversive ironies, took the conventions of proper womanhood – self effacing modesty, purity of body and spirit – to such an extreme that their significance was reversed; she confined herself to such an

extent that she removed herself from the sexual market altogether.

(579)

Her emotional drives, life obsessed with death, will to the end and eternity are other subjects of writing. It is discovered by a critic, Eleanor Wilner in the passage:

That round pint of radiant life, beacon and wound, is the centre of a poetry and a life obsessed with death, fixed on the mysterious gate to an equivocal beyond, driven by her poems, with the dash, that verbal sign which both divides and connects, which rushes forward and yet, simultaneously, arrest. "Death" she wrote, is "The Hyphens of the Sea." (126)

Significance of the Study

Dickinson's poetry is colored with certain formal features that make it structurally sound but difficult. Among these features, irony is the dominant one. Yet this is not noticed and given due consideration. The lack of recognition of irony in her works invites critical gap. To fill this ironic gap is one of the prime objectives of this study. And this ironic effect in her poetry is caught only through ambiguous images – which seek one interpretation but at the same time resist it.

Here it seeks to clarify the ambivalent relationship of self to the exterior world. And it is approached through deconstructive theories of irony that simply allows no "new-critical close-reading" – which discloses that the texts lack a "unified" and "totalized" boundary; a text is the play of internal counter-forces. Correct or right reading is hardly possible. To seek these counter-forces,

contradiction and ambiguity in her life and relation to the world is another purpose of this research. As said, in her poetics of whiteness, her language prompts one to push against the obvious reading. Here whiteness acts as an ambivalent sign. It simply displays her supposed interest in spirituality and drawing herself away from the outer world but at the same time it suggests her rejection of various forms of worldliness connotatively. In her writing, Dickinson gets ironic stress in terms of ambiguous images which invite more than one interpretations, and are in contrast and opposition to. Ironic gap in her works traces the intentional use of ambiguity that articulates vague or equivocal expression. Instead of unity and oneness – as new critical reading demands – duality and diversity is set in. Piling up of comparison invites paradoxes in her poetry, which sets the problem of interpretation. Poem 930 is the best example of this problem. Her willful self-dramatization hits at the duality in her poetry which carries out the ironic sensibility in her works. In order to support this, Ellianer Wilnear writes that,

Her reclusiveness was, for by her art, her letters and her willful self-dramatization, and at the same time to create the appearance of the passive female figure. Prostrating herself before an imaginary master, she in fact played a role, even admitting aloud that by keeping him in her head, she had him at her bidding. (128)

Despite the critical notions of above-mentioned critics, Dickinson's poetry also deals the formal or structural aspects; like other aspects, irony is major strategy and weapon for her. This study will basically focus irony not as a trope or technique, but as a strategy. However, no critic has yet made an attempt to introduce it. So, it is distinct and new. It will be approached in terms of deconstructive theory of irony to ratify "ironic sensibility" in Dickinson's poetry.

Chapter II: Theoretical Modality

Deconstruction

Derrida proposed "deconstruction" not as a mode of literary criticism, rather he devised it as a way to reading texts so as to unveil and rupture the intactly followed "Western Metaphysics". A number of critics in America viewed Derrida and his theory in light of "close-reading." In North American context deconstructive reading was placed on ground of New Criticism but Paul de Man argued both theories as representing diverse ways: New critical reading is not adaptable to deconstructive reading because both end with distinct outcome. Unlike new-critical approach, deconstructive reading undertakes to expose counter-forces, dissemination and multiplicity than oneness, organicity and unity.

As underpinned by de Man, a text is the mixture of both language (grammar) and rhetoric. Grammar persists to aspire for the fixed and ordered grounds while rhetoric (play of tropes and figures) proposes dispersal and chaos. That is why, a literary text simultaneously asserts and denies the control or authority; deconstruction does not invite more annihilation, rather it subverts the domination of one system over another. In relation to it, Barbara Johnson views:

Deconstruction is not synonymous with destruction . . . The deconstruction of a text does not proceed by random doubt or arbitrary subversion, but by the careful teasing out of warring forces of significant within the text itself. If anything is destroyed in a deconstructive reading; it is not the text, but the claim to unequivocal domination of one mode of signifying over other. (5)

Deconstruction identifies the textual features but views only on the rhetorical aspects. It seeks disorder and a tendency of language to reject its open-sense. It undermines the surface or apparent meaning. Instead of discovering a certain ultimate meaning for the text as new-critical reading seeks, it explicates the text having no stable meaning. Since there is no possibility of ultimate truth, deconstruction seeks to underrate all pretensions to authority. To bracket the dominant western mindset is one prime objective of this reading.

Both of the synonymous terms: deconstruction and post-structuralism—react against a century long study of structuralism. Though deconstruction traces out the textual features like structuralism, yet it differs because its focus is rather on rhetorics than grammar. Even if deconstruction seeks similarity of text to syntax like structuralism, it consists of disorder and rejects the obvious sense and sensibility. So, texts are bound to deconstruct themselves rather than to generate a fixed and identifiable meaning. To erase the surface meaning is one of the features of deconstructive reading of a text. It backs up the denial of final interpretation. Celebration of text's self-destruction and questioning to the presence provide a background study of deconstruction; internal contradiction and never-ending play of language support this study too. It always takes apart meaning to show the contradiction of structure that lie hidden within. Nothing maintains privilege over the other; it asserts the state of changes, provisional meaning and open-ended constructs. In order to support this argument, M.H. Abram states:

Typically, a deconstructive reading sets out to show that conflicting forces within the text itself serve to dissipate the seeming

definiteness of its structure and meaning into an indefinite array of incompatible and undecidable possibilities. (55)

Derrida, a successor to Heidegger, Nietzsche and Freud is preoccupied with the concept of "Knowledge and truth" that assisted "Western Metaphysics". But for him western use of language, culture, philosophies and theories of language are all logocentric. Partly, they are phonocentric because they give priority to speech over writing. Presence is the final referent. For them it is self-certifying and self-sufficient. But, it always serves only to centre the structure of the linguistic system. Many attempts made by western philosophy to originate a final and fix foundation in presence have undergone failure. Derrida gives stress upon saying something more than we intend. Thus, Derrida says: "we must always say more, and other, than we intend to say" (qtd. in Abram, 56). Similarly, de Man views that literature shouldn't receive traditional humanistic ideas. Thus, he states that:

In stead of being taught first of all as a vehicle for the received ideas that are often equated with traditional humanistic knowledge, Literature should be taught as a rhetoric and a poetics prior to being taught as a hermeneutics and a history." (25-26)

Mostly hot-debated term, "writing" in Derrida's theory is marginalized and repressed by Western phonocentric thought. Colebrook takes the view of Derrida in examining this origin seeking tendency and says:

Writing is necessary both for truth and meaning, but also precludes the possibility of a pure truth or meaning. Philosophers privilege pure concepts and logic and are suspicious of the ways in which

writing, or any form of copying technology, can detach words from their origin and allow them to circulate without their original sense. (qtd. in Colebrook, 95)

Deconstruction is applied to lower down the linguistic system which gives much space to open a certain boundary and coherence. Commonly believed, language is a vehicle of meaning which is present to our conscious. And with the help of language, our consciousness gets outlet. At the cost of man, language is supposed to be a tool either to expose intent or meaning. So, as a tool it is subservient to meaning. Here is created hierarchy between meaning and language. But the language consists of problematic nature. The very nature of language itself necessitates deconstruction. Simply, it displays conflict and contrast within text.

Irony

Irony refers to the discrepant gap between saying and meaning. It is generally considered as a contrast between what is said and what is meant-which differs from the concept of latest definition of irony. Seeing something as ironic is an intellectual process. Irony is studied as an interpretative form as said by David S. Kaufer. Here exists diversity of things to which the name "irony" attaches. All forms of irony are despair of finding a unified whole or core. But It functions to achieve emphasis through negation. About its function David S. Kaufer says:

Specifically, it permits a speaker to emphasize, a particular proposition by pretending to contradict it. By claiming an unconditional love for spinach, the ironist make all too clear an unconditional hate for it. (453).

Irony is also considered as an aesthetic of binary opposition. It filters the interpretation of a content through binary opposition, which is defined as pairings of objects or concept-where one element of the pair is in compatible with the other. It is aesthetic but not logical. Ironic function is tied up with ambiguity or equivocation. Herodotus views on irony: "Ironists can also design elaborate equivocation to appease audiences who harbor incompatible beliefs" (qtd. in Kaufor, 454).

Irony was derived from the Greek term, "eironeia". It was first taken in Plato's Republic to qualify the implication of irony in Socratic dialogue. Again Cicero used ironia to define its rhetoric. The deliberate pretension of the eiron resulted 'irony'. In order to achieve rhetorical and artistic impact, it was developed. This rhetorical enforcement was first noticed through Socratic dialogue in plato's Republic. Now, it has earned popularity and is named as Socratic irony. Socrates used irony to introduce truth and recognition even if the truth is enigmatic and unfinished; verbal irony is also based on the foundation or the technique of eironeia. It is also called everyday irony. Behind everyday language and words, one keeps hope of something more than what other say. Simply saying, some ironies are applied to recognize life's contradiction, destiny, absurdity and so on. Thus, Muecke states that,

What came to be known as dramatic, cosmic and tragic forms of irony-where irony is just a recognition of the futility or inhumanity of destiny-are species of the romantic tendency to define, irony in terms of life's contradiction. (qtd. in Colebrook, 22)

Though it is deceitful yet it is not merely applied to cheat; rather it is used to load the artistic effect in any work of art. In most of the modern critical uses of the term "irony", there remains the root sense of dissembling or hiding what is actually the case; not however, in order to deceive, but to achieve special rhetorical or artistic effects. Colebrook cites Quintillian's definition of irony as "saying what is contrary to what is meant" (qtd in Colebrook, 1).

Generally, it is supposed that irony is employed as a literary device to trace out what is intended and what is expressed. As a mode of speech, it produces meaning in contrast to words. Recently, it is adopted as a point of view too. Thus, Colebrook defines irony as: "Irony is not a way of speaking or a style of language, it is an attitude adopted towards whatever vocabulary one speaks" (5). As a subtle and widely used device, irony has a long history. Its role can not be curtailed focusing only on a certain period. Even if utterances in Homer's *Odyssey* were ironic, it remained unnoticed till the late eighteenth century. However, many efforts have been spent in defining irony from past to present. The epic art always consists of irony and objectivity that imbues irony too, which Thomas Mann aspects in the speech on epic novel as,

Its greatness is mild, restful, serene, wise- "Objective." It keeps its distance from things, has by its very nature distance from them, it hovers over them and smiles down upon them []. The art of the epic is "Apollonian' art as the aesthetic term would have it; because Apollo, distant marksman, is the god of distance, of objectivity, the god of irony. Objectivity is irony and the spirit of epic art is the spirit of irony. (qtd in Muecke, 400)

Roman philosophers also equally contributed in foregrounding the term, irony. Irony came into use at first in Greek comedy. It was derived from character's name "eiron", which stands for a dissemble in speech. Aristophane in his comic plays implemented 'eironeia' to refer to lying rather than dissimulation. But sometime later it came to notice dissimulation too. Thus, Colebrook forwards:

The word eironeia was first used to refer to artful double meaning in the socratic dialogues of Plato, where the word is both as pejorative—in the sense of lying and affirmatively, to refer to socrates' capacity to conceal what he really means." (2)

In the sequential off-shoot of irony, a handful of books and articles have contributed a lot. They have provided a glimpse upon irony of several ages: Medieval, Renaissance and post-modern. In each of these ages ironia got the permanent seat; some of the authors as early as Erasmus and Bede found 'ironia' in Biblical texts. Nevertheless, irony was considered as a minor and subordinate figure of speech before the theorization of irony in the nineteenth century. Most importantly, socratic irony opened the western sensibility. Irony as socrates' capacity motivated him not to agree with day-to-day values but stay with questioning. Simply saying, irony got maturity slowly and gradually. Till the seventeenth century it was not in practice but only after the eighteenth century it drew attention and occupied a wider room. It was Edward Spencer who implemented irony in his work such as Sheperd's Calendar. He was the first English writer to use irony.

Many successors adopted it like Dryden. In one hand, a cohort of writers: Dryden, swift and pope enjoyed a lot in proposing irony as a major tool for writing.

On the other hand, Pope used irony to gain the vested interest behind writing, *The Rape of Lock* (1714). Similarly, Jonathan Swift applied irony as a major weapon and strategy to attack on contemporary social, political and cultural milieu and myopia of the eighteenth century England. Take for example, his work *The Modest Proposal* and George Orwell's *Animal in the Farm* have deployed irony to attain their purpose. In the late eighteenth century ambivalence of irony fascinated Friedrich Schlegel. Thomas Mann was attracted by ambivalence of irony. Thus, Douglas Mucke addresses Mann's passing interest toward it in the following passage,

One of the things that fascinated him, as it had Friedrich Schlegel, in the late eighteenth century, was the ambivalence of irony. All irony is in a sense ambivalent, the addressee of a verbal irony is equally aware both of what seems to be said and of what irony is equally aware both of what seems to be the case and of what is really the case. But irony may be ambivalent in other ways. In the passage we first cited from Thomas Mann we read of "universal affirmation which, as such is, is also a universal negation." (qtd. in Mucke, 407)

Mark Twain's irony was based on deception. He uses the image of irony that was identical-twin, which is also used in *Huckleberry Finn* and *The Prince and the Paper*. Unlike archetypal image of irony which has tie with vertical knowledge and power, Mark Twain creates horizontal image of irony. Irony is seen from the perspective of victim. Then, in the dawn of the nineteenth century, it got much popularity: Robert Browning and Thomas Hardy shifted their focus on irony.

Samuel Beckett, Wayne Booth and Vladimir Nabokov noticed irony in their writings in the twentieth century too. Then after 1950 it took wider space in English Literature.

Irony was much discussed even in Germany too. It emerged as a rhetorical strategy. Friedrich Schlegel, Ludwig Tieck and Karl Solgane were the leading figures who set their focus on what irony is. It was the nineteenth century when irony would be generalized. For generalization, many terms were used: irony of time, of life, of fate and of existence. Schlegel asserts the dialectic of self-destruction and self-invention that characterizes the ironic mind is an endless process that leads to no synthesis. Soren Kierkegaard obtains no less importance and value in defining irony. He gets a new space because of his different opinion. A number of writers long connected with "New-criticism" have argued on irony differently but the meaning is same. Among them are T.S. Eliot, R.P. Warren, Cleanth Brooks & I.A. Richards who have donated contribution. I.A. Richards assumes irony as an equilibrium of opposing attitude and impulse. New critics backed up the paradoxical nature of irony. They believed in its power to balance the opposite impulses and practices. Kenneth Burke also said that words represent paradoxical human attitudes.

Even if irony and metaphor are figures of speech, both differ in a sense that metaphor is used to refer to comparison and contrast where as irony invokes not open but hidden sense. Thus, both function differently. Ironic use of the words create uncertainty because of the way we speak differs from the art of living. One sees contrast between saying "good" and the "good" itself. Ironic reading distorts the shared convention and understanding. However, language consists of the

shared recognition—a feature of language in which irony stays. We don't only exchange signs, meaning is also identified which is other than a sign. It discloses that what each sign says is different from what is intended. Because of the recognized context and conventions, meaning is achieved. As such is underpinned by stable irony. Concerning upon the overall impacts of irony, it records several challenges to the conventional and completely rhetorical use of concepts. It comprises of both ethical and political effects as well. Colebrook states, "Plato's dialogues fulfilled a political and ideological imperative, which the concept of irony sustains today" (35). Many of the twentieth century theories argued that irony asserts the shared human conventions and assumptions. Because of our fixed norms and conventions, we identify irony. Thus, Searls forwards the idea on irony as, "on the contrary, language only works with shared conventions, and when language is not used conventionally in ways that we recognize, we can call clearly what is really being meant" (qtd in Colebrook, 41).

Irony based on shared convention is much talked in Wayne Booths' *A Rhetoric of Irony* (1974). Irony is a specific type of speech act and this rhetoric of irony is a theory about its recognition and creation. But Wayne Booth is in many ways much analogous to Douglas Muecke. Here Booth tends to argue that irony goes far from any literary event. Irony is rhetorical, for it is applied as a technique to convey some other meaning. Irony is supposed to be the form of paradox. Thus, Schlegel views, "irony was not just signaling the opposite of what was said; it was the expression of both sides or viewpoints at once in the form of contradiction or paradox. Irony is the form of paradox. Paradox is everything simultaneously good and great (qtd. in Colebrook, 54). As irony displays contrast between what is said

and what is meant, principles of logic do not work properly here because logic demands true judgement. To be a true justification, there must be the presence of non-contradiction. But, now it relies on the principles of logic even if contradiction is not logical. Romantic irony rejects the norms of non-contradiction. Paradoxical irony is clearly stated in English Romanticism. Among the exponents of this sort of irony, William Blake contributed a lot. Here to signal the spot of irony, Colebrook argues that:

I think perhaps the 'clearest exponent of this sort of paradoxical irony in English Romanticism is William Blake (1757-1827). His poems both present a message or moral and show that moral to be pernicious and symptomatic of fallen conscious. His songs of Innocence assest the beauty and value of a state of childhood innocence ndthey that innocence to be alive, lulling and paralysing. His song of experience present world as fallen, using the poetic voice to attack modern corruption and industrialism; at the same time, these poems are also critical of the accusing, pessimistic and negating voice of judgement. (57)

Irony has been categorized into many forms. Various definitions have been recommended to introducing what irony actually is since its beginning to the present. On the basis of nature and function, it has been described in different ways even if the meaning is same. It has taken different forms such as dramatic, epic, horizontal, vertical cosmic, stable, sarcasm, unstable, post-modern, Socratic, Romantic, verbal, structural and tragic irony. Some of the attempts were made to explore irony even in the classical period. As a result, socratic irony got

manifestation. Around the fourth century B.C. this irony was baptized. Socratic irony was named due to the philosopher's pretension of knowing nothing. The statement: 'only one thing I know is that I know nothing' captures the ironic sense.

To support this, M.H. Abram states:

Socratic irony takes its name from the fact that, as he is represented in Plato's dialogues (fourth century B.C.), the philosopher Socrates usually dissembles by assuming a pose of ignorance, an eagerness to be instructed, and a modest readiness to entertain opinions proposed by others; although these, upon his continued questioning, always turn out to be ill-grounded or to lead to absurd consequences. (136)

Similarly, another form of irony developed that was dramatic irony—which results in a situation of play. In this situation of play, the audience knows the shortcoming and circumstances but the character knows nothing. S/he expects the actual results behind his saying but it is reversed. For example, *Oedipus Rex*, *Twelfth Night* are the texts in which irony is embedded. It is analogous to tragic irony. This instance of irony is illustrated in Oedipus's dialogue given below in which he boasts of being great and solving the riddle of the nation but his anticipation goes wrong. Oedipus in Sophocles' drama *Oedipus Rex* says:

Children,

I would not have you speak through messages,

And therefore I have come myself to hear you—

I, Oedipus, who bear the famous name.

(*To a priest*) you, there, since you are a eldest in

the company

Speak for them all, tell me what preys upon you,

Whether you come in dread, or crave some

blessing:

Tell me, and never doubt that I will help you

In every way I can; I should be heartless

Were I not moved to find you suppliant here.

Changing mode of irony gave way to irony of paradox long connected with New-criticism. Cleanth Brook, and many other critics contributed a lot for its off-shot. It advocates the similar concept to Romantic ironologists as they argue that the paradoxical relationship of multiple impulses and experiences is its basic aim.

Irony is a complex and moving term. Its nature is always dynamic and progressive. But the overall review on irony presents, according to Wayne Booth in *A Rhetoric of Irony* (1975), that various ironies have two forms: One is stable whereas another is unstable irony; stable irony refers to the covert, fixed and finite spots in its application while unstable irony offers unlike the quest of stable irony. Literary fixity, absolute interpretation is the major aspect of stable irony. It covers the area of socratic, verbal, structural and other ironies too. But unstable irony displays equivocal ironic interpretation. It shows paradoxes and incongruities in structure of human life and universe. By commenting the earlier view on stable ironies, Wayne C. Booth recommends a distinct thought which is stated by Douglas Mucke in the passage given below:

Wayne C. Booth commenting on the fact that irony and ambiguity are now commonly regarded as of value per se, says with a change of image, "we have looked for so long at foggy landscapes reflected in misty mirrors that we have come to like fog." In his late work, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, he called unstable "those ironies whose ultimate meaning, if any, resists interpretation. (qtd in Muecke, 411)

Against the exposure of stable irony, deconstructive irony, expounded by Derrida and de Man has come to the fore by addressing equivocal and incongruous meaning. For them signs are used to point something but they turn to resist it at the same time. They always give emphasis on ironic meaning as flux. Divergent interpretations are likely to stand in reading and writing something. To write something means to produce a gap or distance between a text and what it refers to.

Deconstructive Irony

Irony is not merely a trope, nor it is a device which is defined on the basis of the intention and truths claimed by speaker. It refers to disruption and dismantling of proper understanding. Colebrook asserts, "One of Derrida's ancestors in the destruction of presence was Friedrich Nietzsche, who saw truth as a particularly persuasive fiction: Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusion" (97). Deconstructive irony is approached to rupture the area of topological meaning and truth. It deals with equivocal interpretation. One explication underrates and weighs down the other, it is correspondent to unstable irony. Spurred by Derrida and de Man, deconstructive irony exposes the partial, infinite, equivocal and multiple meanings de Man clarifies the notion of deconstructive irony with reference to allegory. In one hand, It is, for de Man, a

demystifying term to challenge the system of overrating symbol-to which Derrida calls transcendental signified. On the other hand, it undercuts the concept of truth. Undermining of truth results only when the relation between referential and figural meaning is rendered ambivalent. According to de Man, allegories are temporal unlike symbols. For him symbols are synchronic, while allegory is diachronic. Allegory is more a sign-relation than sign-thing relation. Sign and sign within allegory have relation, which is a matter of distance, difference and discrepancy as well. Thus, de Man claims:

Whereas the symbol postulates the possibility of an identity or identification allegory designates primarily a distance in relation to its own origin and, renouncing the nostalgia and the desire to coincide it, it establishes its language in the void of this temporal differences. (207)

As every text is the allegory of its own misreading, meaning can not match with the totality of work. de Man parallels irony with allegory saying that irony unveils temporality which is not organic. It permits no end, no totality. Both identify the temporality. Both are related to an act of demystification of an organic world. However, there is also a difference between allegory and irony. Difference between them is made clear by Lacapra in the words as:

De Man notes a variety of differences between allegory and irony themselves, notably in the intended, diachronic, narrativized, or displaced temporal structure of the former and the pointed, synchronic, aphoristic condemned temporality of the latter. (52)

Suggested by *Allegories of Reading*, irony is no longer a trope but the undoing of the deconstructive allegory of all tropological cognitions. Irony enforces the repetition of its deviations. In suggesting what irony actually is, Beerendra Pandey states de Manian view in his essay, "Deconstructing Irony: Reading Paul de Man":

So Irony doesn't stop There is irony when language starts to say things you didn't think it was saying when words acquire meanings way beyond the one you think you are controlling and start saying things that against your own quest for meaning admitted intention. So irony is so fundamental, that, for me it is no longer a trope. Irony is generally called a trope of tropes, but actually irony is a disruption of a continued field of tropological meaning. So all people who write on irony try to limit its meaning and singularly fail to do so. It is uncontrollable because it is just that: it has to do with the lack of control of meaning'. (qtd in Pandey, 55)

It refutes the notion of self and of meaning. De Man's concept of irony is much analogous to de' doublement and permanent parabasis, which reprimand the notion of stable irony. Unlike Booth's view upon irony, de Man proposes that irony can't be closed off. It imposes its indirection in all direction. Deconstructive irony demands radical openness that sets in divergent interpretation. Signs stand for something but differs from the very literal meaning. It questions the literal meaning, simply quoted definition of irony: as the contrast between what is said and what is meant is now superseded. Thus, deconstructive irony posits something

in a way that generate, not any particular and single but an open-ended series of subversive interpretation.

Derrida speaks of satirical and transcendental irony. Satirical irony simply attacks on conventions of a particular context whereas the transcendental irony transcends the context. Irony as an speech act is specific and not beyond any context; it is not pure and transcendental. Ironic implication in Derrida's works discloses the concept of impossibility. He states that one needs laws and system of language in order to speak but this lawfulness is hardly possible to be gained. It speaks only of the commitment to the necessity and lawfulness but nothing leads to totality of concept. Language fails to refer origin or presence. Thus, Claire Colebrook argues:

The ironic implication of Derrida's work are summarized in one of his key ideas, necessary impossibility. Derrida's deconstruction works, on the one hand, with the necessity of language as law and system. In order to speak or intend our utterances and experiences must be submitted to some law. This is necessary, for there would be no being, presence or reality without this commitment to identity or what is, above and beyond singular differences. On the other hand, such lawfulness is never achieved. (98)

Post-structural Ironic Sensibility

Ironic awareness within writing that is necessary for truth and meaning but bars the possibility of pure truth or meaning is simply termed as post-structural ironic sensibility. Post structural ironic sensibility seeks its first connection with

contradiction and multiplicity of meaning. To understand a text and its intended sense is not only a prime objective of post-structural reading, rather it means to see connections, connotations and productions that are unintended too. Ironic awareness within text and language is suggested by it. Dickinson's poem shares the features of new critical reading but invites post-structuralist notion at the same time. Thus, William Shullenberger opines, "Dickinson's poem's [] provide training in the close reading and explication techniques of New Criticism, Yet inevitably offer a great playground for post-structuralist reflection" (qtd. in Fast and Gorden, 95).

As said by de Man, irony is inescapable to any literary text. Writing or narrating a literary text is not just for introducing oneness and organicity, rather it stands to produce gap, difference and distance between a text and what it signifies. For ironic self-realization, the function of allegory is a must. Here the function of allegory represents imagined difference between literal world and a signified world. It insists on thinking beyond the logic of authenticity and originality. Recognition of ethical authenticity must be destroyed by inauthenticity. Here, ethical authenticity represents the endeavor to control the ways in which narratives produce us and our origin. Regarding Emily Dickinson and her writing, it is generally believed that her works cope with new-critical standards of formal integrity but unlike this 'New-critical reading', she posits, the positive dislike for stability and oneness; Poem do not end in themselves. She shares rhetoric stimuli in her works which differs from defamiliarization though but act to arouse impact on audience.

She attempts to break, down the 'New-critical/Formalistic trend that shows the poet or author as genius, a master and divine-self being different from others. Her post-structural ironic sensibility prevents this authority, and inks the author is dead and not a supreme divine force. Her act of nullification of hierarchy or essence of man-unlike new-critical dimension-help her to identify the male-domination and relation of gender binary opposition. Irony is considered an aesthetic form of binary opposition, it exposes the ambivalent relationship between men and women in the contemporary nineteenth century American Society.

An act of irony always presents the existence of the temporality that is not definitely organic. It relates to the source only in terms of distance and difference. It allows for no end and no totality. As per the deconstructive ways, allegory acts to tantalize unsolvable properties of text, the plurality of signs and the problem i.e., aporia of selection of them. To support this argument, Pandey forwards the de Manian concept of irony in the passage:

. . . for any kind of discourse there can only be misreading in an initiate chain . . . if there are misreading, there must be their Hegelian negation, a reading, but de Man's answer here, no doubt, would be that the notion of a reading is merely an example of language is hiding "behind a misleading sign". This misleading sign turns out to be the trope or figure. Figuralty provides the deceit [].
(qtd. in Pandey, 51-52)

Conclusively, irony works as a contrast between what is said and what is meant. Expressed meaning always differs from the intended one. A gap, distance and difference exemplifies the role of irony. Irony has developed in many forms:

stable as well as unstable. Stable is associated with earlier forms of irony—which refer to fixity, origin and oneness—than the deconstructive irony. The key theme of irony is that it is not interpreted as per the speaker's intentions but the disruption language adopts for understanding.

Chapter III: Textual Analysis

Self-denial and reclusiveness were ironically some forms of protest.

Dickinson was in favor of freedom, which she believed was eschewed by mystical values, authoritative and oppressive American culture, politics and religion. So, the present study exposes ironic sensibility in her poetics. In order to gain this objective, the study delimits itself to deal ten poems: "Much Madness is Divinest Sense," "After Great Pain a Formal Feeling Comes", "I Felt a Funeral in My Brain," "My Life Had Stood—a Loaded Gun—," "A Word is Dead," "One and One—are One," "I'm Nobody ! Who are You?," "I Could not Stop for Death"-, "A Charm Invests a Face" and "I Heard of Fly Buzz-When I died"-'. Poems for her are not end in themselves, rather they vibrate the rhetorical stimuli. Unlike 'New Critical and Formalistic' thoughts: the poet is imagined as a genius, a master and so on, it thwarts such imaginative authority. Unlike speaker's seek for certainty, organic whole (Oneness) and understanding, her poems are supposed to end with authorial practices and bewilderment. By creating ambiguous images, she makes an attempt to question the authority of Christianity in western civilization. The feeling of radical ambivalences, life's contradiction, faith and doubt at the same time and double identity sets up the post-structural ironic sensibility in her poems which attacks on truths, and exposes the lost sense of what is often called original and one.

"Much madness is divinest sense" shatters the beliefs and claims on which the society and people are grounded—and where majority determines the fate of minority. That is to say, it breaks the privileged truth-claims and intentions. Here is exposed the scornful attitude toward society and the system of conformity that

admits what majority orders to and imposes upon an individual. It disrupts the thought of brutal force, that is a cohort of people, particularly male which has extolled the paradigm of western metaphysics; majority holds restriction over minority and subdues their voices. This insensitivity of American society and people is mockingly attacked in terms of deconstructive use of irony in the following poem:

Much madness is divinest sense
 To a discerning eye;
 Much sense the starkest madness
 'T is the majority
 In this, as all, prevails
 Assent, and you are save;
 Demur,—you're straight way dangerous,
 And handled with a chain. (465)

In such a society where majority induces suppression, exploitation and imbalances between people, "much madness is supposed to be the 'divinest sense' (line-1) whereas 'much sense' is dealt as the 'starkest madness' (Line 2). So, Dickinson said to a friend, "Insanity to the sane seems so unnecessary-but I am only one, and they are "four and forty," which little affair of numbers leaves me impotent" (qtd. in Anderson, 306). "Much madness is wittily ironic which speaks out hatred toward overwhelmingly dominant system of oneness and conformity ruled out by prevailing majority. Here, this insanity adds tension in her life but she gets victory over it and shapes it in this poem. Here, Anderson argues that,

The poet's traditional role of being "insane", and his consequent alienation from society, was one she readily assumed. But the reality behind this popular notion, the psychic pressures that in greater or less degree compel the poet to utterance, is another matter. (306)

In the first two lines is seen the ironic gap: an individual (discerning eye) is subjected to follow the so-called principles of majority as truth but what the world has regarded the sense of truth is empty, hypocrisy and pretension only that describes no weight. This sense of majority is for Dickinson only a waste-product and madness. What seems sane for a group or society deems insane for Dickinson's like sensitive people. It displays her harsh contempt on established notion of truth and ethos; the inner motive of people is to assent those who are drawn on the prevailing social, political, cultural and religious system of the nineteenth century America but they repel those who demur the established vogues instead. S/he is declared insane if majority is not accepted. It is clearly asserted in the 6, 7 and 8 lines: 'Assents, and you are save' Demur,—you are straightway dangerous' And handled with a chain'. They carry out her anger toward outlive and senseless society and people. Conclusively, it outlines her frustration and suffering that represents the plight of minority. More strikingly, it speaks of the tussle between two groups: one who obeys and one who rules, and it projects the protest to the system of traditional society and people.

Ambivalent relationship between externalization of pain and internal condition is the sole idea of this poem: 'After Great Pain, a formal feeling comes' silent anguish is made horrendous by its ironic presentation. It explicates a state of

mind that accelerates feelings. Here, to cope with this statement, Francis Manley says:

In each of these poems Dickinson was faced with this initial problem: somehow she had to describe a formless, internal entity which could never be revealed to other except in terms of its outward signs and manifestation. Moreover, these externalizations did not always correspond to the internal condition but at times, in fact represented the exact opposite. (260)

Dickinson sets up some words in the lines 2 to 5: "Nerves", "Hearts" and 'Feet' to personify them so as to reveal an act of numbness on them. But they belong to no one; yet this formal feeling produces in a person who has lost the sense of time and identity which is added in the lines 3-4. Their internal amorphous pain has no way out that can not be shown to the rest except in signs and manifestation. In the first stanza, Dickinson exposes the ironic nature of pain and feelings:

After great pain, a formal feeling comes— The Nerves sit
Ceremonious, like Tombs— The stiff Heart questions was it the, that
bore, And Yesterday, or centuries before? (341)

The great pain expounds internal paralysis but this numbness is not itself a pain— Nor is it feeling which slowly and gradually emerges out from the poem until at the end. Nerves represent the formal feeling which comes only after great pain by being silent, ceremonious mourners, they simultaneously deal sensation, no feeling, not pain and nothing. Here is stated that a 'stiff Heart' dares ask question to the trouble-maker who converted many gentle women's lives into 'Tombs' and so

on. Similarly, in the second stanza, it is asserted that like a puppet it has mechanical feet but rotates around and above the sky. Even if it is like a stone, it absorbs full-fathom satisfaction. 'A Quartz contentment' refers to pleasure and appearing mad literally but it is compared with stone with no sense. So by the second stanza, it is resolved into a cold, quartz-like peaceful satisfaction of the mind.

However, irony appears to modify and qualify it that the poem ends in tense, unresolved ambivalence, which is founded in the following stanza:

This is the hour of Lead
 Remembered, it out lived,
 As freezing persons, recollect the snow—
 First—chill—then stupor—the the letting— (341)

The positive marker "remembered" is transferred into ambivalent form by being modified with negative connotation: 'As Freezing person recollect the snow,' Ironically, freezing person can memorize the snow since they die in it and are destroyed by a worm. Since there is no solution to this ambivalence, the poem ends unresolved, suspended between life and death in a quarter contentment, the deadly anguish of all; the very essence of pain, which is not pain but a blank peace just as the essence of sound is silence. Paradox is long-term applied point in this poem. Dickinson defines an essentially paradoxical state of mind in which one is alive but yet numb to life: both a living organism and a frozen form. Although the mourners, the nerves appear to be the living, they are in actuality the dead, and conversely the 'Stiff Heart'— which has ironically a heart, a semblance of consciousness. Both

these forms of living death explicate the stop sensation' that comes after the great pain.

Although movement shows vitality—as mentioned in the first line of second stanza: ('The Feet, mechanical, go round', there is no life in the aimless circles of the walking dead. Nether numb feet go on the hardness of ground or on the softness of air, their way is wooden, for paralysis is within them. Since they cannot feel, nor know, nor even sense where they are going "Regardless grown", they wander in circles (" go round") on an insane treadmill as if lost, suspended between life and death and sharing the features of both. Certainly, the 'Chill' and 'stupa' of freezing, a gradual numbing of the senses incorporates many of her attributes of death itself: a loss of vital warmth, of a sense of identity in time and space conjoined with an increasing coolness rigidity. Since freezing is neither life nor death but both respectively—which is an expansive metaphor for the living deaths which comes after great pain. In this way, ambivalence works to expose the poem's ending suspended between life and death.

'I Felt a Funeral in My Brain', meditates up on a funeral, but the crucial experience of poem is not death itself, rather it dwells upon the evolving experiences of intuiting, emotionally and spiritually a meaning beyond the fact of death. Dickinson proposes mismatch or difference between appearance and reality. At the literal level, the poem simply concerns over the emotional experience at a funeral by sensitive individual; it undoubtedly comprises of something more than the poet exercises her ability to ring the transformation of her emotions. Thus, George Moneterio asserts that: "the crucial experience of the poem is not death

itself, of course, rather the poem is based upon the evolving experience of intuiting, emotionally and spiritually, a meaning the fact of death" (658).

The poem traces the speaker's loss of consciousness which is clearly stated in the beginning line: 'I Felt a Funeral, in My Brain' and this loss is a dramatization of the deadening forces that is known as repression. The whole poem seems structured in past tense which outlines that the speaker is reconstructing an experience whose pain in past was rendered impossible to know. Here is shown only the experience of death which is stated in the following words by McDermott:

Dickinson's best known poems are those describing the actual experience of dying, e.g. the famous experience of deaths mimicking a pounding funeral inside her head: "I Felt a Funeral in My Brain," a poem that is considered figuratively an attempt to describe the terror. (78)

One can associate experience and at the same time undergo dissociation from it. So, experience itself is chain of dissociations. It is about knowledge and the results of its repression which is called in the fourth line of first stanza: 'That sense was breaking through'. Mourners represent self who fight for resurrection and to keep alive though the speaker is trying to commit to burial. Self feels conflict about the repressive gesture. Self is in conflict about the repressive gesture. Self in conflict goes over the same ground "treading-treading-" of its argument with itself and sense threatens to dissolve, "break through' because of the mind's inability to resolve its contradictory impulse, which is interlocked in the second stanza:

And when they all were seated,
 A Service, Like a Drum—
 Kept beating— beating—till I thought
 My Mind was going numb— (280)

Literally, participants sit for the service and read words over the dead which appears in the lines 5-6: 'And when they all were seated,' 'A service, like a drum—' but at the figurative level the confusion of mind quiets to one unanimous voice issuing its consent to the burial of meaning. In the fourth stanza, a repressive force lashes (quiets) the speaker with retaliatory distortion: Heavens cosmos represent "toll" as 'Bell'. Being is reduced to the 'Ear'. For the mourners have disappeared, 'Being and I' are united. I is a victim passively awaiting its own annihilation.

The poem cannot stand for a literal funeral since people do not funeral, they attend. They do not feel funeral in brain too since what is in brain that can be buried in a thought only. Although in sitting for the an ambiguous term that 'sense was breaking through—" introduces contrast in its use. It connotes that sense is either 'breaking down' or 'emerging'. In our first understanding, sense is breaking through consciousness means the speaker is breaking down because the verb 'breaking' means necessarily collapsing. Another ambiguous image is beacons in the peculiar formation of the third line to the fourth stanza:

As all the Heavens were a Bell,
 And being, but an Ear,
 And I, and Silence, some strange Race
 Wrecked, Solitary, here— (280)

It raises the question of whether the status of personhood is being conferred upon silence or of whether the speaker is herself ceding that status by allying herself with something inanimate. If the conjunction is so understood, she and silence might have equal status, might even be considered to form a "Race". Or since silence does not have status of a person, the speaker's identification could be regarded as working to cancel the speaker's own personhood. Despite the attempt to personify silence, the speaker rather depersonalizes the self to the point of obliteration. The last two lines: 'And then a plank in Reason Broke'/And I dropped down, and down— detail the experience of person with panic attack, sensation of detachment and losing control of one's own mind from overwhelming anxiety and the fear of going crazy.

Duality and multiplicity of meaning is discussed in the next poem: 'My Life had stood-a loaded Gun-'. Her life is compared with 'gun', a male possession and consists of more than single interpretation. But at the same time, it can be played to kill the opposite if needed. This power in women seems destructive and explosive. The poet sees split between the hunter, admittedly masculine and the gun: 'For I have but the power kill' (Line -3) shows this fact. So far as women history is concerned, it is found that female are used as gun to hunt the bird of the sake of masculine gender-who bears ownership on Gun.

Gun as an object is condemned to remain inactive until and unless the hunter takes possession of it. Possessor is paid higher value than possessed. Here possessor is God, soul, mind, spirit, male and purpose while 'Gun' represents female, language, power, passion, body and so on. But the paradox is that the owner is declared to be mortal and the gun is also lifeless on the owner's

disappearance although it is lifeless. This exposes the mentality of the nineteenth century American society, where females are deprived of rights so as to impose upon them surrender, passivity and exclusion. As a result, Dickinson drove herself away from society to the fifteen-year's long of seclusion. But the explosive nature of gun is long-forgotten. The gun contains energy capable of rousing echoes in the hills and lightening up the valleys. They give up the deadly power of gun. It is at the same time interpreted as a defender of master or male instead of being attacker to foes. Here, metaphorical presence of gun smashes the hierarchical relationship which has created the wall between male and female as female are only subservient to their lords/masters. Here in the last stanza, line two and three assist with the sense of egalitarian life-line between both opposite sexes: I guard My Master's Head'—and 'T is better than the Eider—Duck's.

Speaking through the voice of a gun, Dickinson exposes the power and defect of the gun i.e. both positive and negative implications. She is cruel not pleasant, hard not soft, emphatic not weak, one who kills not one who nurtures. She explores multiple self from within. The gun/speaker reconciles her smile with the after math of a volcanic eruption. But her smile is not coincided with the volcano's fire. In the third stanza, she exploits the possibility of plural meaning that is stated below:

And when at Night—our good Day done—

I guard My master's Head—

It is better than the Eider—Duck's

Deep pillow—to have shared— (754)

Here, speaker prefers guarding the master by having shared his pillow, that is, having shared intimate relationship—primarily sexual. Thus, ironically, the speaker seems at distance from the world of life, i.e. of potential life-creation or love. By allying herself with catastrophic power rather than sexual intimacy, she may also be indicating that the former seems safer to her.

Another poem: 'A word is dead' gives an outline of how each sign refers to other ones but is not fixed and does not carry out totality. Meaning created by someone does not coincide with the totality his work presents is manifested in it. It dismantles the logo centric assumption of western metaphysics. Dickinson forwards her view that the long-established notion of speech that is found and given proper sense is not viable and does not mark out possibility of utterances. Thus, the primacy of speech over writing is deceptive and immature reply of those who are drawn on western logo-centric foundation. As language consists of slipperiness and unreliability, no signifier paves way to signified. It is just a play or chain of signifiers. Viewing upon deconstructive irony, Meller forwards de Man's concepts as, "de Man, thus, "Condemns man to be the prison house of Language: Man must remain confined within a nexus of signs that refer solely to other, anterior signs . . ." (qtd. in Meller, 220). It is what Dickinson projects in the following poem:

A word is dead

When it is said,

Some say.

I say it just

begin to live

that day. (1212)

'A word is dead,'/when it is said' in this stanza articulates certain feeling of fixity and finality of utterance once it is spoken. It has no more pertaining use. It is dead but these utterances communicate variable meanings and senses that pass over each other. This is obviously maintained in the last lines four and five: 'I say it just'/ 'Begins to live'. Now she calls into question saying that each word has embedded more than one signifier upon itself. That's why it communicates inadequately and incompletely. Lines one and two contradict with lines four and five. The first two lines seem supporting the ebbing thought of logo centrism by showing supremacy of speech over writing while the last three lines augment the opposing force to this established parameter of reading. So, here is condemned the believers on phonocentrism and induces a process of reading against the grain.

Similarly, she introduces lack of 'oneness' and 'organic whole' as egged up by western metaphysical concern and ruptures by fostering a mathematical inquiry into certain metaphysical claims prevalent in her lifetime in the poem: 'One and one-are one-'. She turned to the 'Bible' which was considered as a sacred text. Mathematics—as she was fascinated by—was taught a step as a proof of a divine plan which shapes the frameworks of nature's harmonies and is essential to the argument for a god.

During her life time, it was not taken as an objective and value-free object. People were taught to perceive God's presence and promise in the laws of mathematics. In light of divinity, mathematics was taken into consideration. All curriculums were driven into God's promises. Mathematical education is not just

about mathematics, 'it is also about the values of the time, including Christian charity. But Dickinson counters an oppressive and stifling authority by focusing mathematics itself as an impersonal, egalitarian rule, which cleanses the claims about superior authority as a source of unity and oneness- which is also sought for by new-critical reading. This feeling of "One" is cut in the following poem by Dickinsons in terms of deconstructive strategy:

One and one—are one—
 Two—be finished using—
 Well enough for schools—
 But for + Minor choosing—
 Life—just—or Deaths—
 Or the Everlasting—
 + More— would be too vast
 For the soul's comprising—
 + inner + two (531)

What this poem supports is the mystical mathematics at the opening line: One and one—are one-which puts aside the general mathematical rule. Thus, Michael Theune says:

Dickinson questions a system in which the most elementary of mathematical proposition, that one and one are two, can be mistaken for the most dimwitted and/or the most exuberantly

mystical, the most dangerous and/or the most promising
 metaphysical proposition that all things added up and one. (108).

Metaphysics consists upon the circulation of life, death and everlasting, which torches the mystical vision of 'above' or 'one'. But Dickinson argues that this mystical vision is limited. One and one are not one since soul must choose from various ones. For example, the soul must choose either life or death. It is not even given the option of unifying those opposites. Because of the limitation on soul's choosing, as per Dickinson, 'one' is hardly possible. If soul selects 'life', it does not attain everlasting one. It can not receive life, and then turn to die, for death is separated from life. Thus, Dickinson gives a reference to 'oneness' while simultaneously reverses that oneness. "One and one-are one—" further supports the view that Dickinson is problematizing this 'oneness'. If the 'Two' is inserted, "Two-would be too vast" sounds ironic. So, there is lack of oneness.

The binary relation between the nineteenth century men and women: men as master, women as slave, reified in the open market for sale, is glimpsed in the poem: "I'm Nobody: Who are you?" gentle women of this period were associated with male bodily for economic purpose but deserving no equal status in society. This shows that the society had traced the vertical line to probe hierarchical domination. But by proposing the issue of binary opposition in this poem, she overpowers her silent protest, gains power and shows hidden pain and suffering to subvert such zenith. Here, she herself gives her identity as 'nobody' mentioned in the opening line of poem: 'I'm nobody!' and asks others as if who they are, which is embedded on the following poem:

I'm nobody, Who are you?

Are you nobody, too?

Then there is a pair of us—don't tell.

They'd banish us, you know.

How dreary to be somebody?

How public, like a frog

To tell your name the livelong day

To an admiring bog ! (288)

Here 'nobody/somebody', banish/public' 'I and you/they' makes an inquiry into binary opposition. The overwhelmingly dominant orthodox religion (Puritanism) has looted female's true identity and made them vulnerable too. 'Then there is a pair of us—don't tell' urges that how male—dominated society has silenced their voices to rule over them. If told, they would be expelled from society as Dickinson made exile for fifteen years. Somebody operates as majority on minority who decides the fortune of female. If demurred, they ought to undertake crisis and punishment. But being nobody, her death would pass entirely unnoticed. It shows her small self, and it implies that she is incapable of dying too. Clearly, it is stated that not only will she not die "noteless" (no values), but also she might not die at all. Through the extravagant humility she gets extravagant power. Thus, Lisa Harper argues that,

Such subversive modesty reaches its zenith in poem (288), "I'm nobody ! Who are you? where in Dickinson gains power by remaining unidentified, disembodied and unnamed. It is possible to

hear in her oxymoronically modest assertion the liberatory effect of a claiming the status of "nobody". (30)

In the second stanza is seen the difficulty of being somebody and public: 'How dreary to be somebody !' is its example. Finally but not at least, its estimation is to reveal the congested thought, rules and values of Christian society by throwing the rays of revolt being silent or passive. Simply, hierarchy created between city and rural areas because of highly developed technology and democracy has added anxiety, which is shown in the second stanza. Thus, Vivian R. Pollack states the view of Betsy Erkkila that:

Several poems register Dickinson's anxiety about the twin forces of democracy and technology that were transforming rural Amherst and moving America from the country to the city in the nineteenth century: "I'm Nobody ! Who are you?" resists the noisy "Public" culture of democracy-of stump speech and camp meeting-addressed to "an admiring Bog." (qtd. in Pollack, 151)

In this way by revealing the hierarchy between city & rural areas, she probes the male-female relation based on sexual binary.

Another equally important poem: "I Heard a Fly Buzz-When I died-shows ambiguity of blue color added in 'Fly'. It is implied to expose the rejection of traditional beliefs on the basis of ambiguous images. Life after death is possible-based on Christian-orthodox religion. It attacks on the Christian being about the spirituality of life and deaths. As per the values of this system, some mysterious angles or Christ comes taking soul of the dead person, however only a fly comes. His/her body is covered with complete darkness as well as oblivion. The final

moment of life falls in silence and blindness instead of immortality and eternity. Here in the following stanza is seen the mourners expectation of getting in touch with the "king", perhaps "Christ" at the moment of their dearest's loss:

The Eye around-had wrung then dry-

And Breaths were gathering firm

For that last onset-When the king

Be witnessed-in the Room- (465)

"Breaths" stands for people whose "Eyes"-perhaps mourners', are dry. They are gathered firm to see "the king," that is the Christ coming to take his soul toward heavens. This is a fine example of people's belief on orthodox-religion and the principle of life after death is possible. But at the same time-as mentioned in the third stanza-a fly interposes instead of heavenly king. What they expect of goes wrong suddenly:

I willed my keepsakes-sighed away

What portion of me be

Assignable-and then it was

There interposed a Fly- (465)

A "Fly" is generally understood as dead man's body eater but here it works as a substitution for king that exposes there is no afterlife. It is ambiguously applied to shatter the nineteenth century American's belief on life after death. She was hopeful of king's arrival, but a Fly interposed finally. The term 'blue' in the last stanza is also ambiguous, which hits at the ambiguous image. Here 'blue' in one

hand suggests 'immortality' and 'eternity' but the color blue with 'fly' creates an image of mortality, ruin and loss. The final stanza:

With Blue-uncertain stumbling Buzz-

Between the light-and me-

And then the windows failed-and then

I could not see to see- (465)

reverbrates that the window is compared with eyes to which people perceive as soul. Here eyes are shown defective and useless that marks out the spiritual death and crisis: there is no life after death. In this way, this poem successfully makes an attempt to pose the religious questioning, which emerged out from the gradual loss and doubt on authority of christianity and western void civilization. Hence conventionality is turned down in terms of abundant use of ambiguous images such as "Fly", "King", "blue" and "death experience" which invite one interpretation but resist it at the same time.

It this poem, the 'blue buzz' represents both uncertainty, inadequacy of men's senses to open the mystery of the universe. 'Blue' is the unmistakable implication that man's senses are finite. Life is fraught with uncertainties and it demands human limitation. Thus, Ford says: "In the world of Dickinson's poem, the blue buzz represents both the stumbling uncertainty of Life's irregular course and the equally stumbling in adequacy of man's senses to unveil the mysteries of the universes" (500).

In the next poem, 'Because I could not stop for Death,' allegorical representation of death as romantic lover to beloved taking her to the land of

immortality and eternity is exposed. "Death" is allegorically (ironically) her lover who assists her to step on to the destination of immortality and eternity. In terms of allegorical approach, it can be generalized that she is fascinated to the arrival of lover (death) which exposes the romantic flavor in the poem. Here in the opening stanza, he comes with "Chariot" as a gentlemen or suitor to take but the use of 'but' at the middle part of third line shows the reversal of her belief. This is captured in the following stanza:

Because I could not stop for Death-

He kindly stopped for me-

The carriage held but just ourselves.

And Immortality. (479).

Death is the allegorical actor who drives carriage from the mortal to immortal land. Death is personified who is kind and gentle to serve her. The travel from the land of loss to spirituality is exposed through the movement of the Chariot. The relation between lover and beloved seems erotic which proves that it is romantic. Here death itself shows 'mortality' but its abstraction refers to eternity in terms of his longer but romantic journey with her. Howsoever the death is presented," it is ironically a romantic lover, Chariot driver and a pilgrim of the land of purity and spirituality, which is portrayed in the following words by a critic, Ken Hiltner:

That the poem depicts Death as a bridegroom has hardly been lost on critics, but whether Death is a "Chivalrous gentleman," or a "gentleman suitor" who is revealed to be a "kind of rapist" has

certainly been contested-as it has been regarding the Homeric

"Hymn" where the suitor Hades Arrives in his golden Chariot. (25)

This shows that she has framed her poem on the basis of allegory which shows death as her romantic lover though this allegory works as an irony which is operated to show gap and distance between what is and what seems. Here seem a lover/suitor but he is actually a agent of patriarchal exogamy. She ironically falls in love with him and passes from school, fields and leaves her job to participate in journey of immortality and civility, which is mentioned in this third stanza:

We passed the school, where children strove

At Recess-in the Ring-

We passed the field of Gazing Grain

We passed the setting Sun- (479)

Again this stanza absorbs her fascination toward her love with death and repeatedly shows the movement of Chariot by keeping a glance at field, sun, school and so on. Though this 'death' male-lover is not actually a lover. They seem united because 'we passed' is repeatedly used. They are one and true lovers. But at the same time it is reversed saying that 'He passed us" in the fourth stanza. This exposes that there is no virgin knot tied us actually. But it is her ignorance to believe on the notion of never-ending lover similar to the circular images: "The Ring," "The circle shaped sun". Days, season never end but turn back on themselves to repeat. Thus, the parataxis: "We passed. . . . We passed . . . , and alliteration: "Fields of Gazing Grain" and "The Setting Sun" Shows the continuity of scenes. So is the love with death for her. But in reality it is an abduction.

The last stanza as given below depicts that before abduction, she had believed on the race of immortality but it captures the sense of her return from rape and death once again as Persephone.

Since then-His centuries-and yet

Feels shorter than the Day

I first surmised the Horses' Heads

Were toward Eternity (479)

It echoes her agony and pain resulted from her romantic love and affection for male agents sheltered in the patriarchal institutions. As a piece of property she belongs to the death. Though she is shown as loved by a lover yet she is in reality raped and traded about by patriarchal power. Though she seems willful to leave her home, school and children yet she doesn't want to do so. Thus Ken Hiltner says: "[]. Dickinson choose not to achieve immortality at the cost of killing the relation that bound her to her world" (39). Thus, this poem reveals her patient sympathy for women ripped away from family and home who calmly surrendered to male as the speaker goes with death (lover being presented allegorically). Next it echoes that how a woman accepts a suitor when he intends to take her away forever from mother; sister and friends.

In her poem, "A charm invest a Face" shows the speaker's contrastive attitude toward keeping beauty to fascinate the opposite sex. It manifests the 'self's' desire to 'other's' but so is reversed at the same time. It addresses the veil's ability to attract and sustain such desire. The coquettish lady remains behind the veil in order to sustain her charm, beauty and so on. Here, Dickinson seems supporting

conventional and conservative definition of womanhood. But at the same time, there is different and complicated fact that is that women beneath the veil are not entirely appeased and gratified with her condition. Here, 'veil' has double-meaning which contrast each to other. Outwardly she wishes to maintain such beauty by veiling herself whereas she refrains herself to keep erotic control inwardly. Here seems a gap and discrepancy between denial and wishes. As such is captured in the following poem:

A charm invests a face
 Imperfectly beheld -
 The Lady dare not lift her veil
 For Fear it be dispelled-
 but peers beyond her mese-
 And wishes-and denies-
 Lest Interview-Annual a want
 That I mage-satisfies (421)

Curiously, she longs for and is afraid of her own unveiling. But she gains power by remaining behind the veil even if it imprisons her. To cope with this view, Lisa Harper forwards the following statements as,

Moreover, the poem clearly implies that while the veil protects the Lady from losing the interest of the other, it also preserves her own desire. Were she to lift her veil, she might be disappointed with the other's appearance. (29)

By remaining veiled, she sustains her self as well as her desire as mentioned in line 5: and wishes-And denied; She partly ensures the survival of desire and of the self. Dickinson's impulse to using poetics of veil is simultaneously to conceal and reveal, to obscure and to provoke and to flue and to confront. Thus, Lisa states: "Repeatedly, Dickinson revised the purpose of the veil, employing it to represent "Contradictory desires-the desire to bring her [self] closer and the desire to distance her [self]" (34). In this way, the poetics of veil exposes her contradictory notion of maintaining her self and desire to cope with charm that invests her face.

Chapter IV: Conclusion

Emily Dickinson, an American woman writer of the nineteenth century, exposes the social, political and cultural picture of the oppressive patriarchal society. Her poetry is molded on conflict, doubt and repression. She raises the mind-boggling issues such as deaths, seclusion and skepticism-which resulted from overweening and domineering patriarchy sheltered in the nineteenth century society. Renunciation, mediation on deaths and wound are the pivotal sources and forms of her poetic creativity. And society in which she gained her life, religion, metaphysical education, socio-eco-politico-cultural values to which her life was dedicated, are the prime stimulating factors for and assistance in her poetry. Her punctured self, hyphenated life and skewered soul are also the origin of her poetry. Her poetry gives a space to tormented personas whose life is shaped in the basis of sexual binary. In this connection, Dickinson explains that "female sexuality has always been conceptualized on the basis of masculine parameters []" (qtd. in Shoobridge, 88).

Ironic sensibility is introduced in her poetry in terms of the profound ironical images. They depict the ambiguous images, ambivalent and contradictory relation of self to other. This "other" is undoubtedly associated with "minority", i.e., a group of female long-dominated and harassed by oppressive male-chauvanism and orthodox religion, whereas "self" is counted as majority who decides the role and fate of deteriorated group, i.e., females, and who stands as 'one'/God' and 'soul'.

Dickinson looms up seemingly exploring the silent protest in order to devastate the wall of patriarchy erected by its agents; while doing so, she emerges

as a supreme ironist. In terms of irony, she manifests her deeper purpose, which remains hidden and unknown at the surface level. In reference to this, Vivian R. Pollack remarks: "She was witty and tart, but there was a deeper purpose" (5). Ironic awareness is found in her duality and contrast in attitudes: she manifests doubt on and faith in orthodox-religion which generalizes male as 'divine-figure'. This is the point of her prime focus and to determine the forms of her poetic genius. In connection to this sensibility, Danniell G.O. Hara expresses in the lines: "Dickinson's irony secures for her still basically religious sensibility, a creative balance of faith and skepticism of the will to believe and to surrender to something []" (175).

Her works invites new-critical reading in which irony operates as a technique to balance the two opposite forces and to show unity. As such is ratified in the lines: "the New critics see irony as a technique which discovers a formal, aesthetic resolution a balance of the painful opposition and ambivalences of existence" (178). But at the same time it provides a ground for post-structural reading which confronts new-critical approach. So, Dickinson carefully germinates the post-structural ironic sensibility given impetus by Paul de man and Derrida. By means of this trend, multiplicity of meaning, disjunction, uncertainty, contradiction, lack of oneness, paradoxes, ambivalence and truth as illusion are gone through in her poetry; New critics' valorization of master/self as authority, genius and father is dismantled and undermined by this trend. It advises that the authorial presence in any text is ominous. So, the death of author is replaced. Regarding new-critical reading, Soren Kierkegaard opined negatively saying that this approach has some limitations that is that has embraced essentially a religious

orientation. But here she implements irony to attack and mock at the religiosity and the aesthetic mind set; it is also asserted that Dickinson's irony permits her to enjoy duality and spew out double meaning and radically ambivalent response.

Dickinson painfully concentrates upon death and willful withdrawal but it acts to rejuvenate her life and freedom at the same time. Her self-denial operates as life-construction. She rejects herself to get one's own self and to violate male construction. She appears being hunted by long terms domination of patriarchy which gets into the form of self denial.

She maintains the scornful attitudes toward the society she lives in and the system of conformity she is subjected to follow. The poet exposes her mocking anger too. And simply the belief in life after death is possible' is rejected through ambiguous image of fly. The blue color is used ironically with fly. Fly is mortal and has quality of delay but 'color blue' is symbolic of eternity and immortality. Double meaning is given much space in her poetry too; similarly ambivalent relationship between externalization of pain and internal condition is another sole purpose of reading her poems. Next, paradoxical representation of gun which sets multiple meaning in one hand and the symbiotic necessity of body and soul is forwarded by Dickinson in her work on the other. 'Gun' is an object, perhaps compared to female possessed by male/God/owner which is used as per his wishes. However, it can turn against to possessor if needed in crisis. Meaning created by someone doesn't coincide with the totality that is presented in his/her works. This thought is operated to attack on logo-centric approach. In her other poems is dismantled the concept of oneness that is divinity, soul and God-as prompted by new-critical reading. A gap between literal and deeper meaning is also embedded

upon her works. She consumes the theme of sexual binary to mock at vertical relationship established by majority. Likely, allegorical representation of death as romantic lover leading his beloved to immortality gives ironic meaning in her poem; poetics of veil exposes her desire for charm and alluring effect but arouses annoyance over such tradition. In this way her works carries out her ironic sensibility in terms of deconstructive theories of irony.

Therefore, Dickinson ironically accepts her position and limitation resulted from the system of conformity prevalent in the nineteenth century American society colored with patriarchy. In order to underscore the limitation of that period imposed upon females, she admits her passivity, meditation on death, surrender to much eulogized metaphysical relation through ironic representation. Next, much of the tension-a defining term of deconstructive theory of irony-emerges from her double positioning and duality that invites more than single interpretation, recommends paradoxical relation and sets the use of ambiguity which offers one interpretation but resists it at the same time. On one hand, she announces irony not as a trope, nor as a device but as a strategy by which she maps her plan to attack on privileged truth, authority and intentions. On the other hand, she applies it as an act of writing against the grain, i.e., an act of writing against established values and systems of the nineteenth century American society. It is therefore implemented as a weapon to hammer down the interest of self, divine and authority which crashes the sweet dreams of and possibility of female freedom and life in existing society. Her ironic sensibility is operated and reenacted to pierce into the prevalent principles and systems of society based on what a majority orders to and imposes upon minority. Similarly, she ruptures the hierarchy and ironically dismantles the

puritan beliefs ironically saying that life after death is possible. Her ironic ending of poem reinforces our comprehension that female did not have identity, self, adequate role and position in society in which Dickinson passed her life with many twist and turn and ups and downs respectively.

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Appendix

I

Much madness is divinest sense
To a discerning eye;
Much sense the starkest madness
T is the majority
In this, as all, prevails
Assent, and you are save;
Demur,—you're straight way dangerous,
And handled with a chain. (465)

II

After great pain, a formal feeling comes—
The Nerves sit ceremonious, like Tombs—
The stiff Heart questions was it He, that bore,
And Yesterday, or Centuries before?

The Feet, mechanical, go round—
Of Ground, or Air, or Ought—
A Wooden way
Regardless grown,
A Quartz contentment like a stone—

This is the Hour of Lead—
Remembered, if outlived,
As Freezing persons, recollect the Snow—
First—Chill—them Stupor—then the letting go— (341).

III

I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,
And Mourners to and fro
Kept treading—treading—till it seemed
That Sense was breaking through—

And when they all were seated,
A Service, like a Drum—
Kept beating—beating—till I thought
My Mind was going numb—

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

As all the Heavens were a Bell,
And Being, But an Ear,

And I, and Silence, some strange Race
Wrecked, solitary, here—

And then a Plank in Reason, broke,
And I dropped down, and down—
And hit a World, at every plunge,
And Finished knowing—then— (280).

IV

And do I smile, Such Cordial light
Upon the Valley glow—
It is as a Vesuvian face
Had let its pleasure through—

And when at Night—Our good day done—
I guard My Master's Head—
'T is better than the Eider—Duck's
Deep Pillow—to have shared—

To foe of His—I'm deadly foe—
None stir the second time—
On whom I lay a yellow Eye—
Or an emphatic Thumb— (754).

V

A word is dead
When it is said,
 Some say.
I say it just
Begins to live
 That day (1212).

VI

One and one—are one—
Two—be finished using—
Well enough for schools—
But for + Minor choosing—

Life—just—or Deaths—
Or the Everlasting—
+ More— would be too vast
For the soul's comprising—

+ inner + two (531)

VII

I'm nobody, Who are you?
Are you nobody, too?
Then there is a pair of us—don't tell.
They'd banish us, you know.

How dreary to be somebody?
How public, like a frog
To tell your name the livelong day
To an admiring bog ! (288)

VIII

I heard a Fly buzz—when I died—
The Stillness in the Room
Was like the Stillness in the Air—
Between the Heavens of Storm—

The Eyes around—had wrung them dry—
And Breaths were gathering firm
For that last Onset—when the King
Be witnessed—in the Room—

I willed my Keepsakes—Signed away
What portion of me be
Assignable—and then it was
There interposed a Fly—

With Blue—uncertain stumbling Buzz—
Between the light—and me—
And then the Windows failed—and then
I could not see to see— (465).

IX

Because I could not stop for Death—
He kindly stopped for me—
The Carriage held but just Ourselves—
And Immortality.

We slowly drove—He knew no haste
And I had put away
My labor and my leisure too,
For His Civility—

We passed the School, where Children strove,
At Recess—in the Ring—
We passed the Fields of Gazing Grain—
We passed the Setting Sun—

Or rather—He passed us—
The Dews drew quivering and chill— (479).

X

A charm invests a face
Imperfectly beheld -
The Lady dare not lift her veil
For Fear it be dispelled-

but peers beyond her mese-
And wishes-and denies-
Lest Interview-Annual a want
That I mage-satisfies (421)