

Emily Dickinson and Japan : When Seclusion Chooses the Art

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Introduction

We can hardly bring the Dickinson centenary in Japan to a close without reverting to a question posed by Dr. Ruth Miller, one of the guest lecturers at the December 1986 Emily Dickinson Society commemoration in Tokyo. At a party fifty-three floors above the bustle of Shinjuku streets, Miller asked the circle of Japanese scholars around her why such a large number of people in this country are committed to Dickinson studies. (There are already one hundred fifty members in the six-year old Society.) The query was not much more complicated than something like "Why is Dickinson so highly appreciated here?" One expected the Japanese to fall all over themselves in their eagerness to enlighten Miller.

Instead, "The Silence- -like an Ocean rolled- -" : the reticence would have warmed Dickinson's heart. As I recall, no one produced a tidbit or fact for Miller's perusal. Not because these persons weren't capable in English- -they were all either personal

acquaintances or people I had just met and had conversed with in English, finding them competent on a range of subjects. Just as remarkable as the Japanese silence was my own. Only an iota of Oriental *enryo*- -constraint- -reluctantly acquired as an American living here for twenty-five years, kept me from pouring out on the spot my theories on why we love Dickinson. Ever since whenever I recall this aborted occasion, I have been alternately exasperated with the opportunity missed and fascinated with the implications of Miller's question for Dickinson studies.

Persons familiar with Japanese group dynamics might suggest that psychological and sociological determiners such as who speaks first or who has the most authority in a given assembly were the stymieing factors in this situation. (Although I find that my Japanese academic acquaintances are usually the least bound by traditional social conventions.)

There may be some academic threshold on which the Japanese have been discussing why they appreciate Dickinson ; if so, it has not yet come to my attention. I suspect that, although the Japanese intuitively know why they are devoted to Dickinson, their priorities lie not in reporting these feelings, but with aspects of Dickinson scholarship of their own choosing. On the December occasion their silence might genuinely have been surprise that they would be called on to explain themselves.

There may be a more subtle aspect to the silence. "We have so much in common with Dickinson" might have been one reply to Miller's question. That such a sentiment was not forthcoming is a clue to an aspect of their commonalities at work : the Japanese, like Dickinson, "don't speak things like the rest."¹ I believe that consciously or unconsciously, Japanese readers have discovered an artistic and emotional affinity with Dickinson that is, for the most part, unparalleled in Western students of the Amherst poet. If this is true, it has implications for our understanding of Dickinson's

position in the world of letters.

Problems with Commonalities

Problems arise when we consider what Dickinson and Japan may have in common. Dickinson herself fends off scrutiny of her person. In 1862, at the height of her creative powers, she wrote to Thomas W. Higginson, "When I state myself, as Representative of the Verse--it does not mean--me but a supposed person." (L 268)² Later in her life she observed wittily, "Biography--assures us of the fleeing of the--Biographed." (L 972) These would seem to be indications more of a sense of privacy than of the real situation. Dickinson manipulates facts to suit herself. In 1862 she wrote Higginson, "I made no verse--but one or two--this winter--Sir--" (L 261)--a period when she was averaging a poem a day. Nor can we take as simple truth her comment to Higginson on publishing "as being foreign to my thought as Firmament to Fin--" (L 265). Here is the Dickinson who tells the truth, but "tells it slant;" it is "Uncle Emily's ardor for the lie" as she once spoke of herself. (L 315)

Apart from the self-protection Dickinson draws around her work is the more general problem of using biographical inferences as a critical method. Yet Allen Tate comments, "There is none of whom it is truer to say that the poet is the poetry."³

It is a common Eastern assumption that the artist and his or her milieu are inseparable from their work. Shuichi Kato describes Japanese culture as one of having its aesthetic values at the center with a close relationship between art and daily life.⁴ With such an Eastern assumption of a high level of integration, Dickinson's daily routine is viewed in its aesthetic wholeness. Her close affinity with nature, with her yard and garden are noted. The disarming Japanese charm of the host presenting the guest with a gift is played out when Dickinson offers Higginson day lilies on his rare meeting

with the poet.

Especially her “costume”- -the white dresses; also her prolific output (at the height of her powers Dickinson was writing a poem a day, a not uncommon Japanese standard); and the juxtaposition of poetry in her letters- -all these suggest the fastidiousness and artistic refinement first recorded in Heian court tradition and continuing in some measure in Japan to the present.⁵ The irony of Richard Sewall’s “She is the summation of a culture,”⁶ is that the Japanese bring an “ah” of recognition to that statement far removed from his intention.

The grounds for the Japanese “ah” of recognition specifically concerning Dickinson’s technique are pointed out elsewhere,⁷ indicating that in areas where she falls short of Western literary standards, she is often strong in an Eastern aesthetic perception of one kind or another. To identify these Japanese nuances in Dickinson is to elaborate on what Northrop Frye calls the “. . .something Oriental about her manner of existence.”⁸

Just as recent feminist scholarship brings revisionary criteria to Dickinson,⁹ it can also be shown that recognition of the “something Oriental” furnishes new insight on Dickinson in areas where she has seemed most enigmatic and inscrutable.

In addition to the biographical aspect, another problem in considering parallels of Dickinson and Japan is the embarrassing fact that generally the Japanese know more about the West than Westerners know of East Asian history and thought. With this paucity of awareness, it may boggle a Westerner’s imagination to compare a person- -Emily Dickinson- -with a people- -the Japanese, because the homogeneous aspect of the Japanese is not fully appreciated. In post-War Japan homogeneity is breaking down. To the extent that it has been a part of the Japanese national psyche for centuries, however, it has deeply molded the development of art and

culture.

The general failure of lay persons in the West to inform themselves and to understand Eastern culture is not only embarrassing ; in the case of Japanese economic successes on an international scale, the West shows outright bewilderment and perhaps defensiveness. Robert Smith describes the manner in which Westerners feel threatened when he says that Japan has not only “challenged us in our most cherished certitude of organizational and technological superiority” – it has furthermore arrived at its present position in the world “by another route, acting on different premises and proceeding in a direction we have not taken.”¹⁰

Without dwelling on the uniqueness of this differing economic route--the premise of Smith’s book--we may see that in some ways this statement on Japan’s economic genius also describes the challenge we encounter in Dickinson. She, too, has defied our cherished notions of literary excellence and by “another route” – what the Japanese recognize as a course often embracing their own aesthetic values--has produced a unique and satisfying art.

Seclusion, the “Other Route”

The “other route” which creates analogies between Dickinson and Japan, and which, to a large extent has determined both their characters, is the road of isolation. In neither situation has it been complete, but in formative periods for Dickinson and for Japan, withdrawal or the absence of normal concourse with society, greatly determined their psychological and aesthetic development. In Dickinson’s case it is a prime factor in contributing an Oriental “aura” to her life and work. To use the well-known Dickinson critic David Porter’s apt phrase, for both Japan and the New England poet “Seclusion chose the art.”¹¹

Increasingly Dickinson distanced herself from Amherst society,

spending close to thirty years in a state of withdrawal. At twenty-three she wrote her friend Abiah Root, "I... don't go from home, unless emergency leads me by the hand, and then I do it obstinately, and draw back if I can. Should I ever leave home, which is improbable, I will with much delight, accept your invitation" (L 166). At twenty-eight she reminds her cousin, Louise Norcross, "...you are one of the ones from whom I do not run away!" (L 199) When Dickinson is thirty-nine, she assures Higginson, "... I do not cross my Father's ground to any House or Town" (L 330).

At fifty she plays with the idea that she has retreated from Amherst's consciousness. Seemingly without regret Dickinson tells her cousins how the delivery of their letter was held up because it was addressed to the "Misses Dickinson." Had it been sent only to her sister Lavinia, it would have been delivered, but two Dickinson addressees confounded the postmaster who only knows "by faith who Emily is" (L 727).

The self-conscious standing off from others is celebrated in Dickinson's poetry, most notably in the well-known poem # 303.

The Soul selects her own Society- -
Then- -shuts the Door- -
To her divine Majority- -
Present no more- -

Unmoved- -she notes the Chariots- -pausing- -
At her low Gate- -
Unmoved an Emperor be kneeling
Upon her Mat- -

I've known her- -from an ample nation- -
Choose One- -
Then- -close the Valves of her attention- -
Like Stone- -

In other poems a similar haughty stance can be traced. “The Soul’s Superior instants/Occur to Her- -alone- -/When friend- -and Earth’s occasion- -/Have infinite withdrawn- -(P 306) ; and :

Exhilaration- -is within- -
There can no Outer Wine
So royally intoxicate
As that diviner Brand

The Soul achieves- -Herself- - (P 383)

Another example of aloneness is, “Deprived of other Banquet,/I entertained Myself” (P 773).

Whatever the reason for Dickinson’s aloof life-style,¹² in Japan’s case the causes of isolation are more evident. It is likely no other people in history have been so deeply influenced by natural geographic isolation as Japan experienced in the positioning of its archipelago. Edwin Reischauer cites the effect of isolation on the Japanese nation as second only to its favorable climate in the shaping of Japanese history.¹³

Not only did this phenomenon of nature “deprive of other banquet” (although there were periods when borrowings from Korea and China were extensive), during the Tokugawa Era (1620-1867) the doors to the world were intentionally closed. The Japanese soul, in artificial seclusion, “selected its own society.”

Examining some of the by-products of isolation that Reischauer lists and noting their influence on Japan, the parallel routes “a people”- -Japan- -and “a person”- -Dickinson- -have taken become more evident. Japanese scholars’ deep affinity for Dickinson takes on new significance.

For reasons of space in this paper the Dickinson/Japan analogies are limited to discussing the contribution of withdrawal to 1)

inventiveness and to 2) the transcendental faith of Zen. However, to follow Reischauer's list, other aspects such as sense of uniqueness, sense of superiority and of inferiority, and family fusion could also be explored.

Inventiveness

First of all, for Japan and for Dickinson, isolation and withdrawal from the world permitted both to develop in their own way. A narrowing effect took place psychologically and aesthetically, producing uniqueness and inventiveness.

The Japanese people, while they enjoy many similarities with other Asians, are still culturally distinctive even from their near neighbors, the Koreans and Chinese. Whether architecture, clothing, or cuisine in general, or bonsai, tea ceremony, and court music in particular, there is ample evidence that "...isolation has probably forced [the Japanese] to invent a greater part of their culture and develop a more distinctive set of characteristics than almost any comparable unit of people in the world."¹⁴

Similarly, Dickinson is intentionally (but not completely) original--"[I]...never consciously touch a paint, mixed by another person" (L 271), was her private assumption, perhaps, but her real genius lay in adaptivity and in the inventiveness early observed and negatively viewed. Her tampering with the hymn form and the flagrant "failure" to rhyme appropriately; her license in the distinctive use of dashes and capitalization; the "mystical" nature of her more obscure work, particularly those poems withheld by various editors until the complete edition appeared in 1955--these were significant factors that kept her work, except for a handful of poems, from publication in her lifetime.

Through their withdrawal both Dickinson and Japan narrow

down the commonly perceived image of the artist working through his or her Muse into a particular aesthetic principle regarding the solitary. "Aloneness," says Daisetz T. Suzuki, foremost Zen spokesperson to the West, "belongs to the East and is at home in the environment of its birth."¹⁵ It is a prerequisite for a Zen experience, that is, for the individual's quest for enlightenment and for unity with the Ground of Being- -the conscious goal of the temple monk, the more unconscious agenda of all Japanese art.

For the Japanese a *wabi* attitude toward life best exemplifies this psychological aloneness. *Wabi* is a subjective stance embracing solitariness and poverty, simultaneous terms in Eastern thought. *Wabi*-poverty is freedom from dependence on material wealth, power, and reputation. It is

to be apart...from the fashionable society of the times...to feel inwardly the presence of something of the highest value...not richness of ideas, not brilliancy or solemnity in marshaling thoughts and building up a philosophical system...but...quietly content with the contemplation of Nature.¹⁶

Or, as Dickinson puts it :

The worthlessness of Earthly things
The Ditty is that Nature sings- -
And then- -enforces their delight
Till Synods are inordinate- - (P 1373)

Or, again, as she wrote Higginson, "My life has been too simple and stern to embarrass any" (L 330); while on another occasion, it was "We hope to see you- -Our poverty- -entitle us- -and friends are nations in themselves- -to supersede the earth- -" (L 277). The world of acquaintances maintained through Dickinson's voluminous correspondence is a "stern" invention on isolation; it is

her psychological control on aloneness.

Thomas H. Johnson recognizes the “frugality” of this New England/Oriental poverty as Dickinson’s style of aloneness. He sees her rejection of society as both physically and psychically “total.”

It was her kind of economy, a frugality she sought in order to make the most of her world, to focus, to come to grips with those universals which increasingly concerned her.¹⁷

Japan and Dickinson’s understanding of poverty are not synonymous, but her unconscious *wabi*-attitude toward reality resulted in the use of the concise, brief, and elusive language that comprises her letters and poems. For the most part, Western critics fail to find in them a satisfying “marshaling of thoughts” and a meaningful “philosophical system.” Rather, they are brought up short against “those universals which increasingly concerned her,” her Zen values.

The Transcendental Faith of Zen

In addition to her inventiveness, Dickinson’s metaphysical agenda, gleaned perhaps from reading Emerson (whose Oriental flavor is hailed by Suzuki¹⁸), and further nurtured by her withdrawal, increasingly reveals itself in terminology that suggests the pursuit of a Zen cosmic consciousness. At twenty she writes of “knowing the world was *hollow*” (L 46); at thirty-three she tells her sister-in-law Sue, “There is no first, or last, in Forever—It is Centre, there, all the time—” (L 288); in 1866 to Mrs. J. G. Holland, “The Landscape of the Spirit requires a lung, but no Tongue” (L 315); to Samuel Bowles when she is forty-six, “It is strange that the most intangible thing is the most adhesive” (L 515); while to Higginson that same year, Dickinson remarks, “We must be less than Death, to be lessened

by it--for nothing is irrevocable but ourselves" (L 519). In 1880 Dickinson tells Maria Whitney, "I am constantly more astonished that the Body contains the Spirit--" (L 643); while to Higginson, "Most of our Moments are Moments of Preface--" (L 641). "Is it oblivion or absorption when things pass from our minds?" (L 432b), is a typical Zen-like attitude.

It is the Zen-like aspects of Dickinson's verse, however, that have been noted by scholars in Japan, most thoroughly in Amy Horiuchi's *Possible Zen Traits in Emily Dickinson's Perception*, but also in others.¹⁹ Perhaps the ultimate example of Dickinson's *wabi* longing for union with the cosmos is expressed in poem #378 in which Horiuchi says Dickinson depends on Zen-like intuition as her connection to reality.²⁰

I saw no Way--The Heavens were stitched--
I felt the Columns close--
The Earth reversed her Hemispheres--
I touched the Universe--

And back it slid--and I alone--
A speck upon a Ball--
Went out upon Circumference--
Beyond the Dip of Bell--

When she "touches the universe," she does it "alone" on the boundary of "Circumference," that ubiquitous Dickinsonian term, and in the aesthetic location of "Dip of Bell"; it is a Zen-like experience, not a rational one.

Dickinson can, however, be more earthbound in her seemingly Zen-like vocabulary.

Within that little Hive
Such Hints of Honey lay

As made Reality a Dream
And Dreams, Reality - - (P 1607)

The gift of honey to which Dickinson refers when she encloses this poem in a letter to Mrs. J. G. Holland is a bona fide object about which the poet's thoughts spin off into language fluctuating between reality and non-reality. Zen expression for Japan also, is both cosmic and local, closely bound up with nature and with the beauty so central to the Japanese aesthetic sense. Reischauer points out that too often Westerners, especially Americans, have over-emphasized the smallness of Japan. If size is a limitation, it is also an asset. Japan's coastlines, mountains, and lush vegetation make it one of the beauty spots of the world. "Perhaps this is one reason why the Japanese throughout history have shown a high degree of artistic appreciation and creativity."²¹

Dickinson also narrowly drew her geographic boundaries to include a lush world of Amherst yard, garden, and sky. Her affinity with nature²² not only expresses itself often in Zen-like pronouncements on reality and state of being, it also relates to her choice of ethical terms and to a religious vocabulary with a Zen-type of essence.

The Japanese in their seclusion developed a similar attitude toward art, religion, and ethics. Kato says "the transcendental faith of Zen" over the years in Japan dissolved into

poetry, theater, painting, the aesthetics of tea (the style of *wabi*), in one word, into art. The art of Muromachi Japan was not influenced by Zen. Zen became the art.²³

In Dickinson there are obtuse phrases in the poetry and letters that juxtapose ethical, even Puritan terminology in relation to nature in a manner that baffles Western (but not necessarily Eastern) sensibilities. Once she avowed "Nature is 'old-fashioned,' perhaps a

Puritan- -” (L 706), and also declared “Vails [veils] of Kamtchatka dim the Rose- -in my Puritan Garden” (L 685).

In a classic example of a passage on nature, beauty, and ethics irretrievably entwined and therefore usually quoted piecemeal because as a whole it fails to make sense to the orderly Western mind, Dickinson wrote Higginson saying she is awaiting his advice.

And for this, Preceptor, I shall bring you- -Obedience- -
the Blossom from my Garden, and every gratitude I
know. Perhaps you smile at me. I could not stop for
that- -My business is Circumference- -An ignorance,
not of Customs, but if caught with the Dawn- -or the
Sunset see me- -Myself the only Kangaroo among the
Beauty, Sir, if you please, it afflicts me, and I thought
that instruction would take it away. (L 268)

This language of nature, beauty, and hyperbole with which Dickinson reaches out to Higginson from her self-imposed state of aloneness is more concisely rounded off, but with no less intensity, in her poetry.

Between My Country- -and the Others- -
There is a Sea- -
But Flowers- -negotiate between us- -
As Ministry. (P 905)

We know this statement is both literal and figurative because Dickinson sent little clusters and bouquets of flowers as gifts to “others.” From her side of the sea of separation she links nature to such religious vocabulary as “obedience” or “ministry.” This juxtaposition hovers near the surface of her ethical consciousness as is evident in “Flowers are so enticing I fear that they are sins- -like gambling or apostasy” (PF 43).

In Dickinson at some ethical core of her personality there is a longing for grace, entwined with nature and beauty which often seems to parallel the Oriental pursuit of enlightenment. Suzuki describes how Zen attitudes unite beauty, nature, and being so that the artist gets

a glimpse of things eternal in the world of constant changes...we look into the secrets of Reality. The mystery of being is not attainable by intellectual analysis or conscious scheming. It is an act of divine grace, from the Christian point of view; an experience of satori- -enlightenment- -from the Zen stance.²⁴

Suzuki's "act of divine grace" and Zen enlightenment would seem to be deeply related if not equivalent: in Dickinson, grace's association with nature is varied as in

My season's furthest Flower- -
I tenderer commend
Because I found Her Kinsmanless,
A Grace without a Friend. (P 1019)

Here we experience the equivalency of flower/grace; while in other poems grace is more startling, even metaphorically chilling: October is "Without, perhaps, the Riot/But graphicker for Grace- -" (P 1422); and "The Morning foreign shone- -/A courteous, yet harrowing Grace" (P 1540).

Grace has this role in relation to nature and being in the well-known poem # 1068 :

Further in Summer than the Birds
Pathetic from the Grass

A minor Nation celebrates
Its unobtrusive Mass.

No Ordinance be seen
So gradual the Grace
A pensive Custom it becomes
Enlarging Loneliness.

Antiquiest felt at Noon
When August burning low
Arise this spectral Canticle
Repose to typify

Remit as yet no Grace
No Furrow on the Glow
Yet a Druidic Difference
Enhances Nature now

Words such as summer, birds, grass, and nature are interwoven with the religious ritualistic terms of celebration, mass, ordinance, custom, and canticle. They are held together by two “graces,” “gradual the Grace” and “Remit as yet no Grace,” which swiftly move the emotion past “No Furrow on the Glow” into a “Druidic Difference.” The primitive magical properties of this phrase invite the reader to retreat to an early Celtic religious motif. Suzuki on Zen also finds that “Easterners live closer to pristine experiences of reality than those people who have highly developed their systems of analysis and abstraction.”²⁵

Without so much as using the term “grace” Dickinson longs for it in language that is satisfying to the Zen mentality. “Sumptuous Destitution” is nameless and, true to Zen principles, cannot be actively pursued: “Profane it by a search— we cannot/”.

In many and reportless places
We feel a Joy- -
Reportless, also, but sincere as Nature
Or Deity- -

It comes, without a consternation- -
Dissolves- -the same- -
But leaves a sumptuous Destitution- -
Without a Name- -

Profane it by a search- -we cannot
It has no home- -
Nor we who having once inhaled it- -
Thereafter roam. (P 1382)

“Harrowing Grace” and “sumptuous Destitution” are oxymorons from the Western point of view ; from a Zen perspective they are possibly ultimate expressions of the experience of enlightenment in the English language.

R. H. Blyth hails another poem for its suggestion of *satori* :

Go not too near a House of Rose- -
The depredation of a Breeze
Or inundation of a Dew
Alarms its walls away- -

Nor try to tie the Butterfly,
Nor climb the Bars of Ecstasy,
In insecurity to lie
Is Joy’s insuring quality. (P 1434)

While Blyth highly evaluates Blake for his Eastern perceptions, he adds that “In insecurity to lie/Is Joy’s insuring quality” is a Zen

example of being annihilated with annihilation, and he says that Dickinson is better at this than Blake.²⁶

Perhaps Japanese scholars or specialists like Blyth are moved by the Zen aspects of “In insecurity to lie/Is Joy’s insuring quality,” but for most of her Western audience, the association with the Eastern “faith of Transcendentalism” is not made so easily. Yet Dickinson’s style, unconsciously espousing “something Oriental,” is highly compatible with the spirit of the haiku master Basho when he said, “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 To “never tire of” the ambiguity and inscrutable qualities of Dickinson’s art, is a challenge for the Western critic.

Conclusion

This paper has noted affinities, commonalities, parallels, and analogies which can be drawn between Dickinson and Japan, due to their partially insular histories and because of homogeneity on the part of the latter. Even this brief examination of Japanese aesthetic values reflected in Dickinson confirms the necessity of applying “holistic” and revisionary criteria to the New England poet. In Dickinson self, poetry, letters, and her selected environment (her room, garden, chosen friends) converge. From an Eastern perspective the artist cannot be separated from her art: the letters are regarded as “poetry,” the poetry as “the letter to the world.”

Another revisionary criterion focuses on how Dickinson’s alleged “weaknesses” can be positively viewed. When seclusion—-the selected environment—-“chooses the art,” most likely the aesthetic standards move toward “imperfections that are a form of perfection” —the style and sensibilities we find in both Dickinson and Japan.²⁸ Suzuki lists poetry, painting, theater, and other arts in which the Japanese taste requires irregularities, unbalance, omission,

suggestiveness, and economy of stroke or word to produce a satisfying emotional and artistic effect. Dickinson's inventiveness, particularly her frugality, is evident in the brevity, ellipsis, and omission--so-called "weaknesses," but actually "imperfections"--that suggest an Eastern sensibility. Likewise, what may be taken as her inadvertent longing for a Zen-like cosmic consciousness, irregular and unpredictable as it is, is one more "imperfection," shaped by a seclusive mentality and life-style. With these facts in mind and taking our cues from the development of the Japanese aesthetic character as it withdrew in varying degrees across the centuries, many heretofore Dickinson idiosyncracies can be evaluated more positively.

Notes

1. A Dickinson comment quoted by Clara Newman Turner. See Richard B. Sewall, *The Life of Emily Dickinson*, p. 273.
2. Dickinson's letters, poems, and poem fragments throughout this work are numbered according to the standard systems in and are taken from the editions by Thomas H. Johnson, *The Letters of Emily Dickinson*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 1958), and *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 1955).
3. Allen Tate, "Emily Dickinson," in Richard B. Sewall, ed., *Emily Dickinson. A Collection of Critical Essays* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 19.
4. Kato states that different kinds of art dominated Japanese culture in different periods of time, "but the close relationship between art and daily life remained unaltered." Shuichi Kato, *Form, Style, Tradition. Reflections on Japanese Art and Society* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1981), p. 5.

5. See chapter IX, "The Rule of Taste" in George Sansom, *A History of Japan to 1334* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1974 edition).
6. Sewall means Dickinson is a summation of New England culture. See Sewall, p. 671, note 3.
7. Mary Cender Miller, "Emily Dickinson's Oriental Heresies Evident in Technique," *Hokusei College Bulletin*, No. 24, (1986), *passim*.
8. Northrop Frye, *Fables of Identity. Studies in Poetic Mythology* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1963), p. 196.
9. Helen McNeil says "...Dickinson's poetry changes literary theory. To think about how Dickinson wrote is to experience gaps and silences in the existing models. Reading her fully means redefining those models." *Emily Dickinson* (London: Virago Press Limited, 1986), p. 4. See *Feminist Critics Read Emily Dickinson* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1983) where editor Suzanne Juhasz has assembled feminist critics whose intention is a "revisionary" and non-fragmentary approach to the poet.
10. Robert J. Smith, *Japanese Society. Tradition, Self, and the Social Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 138-39.
11. David Porter, *Dickinson. The Modern Idiom* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), p. 119.
12. See Sewall, pp. 152-57 where he summarizes various opinions the poet's family and acquaintances held regarding her seclusion.
13. Edwin Reischauer, *Japan: The Story of a Nation* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1971), p. 6.
14. Edwin Reischauer, *The Japanese* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 1977), p. 33.
15. Daizetz T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, Bollingen Foundation, Inc., 1970),

p.25.

16. Suzuki, p. 23.
17. Thomas H. Johnson, *The Letters of Emily Dickinson*, vol. 1, xx.
18. Suzuki, pp. 343-44. Of Emerson's influence on him in his youth, Suzuki writes: "...it is really wonderful to see the American mind, as represented by the exponents of Transcendentalism, even trying to probe into the abysmal darkness of the Oriental fantasy. I am now beginning to understand the meaning of the deep impressions made upon me while reading Emerson in my college days. I was not then studying [him] but digging down into the recesses of my own thought, which had been there ever since the awakening of Oriental consciousness."
19. See Amy Horiuchi, *Possible Zen Traits in Emily Dickinson's Perception*, (Kawagoe: Toyo University Press, 1978) *passim*. Shoei Ando cites a number of Dickinson's poems in *Zen and American Transcendentalism - An Investigation of One's Self* (Tokyo: The Hokuseido Press, 1970). In "Emily Dickinson and Haiku" Katsuhiko Inada also mentions her Zen connections in *Chu-Shikoku Studies in American Literature*, No. 17 (Mar. 1981), p. 17.
20. Horiuchi, p. 202.
21. Reischauer, *Japan: The Story of a Nation*, p. 4.
22. See Henry W. Wells, "Romantic Sensibility" in *Emily Dickinson*, Richard B. Sewall, ed., *passim*, for a discussion on ways in which Dickinson fails to satisfy the usual understanding of nature in Romanticism.
23. Kato, p. 5.
24. Suzuki, p. 221.
25. Suzuki, p. 25.
26. R. H. Blyth, *Zen in English Literature and Oriental Classics* (Tokyo: The Hokuseido Press, 1942), p. 295.
27. In *Collected Haikai Theory*, T. Komiya and S. Yokozawa, eds.,

3rd edition, Tokyo Iwanami, 1951, p. 91 and quoted in Kenneth Yasuda, *The Japanese Haiku* (Tokyo : Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1973), p. 5.

28. Suzuki, p. 24.

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