

【翻 訳】

Emily Dickinson's Oriental Heresies Evident in Technique

Mary CENDER MILLER

- I Introduction
- II Dickinson and Japan: The Miniature World
- III Heresies as Technique
 - A. The Cloud of Knowing
 - B. The Calligraphic Stroke
 - C. The Koan
- IV Summary
- V Appendix 1

Introduction

From time to time consideration of Eastern nuances in American poet Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) takes place. Northrop Frye thought there was "something Oriental in her manner of existence."¹ Archibald MacLeish, Henry Wells, Amy Horiuchi, Akira Kawano, Hazel Durnell and others have taken up the subject to some degree.² In her first chapter of *Japanese Cultural Influences on American Poetry and Drama* Durnell shows that ED had ample opportunity to benefit from surrounding Japanese influences. For instance, a certain Joseph Neejima studied in Dickinson's hometown, Amherst, Massachusetts, eventually returning to Japan to help establish Doshisha University. William S. Clark, a name very familiar to us here in Sapporo, taught at Amherst Agricultural College and came to Hokkaido and is credited with helping establish what is now Hokkaido University. He returned to Amherst in 1877, but Durnell

cannot prove that ED, famous as a recluse, had any interchange with these people.³

However, if we are to believe Henry Wells, we do not need such tangible proof of outside influence in ED's life. Wells finds parallels to ED's thought and phrasing in virtually all civilized literature from China, India and Persia to Italy, Germany, France, Spain and England. ED "achieved universality without the aid of prosaic instruction in comparative literature," he maintains.⁴ However, in more recent decades, scholars have not ceased to bring up the question "Where did ED learn to write as she did?" One can soon list a half-dozen or so scurrings down various rabbit holes "She writes like an Imagist" (before the Imagists were formed). "She writes prose as in Emerson's journals" (which she cannot have read).⁵ The hare is never down the hole. We are in good company and also without specific answers if we add our own question to the list: "Where did ED acquire her Eastern nuances?" From where came her provocative little Oriental insights as in poem # 1516⁶

No Autumn's intercepting Chill
Appals this Tropic Breast- -
But African exhuberance
And Asiatic rest.

We cannot know how conscious ED was of "stillness" or "rest" as an Oriental attribute,⁷ but it is very clear that in recent decades critical literary turbulence has been steadily increasing around this 19th century poet.

One of the concerns of this study is to show how her Oriental attributes exacerbate the Dickinson controversies. For instance, on the one hand ED is called "the greatest realist in our American literature"⁸ and also, "the greatest woman poet in the English language."⁹ On the other, she is disparaged for "having no way of looking at the world"¹⁰; for lacking social consciousness--"It is

hard to discern any significant way in which [the poet] speaks for America."¹¹ Others indicate she has no objective feeling of responsibility toward language.¹²

Her failure to conform to orthodox Western literary traditions and criteria emerges as a basic component of Dickinson criticism and scholarly commentary. Admittedly she was a genius, but, as Yvor Winters points out, there is "a margin of ambiguity in our final estimate of even her most extraordinary work."¹³ In our approach however, we want to adhere to Archibald MacLeish's profound insight: "Anyone who defines art in negatives is lost before he (or she) begins."

We can see ED's work in a more positive light, if we recognize two facts, the major concerns of this paper: 1) ED's withdrawal from the world, in many ways analogous to Japan's geographical and psychological isolation from its neighbors, highly influenced her technique (also her sense of being and of time, subjects we will not address in this paper.)

And the corollary of this hypothesis: 2) When we examine ED criticism, very often the points on which the poet is disparaged are actually the critic's encounter with an "Oriental heresy," an ED attribute more common in Eastern aesthetic circles and highly valued there.

While I will be citing a number of examples where ED scholars negatively evaluate certain aspects of her work, it goes without saying, that from a Western point of view these analyses are usually entirely justified. I am not quarreling with any critic on his/her "Western" grounds, but rather, hope to show to some extent that when we recognize Oriental aspects of ED's work, we are ushered into a world of beauty, time, reality and ultimately of poetry, that is somewhat different from our own.

We cannot define art "in negatives." From ED herself we get the first clue that her Oriental heresies lack the negative quality the

Western mind usually associates with the term “heresy.” It is true that when we examine the entire cannon, we are struck by ED’s blatant scepticism and blasphemy, commonly considered negative dispositions. Though ED tries to throw God out, at the same time she doesn’t let God get away. She jotted on a piece of paper late in life, “God cannot discontinue himself. This appalling trust is at time all that remains.” (poem fragment # 34) We can see in Dickinson a woman on an inner spiritual journey, questioning and sometimes discarding “baggage” out of her Calvinist upbringing, but also savoring her unique “experiences of the mind.” For ED “heresy” is neither a random word nor a negative one towards the end of her life. Notice the light tone she takes in an obscure poem in which we have her only reference to “oriental heresies.”

His oriental heresies
Exhilarate the bee
And filling all the Earth and Air
With gay apostasy
Fatigued at last, a Clover plain
Allures his jaded eye
That lowly Breast where Butterflies
Have felt it meet to die- -

1526

It would seem that adequate scholarly attention has not been given to the significant juxtaposition of heresies- -apostasy- -satiation (the jaded eye)- -death- -as her subject matter in this poem in the last five years of Dickinson’s life (Johnson dates the poem 1881).

Porter has suggested that almost everything in ED’s poetry are allegorical “words of a privately coded intent” and that

The bee poems. . . .disarmingly search exquisite moments in nature when encounters are laden with unsuspected consequences.¹⁵

Emily Dickinson's Oriental Heresies Evident in Technique

Johnson thinks that the reference in # 1526 is other than to a bee.¹⁶ It would seem that the bee can be taken for ED herself, because she sometimes closely identified with nature. It is significant that in her late years, words of "religious" portent, of threat even (apostasy was no small fare in Puritan New England circles) are buzzing around in her head. Her journeys- -purportedly through "earth" and "air"- -have been no farther than in her own mind and behind closed doors. She has satiated herself on a conglomeration of nectars- -Transcendental, mystical, "Oriental". She is drawn towards the humble breast of Mother Earth, towards death: this is "meet", that is, appropriate.

The "unsuspected consequence" of the poem- -to use Porter's phrase- -is that ED is feeling pleased with herself and does not recant her heretical mind-wandering through the years. Anything but apologetic, she gloats about her exhilaration, her *gay* apostasy that "oriental heresies" produce.

However, we do not base an argument for Oriental emphases in ED on the biographical allegory of one poem alone (merely pointing out that ED coined the term and that the poem has been largely ignored). Rather, the long life of enclosure and withdrawal from society and ED's attitude toward it, is what is important here. Staying inside is a foremost Dickinson Oriental heresy.

In ED's own words enclosure is seen as that place where "The Soul selects its own Society/and shuts the door" and where "The Soul with strict economy/Subsists till Paradise." We have suggested that Oriental heresies are signalled by negative critical evaluation. Take her term "economy," closely bound up with ED's technique and it is discovered to be problematic. David Porter, who is especially concerned with ED's linguistics says that

When Dickinson took the language inside
with her, she evaded the obligations to
experience and to common perception that

a public language must ordinarily meet.¹⁷

But what this leading Dickinson scholar means is “a Western common perception” and “a Western public language”. When her readers are from an Oriental climate, or a Japanese one, they do not experience “evasion”. Instead, they undergo “exhilaration” because they recognize ED’s technique as closely akin to literary and aesthetic forms with which they are familiar.

Porter further (unwittingly) supports the Oriental nature of enclosure with the insight that “when Dickinson went inside, it was not that the artist chose the seclusion, it was the other way around—the seclusion chose the art.”¹⁸

He means that seclusion *itself* determines the kind of art that develops. If this is so, then we must pay attention to the startling parallels that can be drawn between ED in seclusion and the Japanese people in their rather insular geographical and historical situation. 1) Both come out of a fertile heritage; Japan with its cultural and spiritual legacy from India, China and Korea. ED underwent religious and philosophical influences from Calvinism and Transcendentalism and acquired a literary inheritance from the Bible and from Shakespeare, particularly.

2) Both used self-imposed boundaries, sometimes in extreme situations, to protect their solitude. Hideyoshi drew back from the invasion of Korea in 1593; the Tokugawa Shogunate shut its door on the world early in the 17th century. From around the age of twenty-four ED increasingly withdrew from Amherst society, to the effect that she often retreated upstairs when guests came or only conversed with them through a curtain from another room.

3) In the privacy of their own worlds Japan and ED created aesthetic forms that are “economical” and unique, though not completely original. Zen, tea ceremony, tanka, haiku are distinctly, but perhaps not one hundred per cent Japanese. ED often writes in

Emily Dickinson's Oriental Heresies Evident in Technique

two-quatrain, twenty-eight syllable forms (though other poems are longer) that are neither hymn nor haiku, but that remind us of both. Furthermore, she has a unique understanding of time and reality: "My Business is Circumference."¹⁹

We point out that the act of "going inside" or "staying inside" is a heretical one. It is suspect. Robert Schiller says it produces either art or madness.

Art offers two ways to those who turn to it from life; a blinded wandering in the deep recesses of a sickened personality, or the depersonalized and hard forms of disciplined and complete expression. Emily Dickinson chose the latter . . . a poetry of craftsmanship rather than that of confession.²⁰

Recognizing their great art forms, we establish Japan and ED on the safe side of the withdrawal abyss: they produced craftsmanship, not madness. Retreating in varying degrees at different points in their respective histories, the deep inclination to withdraw into themselves and to spurn normal concourse with society has produced some strikingly similar features between the two.²¹

ED/Japan: The Miniature World

One of these analogies is Japan and ED's fascination with the miniature. When Wells says "Life is simplified, explained, and reduced to its essence by interpreting the vast whole in relation to the minute particle," he could as easily be describing a Kyoto temple garden or a bonsai instead of ED's work.²²

Initially, regarding sparsity in ED, we have a great compliment from Porter when he says "There is no prose in Dickinson." We can

better understand the implications of this statement when we are reminded that concise, compact writing is one of the achievements of haiku, although in contrast, few Western poets are able to keep prose passages out of their work.

Japanese poetry, like almost every branch of their arts, is virtuoso in methods, and perfectionist in detail... in direct contrast with Western poetry where two or three mediocre stanzas in the middle of a long poem are not considered a serious defect providing that there are a sufficient number of high moments in it.²³

There is no such prose in Dickinson. But on the other hand, there is the complaint that her poems are too pared down, too miniature--they are "a threshold state of organization that can just barely be called a poetic event."²⁴ They are almost too small for us Westerners to believe in.

But ED revels in the miniature, *visualizes* her self that way.

I was a Phobe--nothing more--
A Phoebe--nothing less--
The little note that others dropt
I fitted into place--
I dwelt too low that any seek--
Too shy, that any blame--
A Phoebe makes a little print
Upon the Floors of Fame--

1009

Or, there is the contrast between "I was the slightest in the House/I took the smallest Room--" # 486 and the "House" of "I dwell in Possibility/A fairer House than Prose--" # 657 where the

task is tremendous, "The spreading wide my narrow Hands/To gather Paradise- -"

In ED there is also the awareness of the benefits of enclosure and how they relate to the miniature, neatly capsuled in # 985.

The Missing All- -prevented Me
From missing minor Things
If nothing larger than a World's
Departure from a Hinge- -
Or Sun's extinction, be observed- -
'Twas not so large that I
Could lift my Forehead from my work
For Curiosity.

Her "work", minor thing in life it may be, takes precedence over other cataclysmic events such as loss of world, loss of sun. ED and Japan are deliberately preoccupied with "minor Things- -microscopic, universal art gems, which the fumbling hands of the West find hard to imitate. Such art in the miniature is the product of the high concentration and discipline that retreat and enclosure afford.

Oriental Heresies as Technique

The world as microcosm through economy of expression can be further elaborated on by examining at least three of the art techniques, highly valued by Japanese which ED inadvertently imitates and which bring charges of heretical break with Western poetic tradition. Using terminology familiar to Japanese, I have called these techniques 1) the cloud of knowing; 2) the calligraphic stroke; and 3) the koan.

The Cloud of Knowing. ED embraces powers of intuition and of communication beyond mere words. Often in her work we find phrases that defy linguistic analysis. Although her critics accuse ED of being grammatically remiss, there is evidence that she was inten-

tionally demanding a certain amount of inference on the part of the reader, just as haiku does. In # 1682 we have an image of a cloud coupled with a way of knowing: "Autumn begins to be inferred/By millinery of the cloud." But this is really only one example of a stable, metaphorical use of "cloud" when more typically "cloud" or "haze" functions as a technique pervading many phrases. There is precedence for this in Japanese art. Most of us are familiar with the stereotype Oriental landscape painting where the clouds are "hazy" in their role of suggestion. "Japanese poets have most often sought to create with few words, usually with a few sharp images, the outline of a work whose details must be supplied by the reader as in a Japanese painting a few strokes may suggest a whole world."²⁵ (underlining mine)

In Japanese haiku the details are not all supposed to be present. Porter recognizes the "important meaning of what is absent"²⁶ in ED but it is a begrudging admission after pointing out her obscurities, grammatical defects, lost connections, etc. For ED absence and omission are deliberate, as she says: "By intuition, Mightiest Things/Assert themselves--and not by terms" # 420. Her spirit aligns with the great haiku master Basho's comment, "The haiku that reveals seventy to eighty per cent of its subject is good. Those that reveal fifty to sixty per cent we never tire of."²⁷

Earl Miner says that haiku demands a special kind of "knowing" on the part of the reader--it was "the beauty of this 'imagistic' knowing that was imitated by Ezra Pound and other Imagists,"²⁸ apart from and after Dickinson. "Knowing" for ED happens inside the person, "internal difference/Where the Meanings, are--" # 258.

In the same way she would assert

Who goes to dine must take his Feast
or find the Banquet mean--
The Table is not laid without
Till it is laid within

1223

Such a high level of subjectivity troubles the Western mind, but ED is firmly on the side of the Oriental artist's mood and perception.

The Outer- -from the Inner
Derives its Magnitude- -

The Inner- -paints the Outer- -
The Brush without the Hand
Its Picture publishes- -precise
As is the inner Brand- -

451

“The Brush without the Hand” is a powerful suggestion that the painting that we see and the poetic interpretation we make will be only as rich as our inner resources are : a highly subjective, heretical stance from the Western point of view.

The Calligraphic Stroke. In a very real sense then, ED's poems are often the result of her taking up her brush- -this time a calligraphy brush, and ending the poem in a sweeping off *hane* kind of stroke. We recognize this when another critic calls a heresy to our attention. Blackmur indicates that ED doesn't know how a proper poem begins and ends.

A good poem so constitutes its parts as at once to contain them and to deliver or release by psychological force of their sequence the full effect only when the poem is done.²⁹

In ED there is departure from this norm into a disintegrating effect.

It is well-known that many Dickinson poems are distinguished by their memorable first lines. Some examples are: "Fame is the tint that Scholars leave/Upon their Setting Names- -"; # 866; "I can wade Grief- -/Whole Pools of it- -"# 252; "The Poets light but Lamps- -Themselves- -go out- -"# 883; She dealt her pretty words like Blades- -" # 479; "A Coffin- -is a small Domain,/Yet able to contain/A Citizen of Paradise" # 943; "Funny- -to be a Century- - And see the People- -going by- -" # 345; "I reckon- -when I count at all- -"# 569. All these bold beginnings promise much and deliver less than the critics desire.

There is initial pressure on the brush stroke- -the bold, satisfying beginning, but the direction moves off suggestively into what we recognize visually as a hane- - (one *hane* style in Japanese calligraphy is called the "dragon tail".) Kenneth Yasuda has said that in haiku there should be no conclusion- -the sensuous material to be intuited stands alone.³⁰ ED copies this technique: where we anticipate closure in a poem, we may get a veering off into indefiniteness. (In # 883 what does "Disseminating their/Circumference- -" have to do with poets lighting lamps?) And she could be likened to a musician fumbling for a chord she never finds (which may describe the ending experience of # 569, "I reckon- -when I count at all- -").

Or, what starts out in one direction in the poem does an about-face and follows a new willful stance. In her famous carriage poem Lynen says that what begins as an action, "Because I could not stop for Death/He kindly stopped for me"- -ends in a state of affairs: "I surmised the Horses' heads/Were toward Eternity- -"³¹

From poem to poem the dragon tail endings vary in their indefiniteness, but throughout the canon there are enough of them to conclude they form a kind of break with past patterns in Western literature. ED was establishing her own sense of a poem's wholeness and it was an Oriental sense.

We can see from her worksheets that in producing a final draft she was a perfectionist, working certain words over and over. There are two versions of the well-known "Safe in their Alabaster Chambers- -" # 216. The later one is distinguished for its dragon's tail: "Soundless as dots- -on a Disc of Snow- -" which suggests double heresies. For not only does "a Disc of Snow" strain comprehension, there is the problematic "Soundless as dots".

The Koan. The whole phrase "Soundless as dots" comes near to being a nonsense proposition; we can hardly bring meaning into focus. MacLeish says such images "are like the brush strokes of a beautifully inked Chinese character . . . they are, but are not pictures of the reality expressed."³²

But what MacLeish views positively is taken to be problematic by others.

The language distortions, the exclusive
use of the hymn form and most of all,
the dissociation of words from things
were not separate, chosen modes of art
but the stylistic consequences of seclusion.³³

The phenomenon of dissociation of words from realities in ED brings to mind the function of the koan in Japanese Zen.³⁴ How Zen and mysticism relate to ED's inner journey behind closed doors has received much attention and cannot be fully treated now.³⁵ In these references to ED's mysticism, we are able to see that from time to time in a poem she seems to dispense with the need to mean. She throws in an absurd set of words like Gazing Grain, Chips of Blank, an Aptitude for Bird and Miles of Stare, which make us tingle and make our hair stand on end, and which may rid us of our preconceived notions about what the poem is about. There are enough of these phrases in varying degrees of absurdity to indicate ED was aware of what she was doing though she may not have thought

through *why* she needed to push us toward some brink in reason. These koan-like expressions in ED are not ineptitude as the critics suggest. They are the product of her seclusion and of her inner journey.

The full range of absurd phrases may be grouped in three stages of increasing nonsense :

<i>1st stage</i>	<i>2nd. stage*</i>
<i>Bona fide Tropes</i> (figures of speech)	<i>Oxymoronic Stage</i> (a figure of speech with self-contradictory meaning)
Experiment of Green 1333	paralyzing Bliss 756
Hour of Lead 341	more inner than the Bone 321
Banks of Noon 328	pain has an Element of Blank 650
Zero at the Bone 986	Infinities of Nought 458
Through Centuries of Nerve 341	Death's ethereal Scorn 521
wantoned with a Bone 479	Heresies of transport 1279
Death's Democratic fingers 970	Dimity Convictions 401
Dirks of Melody 1420	
Cellars of the Soul 1225	

* Stages two and three rapidly decline in meaning, until in the "koan" column, there is an absurd group of words on which "the eye cannot focus".

Emily Dickinson's Oriental Heresies Evident in Technique

3rd stage

Koan-like Absurdities

(the refusal to mean)

Decades of arrogance 287	Gazing Grain 712
quenching in Purple 228	Miles of Stare 320
Acres of Perhaps 698	Robin in your Brain 634
Chips of Blank 639	Paragraphs of Wind 1175
Trick of Lily 649	I lingered with Before 609
Alabaster Zest 1384	Silver Reticence 778
Germ's Germ 998	Prodigal of Blue 1045
Geometric joy 652	Neighborhoods of Pause 1159
Capsule of the Wind 998	an Aptitude for Bird 478
Equipage of Amber 603	a dotted Dot 617

Summary

We have challenged three premises in Western Dickinson criticism.

1) Critics have indicated "We will never know where Dickinson got the rich quality of her mind" (Tate). We have shown that we can surmise a great deal about why ED wrote as she did and about what contributed to her mind when we draw parallels between ED's and Japan's history of withdrawal.

2) "Anyone who defines art in negatives is lost before he [or she] begins" (MacLeish). We have looked at a number of disparaging scholarly comments on ED's technique : on her use of intuition, on her poem endings and on her absurd phrases. We have shown that some of the negative evaluation of her work is a bias on the part of Western literary critics. Similar techniques are present in Japanese art and literature. In ED they can therefore be recognized and appreciated in a more positive light.

3) Finally, we have shown that the phrase "There is 'something Oriental' in Dickinson" (Frye) is actually an understatement. ED's art and Japanese art have much in common. Regard of the world as a microcosm is an Oriental thread throughout the canon. It is the fiber that holds the cloth together. This fact will be even further substantiated when we take up ED's sense of being and of time.

We conclude that the many Oriental heresies in ED's art are the product of her seclusion, just as many of Japan's aesthetic tastes are a product of its isolation. Examined side by side, ED's and Japan's mirror effect on each other is striking and instructive to the deeper understanding of both.

(From a lecture presented at the 24 th meeting of the American Literature Society of Japan, October 10, 1986, Sapporo.)

Appendix 1

Jintaro Kataoka thinks that for the past fifty centuries three world views have dominated human thought : the super-theistic view of Jewish society and Medieval Catholicism ; the humanistic view of European culture and the cosmological one of Confucianism, Buddhism and other Oriental beliefs. With these as a foundation, Kataoka can assign certain cultural values to the East and to the West which he does by setting up antithetical word pairs that "describe at large" attributes respectively.

It can be rather quickly ascertained from these cultural groupings that ED's poetry aligns itself with the Japanese "side" for the most part.

<i>Japan</i>		<i>West</i>
intuition	vs.	logic
simplicity	vs.	complexity
synthesis	vs.	analysis
emotionalism	vs.	rationalism
pity	vs.	love
group	vs.	individual
stillness	vs.	activity
non-self	vs.	self
quiet taste	vs.	practicality
irregularity	vs.	regularity
subjectivity	vs.	objectivity
life	vs.	death
minor tone	vs.	major tone
love of nature	vs.	love of human beings

from Jintaro Kataoka. *An Analytical Approach to Comparative Literature* (Tokyo : Shinozaki Shorin, 1970) pp. 121-23.

Notes

1. Northrop Frye, *Fables of Identity. Studies in Poetic Mythology* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1963), p. 196.
2. Archibald MacLeish discusses Chinese poet Lu Chi's understanding of poetry and then compares his tone and style with that of ED, *Poetry and Experience* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Riverside Press, 1960) pp. 4-9, 112. Henry Wells finds "...her metaphysical or mystical insight has many analogues in Chinese lyrics. Her extraordinary delicacy and succinctness are even more clearly paralleled in translations of Japanese hokku...", *Introduction to Emily Dickinson* (New York: Henricks House, Inc., 1947) p. 120. See Akira Kawano, "Emily Dickinson's Poetry and Haiku," *Sanga* Nov., 1977, No. 20 pp. 7-11; and Miriam Anne Skey, "Emily Dickinson and Haiku Poets: Similarities in Their Poetic Form and Technique," *Kiyo*, Shizuoka Eiwa Jogakuin Tanki Daigaku, 1969, pp. 185-198 for haiku discussion. Amy Horiuchi treats Zen connections in *Possible Zen Traits in Emily Dickinson's Perception* (Kawagoe: Toya University, 1978).
3. Hazel Durnell, *Japanese Cultural Influences on American Poetry and Drama* (Tokyo: The Hokuseido Press, 1983) p. 18. Durnell also posits that Oriental influences evident in Emerson's Transcendentalism may have been absorbed second-hand by ED, pp. 22-3.
4. Henry Wells, *Introduction to Emily Dickinson*, p. 164.
5. Allen Tate thinks "We will never know where [Dickinson] got the rich quality of her mind," "Emily Dickinson" in Richard B. Sewall, ed., *Emily Dickinson* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1963) p. 19. Wells says she writes as an Imagist - before they were formed; she is like the French symbolists, who came after her. "Like Poe, Emily Dickinson strangely anticipated French poets of whom she was never to hear," p. 122. "That

her realistic and rebellious poetry shares something with Donne's lyrics, is of course, apparent . . . there is no evidence that she knew Donne. . . ." p.127. David Higgins thinks Emily Dickinson's prose so original that the closest approximation of her style are Emerson's journals "which she cannot have read." *Portrait of Emily Dickinson: The Poet and Her Prose* (New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 1967) p. 74 in Sharon Cameron, *Lyric Time. Dickinson and the Limits of Genre* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), note # 14, p. 262. Frye thought "The aphoristic style of the later letters, is, if slightly more frequent in Continental literature, extremely rare in England and America, yet she seems to have developed it without models or influences," *Fables of Identity*, p. 206. Karl Keller discusses the "power of tease" in ED, as he calls it. "Emily Dickinson had it--a way of writing, of reaching, of staying, of having without being had. Where in all literature could she have found it? I think she came by it inadvertently." "Notes on Sleeping with Emily Dickinson," p. 72 in Suzanne Juhasz, *Feminist Critics Read Emily Dickinson* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1983).

6. Dickinson's poems throughout the paper are numbered according to the standard system in and are taken from the editions by Thomas H. Johnson, *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, The Belknap Press, 1958).
7. Although most readers will have rather firmly in mind what are "Oriental attributes", Jintaro Kataoka's summary of Eastern values are provided in Appendix 1. Nevertheless, setting up word pairs such as "life" (Eastern) over against "death" (Western) is a little appalling and reveals the weakness of the method. For it could certainly be argued that "death" relates to the Japanese concept of "mu" --nothingness--and should be

Oriental, supporting the observation that ED is much preoccupied with death in her poetry. While the word pair polarities leave much to be desired, they are still instructive and, in considering ED's attributes as a whole, overwhelmingly consign her to the Oriental sphere.

8. Alfred Kazin, *An American Procession. The Major American Writers from 1830-1930--The Crucial Century* (New York: Vintage Books, 1984) xiii.
9. Juhasz, p. 1.
10. David Porter, *Dickinson. The Modern Idiom* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981) p. 151.
11. John F. Lynen, "Three Uses of the Present: The Historian's, The Critic's and Emily Dickinson's" *College English*, 28, No. 2 (Nov., 1966) p. 129.
12. R. P. Blackmur, "Emily Dickinson: Notes on Prejudice and Fact," in Caesar R. Blake and Carlton F. Wells, eds. *The Recognition of Emily Dickinson* (Ann Arbor: The Univ. of Michigan Press, 1964) p. 201 ff.
13. Yvor Winters, "Emily Dickinson and the Limits of Judgment," in Paul J. Ferlazzo, ed. *Critical Essays on Emily Dickinson* (Boston: Mass: G. K. Hall & Co., 1984) p. 94.
14. Archibald MacLeish, *Poetry and Experience*, p. 23.
15. David Porter, *The Modern Idiom*, p. 16.
16. Thomas H. Johnson, *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*, vol. 3, p. 1053.
17. David Porter, *The Modern Idiom*, p. 119.
18. Porter, p. 119.
19. Porter devalues this Dickinson statement because "Circumference" doesn't fit into his Western philosophical concepts and understanding of time. He says her "'Circumference' is a catch-all word. It has no ties to reality." *The Modern Idiom*, p. 60.
20. Robert E. Spiller, "Art and the Inner Life" in Paul J. Ferlazzo,

- ed., *Critical Essays on Emily Dickinson* (Boston, Mass., G. K. Hall & Co., 1984) p. 112.
21. While we recognize Thoreau's retreat to Walden, Hawthorne's withdrawal instincts, Voltaire's need for "a garden" as examples of other literary figures' using withdrawal for art's sake, these are not as thorough-going as the Japan-ED analogy. See Niel Kjaer's comparison of ED and Soren Kierkegaard's solitary mannerisms in a discussion of ED as "The Poet of the Moment in" *Dickinson Studies*, No. 59, 1936, pp. 46-9.
 22. Alfred J. Gelpi recognizes the universality of ED's miniature sketching when he says that "The narrow circle of her consciousness contained, explicitly and implicitly, much that was convulsing and would convulse the American mind. "*Emily Dickinson. The Mind of the Poet.* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966) p. 5.
 23. Donald Keene, *Japanese Literature. An Introduction for Western Readers.* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1955), p. 30.
 24. Porter, *The Modern Idiom*, p. 37.
 25. Donald Keene, *Japanese Literature*, p. 29.
 26. Porter, *The Modern Idiom*, p. 97.
 27. In *Collected Haikai Theory*, edited by T. Komiya and S. Yokozawa, 3rd edition, Tokyo Iwanami, 1951, p. 91 and quoted in Kenneth Yasuda, *The Japanese Haiku* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1973) p. 5.
 28. Earl Miner, *The Japanese Tradition in British and American Literature* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1958) p. 113.
 29. R. P. Blackmur, "Emily Dickinson: Notes on Prejudice and Fact," p. 215.
 30. Kenneth Yasuda, *The Japanese Haiku* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1973) p. 4.
 31. John F. Lynen, "Three Uses of the Present: The Historian's, The Critic's and Emily Dickinson's," p. 128.

32. Archibald MacLeish, "The Private World" in Blake & Carlton, eds., *The Recognition of Emily Dickinson*, p. 302.
33. David Porter, *The Modern Idiom*, p. 119.
34. Japanese readers will hardly need to be reminded that in the Zen tradition the Zen master gives a novice a koan, an outrageous statement such as "What is the sound of one hand clapping?" The pupil concentrates on this group of words, which, because of their absurdity, may help remove unnecessary debris out of thought and mind and pave the way for satori— a sudden flash of insight or of mystical experience. See Thomas Hoover, *Zen Culture*. (New York: Random House, 1977), pp. 50-1.
35. Henry Wells discusses ED's mysticism in *Introduction to Emily Dickinson*, pp. 157-163. In addition mystics typically give much attention to detail, to the world seen as a microcosm and to a need to arrest a moment in time through a mystical experience according to Ursula Howard, "The Mystical Trends in the Poetry of Emily Dickinson and Annette Von Droste-Hulshoff" (Urbana, Ill.: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1974) unpublished Ph.D thesis p. 43.

Louise Bogan connects ED and the miniature to her search for mystical encounter when she says, "As her life goes on, everything becomes whittled down, evanescent. Her handwriting becomes a kind of fluid print: her poems become notations; all seem to be on the point of disappearing." "A Mystical Poet" in Richard B. Sewall, ed. *Emily Dickinson. A Collection of Essays*. (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963, p. 143. R. H. Blyth singles out ED's "In insecurity to lie/Is Joy's insuring quality" as a Zen example of "being annihilated with annihilation" at which he says ED is better than Blake, p. 295. *Zen in English Literature and Oriental Classics* (Tokyo: The Hokuseido Press, 1942).

Amy Horiuchi's important chapter on "Zen Conceptions

Emily Dickinson's Oriental Heresies Evident in Technique

Reflected in Emily Dickinson's Poetry" also substantiates the Oriental aspects of her mystical pursuit. *Possible Zen Traits in Emily Dickinson's Perception*, pp. 334-469.

Finally, for indications that ED's awareness that mystical experience involves cataclysm--satori or enlightenment equivalents--see poems # 1581 and 974 : "the Crash without a Sound," "Flash--Click--Suddenness."

Selected Bibliography .

- Blake, Caesar R. & Carlton F. Wells, eds. *The Recognition of Emily Dickinson*. Ann Arbor : The Univ. of Michigan Press, 1964.
- Blyth, R. H. *Zen in English Literature and Oriental Classics*. Tokyo : The Hokuseido Press, 1942.
- Cameron, Sharon. *Lyric Time. Dickinson and the Limits of Genre*. Baltimore : The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979.
- Durnell, Hazel. *Japanese Cultural Influences on American Poetry and Drama*. Tokyo : The Hokuseido Press, 1983.
- Ferlazzo, Paul J., ed. *Critical Essays on Emily Dickinson*. Boston, Mass. : G. K. Hall & Co., 1984.
- Frye, Northrop. *Fables of Identity. Studies in Poetic Mythology*. New York : Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1963.
- Gelpi, Alfred J. *Emily Dickinson. The Mind of the Poet*. Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard Univ. Press, 1966.
- Hoover, Thomas. *Zen Culture*. New York : Random House, 1977.
- Horiuchi, Amy. *Possible Zen Traits in Emily Dickinson's Perception*. Kawagoe : Tokyo Univ. Press, 1978.
- Inada, Katsuhiko. *Emily Dickinson : Strategies for Immortality*. Tokyo : Kinseido, Ltd., 1985.
- Johnson, Thomas J., ed. *The Letters of Emily Dickinson*. 3 vols. Cambridge, Mass. : The Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 1958.

- _____. *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*. 3 vols.
Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard Univ.
Press, 1955.
- Juhasz, Suzanne. *Feminist Critics Read Emily Dickinson*.
Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana Univ. Press, 1983.
- Kataoka, Jintaro. *An Analytical Approach to Comparative Literature*.
Tokyo: Shinozaki Shorin, 1970.
- Kawano, Akira. "Emily Dickinson's Poetry and Haiku," *Sanga*,
(Nov., 1977) pp. 7-11.
- Kazin, Alfred. *An American Procession. The Major American
Writers from 1830-1930--The Crucial Century*. New York:
Vintage, 1984.
- Keene, Donald. *Japanese Literature. An Introduction for Western
Readers*. Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1955.
- Lynen, John, "Three Uses of the Present: The Historian's, the Critic's
and Emily Dickinson's," *College English*, 28 (Nov., 1966) pp.
126-36.
- MacLeish, Archibald. *Poetry and Experience*. Cambridge, Mass.:
The Riverside Press, 1960.
- Miner, Earl. *The Japanese Tradition in British and American Literature*.
Princeton, N. J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1958.
- Porter, David T. *The Art of Emily Dickinson's Early Poetry*. Cam-
bridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1966.
- _____. *Dickinson. The Modern Idiom*. Cam-
bridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1981.
- Sewall, Richard B., ed. *Emily Dickinson. A Collection of Critical
Essays*. Englewood Cliffs, N. Y.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963.
- Key, Miriam Anne, "Emily Dickinson and Haiku Poets: Similarities
in Their Poetic Form and Technique," *The Annual Reports of
Studies*, vol. 2, (Oct. 30, 1969) pp. 198-85.
- Wells, Henry W. *Introduction to Emily Dickinson*. New York:
Henricks House, Inc., 1947.

Emily Dickinson's Oriental Heresies Evident in Technique

Yasuda, Kenneth. *The Japanese Haiku. Its Essential Nature, History, and Possibilities in English with Selected Examples.* Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1957.