

CHAPTER 1

Time, Zero and Rendering of Time in Emily Dickinson's Poetry

Time is a real phenomenon a continuous change through which we live. Time becomes evident through motion; sunrise sunsets, night and day, the changing seasons, the movement of the celestial bodies all is indicative of continuous change. The aging process is a reminder that molecular motion and interactions are also at work and are a part of time. Other important aspect of time is presence of motion of particles like photon and the motion at the atomic level. An often overlooked but very important aspect of time is that forces also act in time.

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Human knowledge and existence are largely shaped by the concept of time and space. Human experiences are bound to time and space to the extent that their absence may lead to the absence of human knowledge. Time can be taken as a change not only to the state of consciousness but also to all the celestial bodies. Sun rise, sun sets, night, day, seasons all are bound to the same concept of change. Such a change may begin with the motion or the movement of a person, a thing or a place or an event. Regarding the motion stated by Einstein, Paul Davies in his *About Time* states: “Time is relative: It depends on motion, it depends on gravity” (127).

Time evolves of the state of consciousness of mind. In short, time is change or flux or mobility of the states of consciousness of mind. In his work *Creative Evolution*, Henry Bergson states that time “always considers moments, always virtual stopping—places, always, in short, immobility which amounts to saying that real time, regarded as a flux, or, in other words, as the very mobility of being, escapes the hold

of scientific knowledge” (128). Bergson is also of the opinion that time is change or mobile. The scientific time in space is discrete and divisible and hence it has no feeling or sense of the real time while the pure duration of the conscious states is continuous, flux and mobile.

Bergson furthermore highlights that time is the change of the states of consciousness. It begins with the movement of a thing or a person. For him, the pure duration of time is the evolution of the permeated states of consciousness that is reducible to the change, creation and maturity. In short, time is not a separate, divisible and discrete entity but the change of the states of consciousness. It is mobility, evolution, creation, maturation, freedom. Regarding the evolution and creation of the permeated states of consciousness, Bergson in his work *Time and Free Will* delineates time with change and states:

We have to do here not with an object but with a progress: motion, in so far as it is a passage from one point to another, is a mental synthesis, a psychic and therefore un-extended process. Space contains only parts of space, and at whatever point of space we consider the moving body, we shall get only a position. If consciousness is aware of anything more than positions, the reason is that it keeps the successive positions in mind and synthesizes them. (113)

It is obvious from the lines that time that takes place in space is discrete and divisible. Moving body that takes place in successive moment - firstly one event and then the other event or action cannot have the pure duration. In other words, the thing or the event that passes from one position to the other is divisible and cannot have the real duration. The real duration can only be felt by the permeated states of consciousness through the mental synthesis.

Time is the change of states of consciousness. It is reducible to maturity, creation or anything. Regarding this reducibility of time to maturity, creation or freedom or anything, Bergson further states in the same book: “We are seeking only the precise meaning that our consciousness gives to this word “exist,” and we find that, for a conscious being, to exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly” (10).

Time, in Bergson’s opinion, is the evolution of the permeated states of consciousness that is reduced into any desired senses. It is not discrete and divisible but continuous. Reducing time into anything or any senses like creation, freedom makes it continuous. In short, time in space is discrete but the time of the conscious states of mind is continuous and it evolves to maturity, creation or any other qualitative braches of knowledge like progress, development, salvation, nirvana etc.

The idea that time is change and it begins with the motion can be shown from the variety of sources. In Paul Davies’s *About Time* it is stated that the Roman poet-philosopher Lucretius in his first century epic *De-Rerum Natura* writes about time as:

And likewise time cannot itself exist,

But from the flight of things we get a sense of time.

No man, we must confess, feels time itself.

But only knows of time from flight or rest of things. (23)

Time has no separate existence. It is the flight or the mobility by which the time begins. In static condition, the time cannot be felt. The flight or the mobility alone creates time. In the static condition of the things or the conscious states of mind,

the time stops. Paul Davies in his *About Time* quotes the sixteenth century mystical poet Angelus Silesious who has stated:

Time is of your own making,

Its clock ticks in your head.

The moment you stop thought

Time too stops dead. (23)

Time is in one's own mind or in his thinking. When thinking or thought begins, the time too begins for him. When the thinking stops, then the time too stops. More elaborately, the time is in the motion of a thing or of the thinking of a person. Both of the ancient poet-philosophers are of the opinion that the time does not exist in itself. It is the motion or the mobility alone that emanates time. The mobility of things makes the time discrete, divisible and linear. At the same time, if the thing is in static position or in rest, then there can be no birth of time. The similar idea is expressed by Silesious that time ends at the moment of the stopping of thought or thinking. In other words, time is mobility of thought or the consciousness of mind. If there is no thought or no feeling of the conscious states of mind, then there will not be the pure time. His concept of time does not seem to be discrete but continuous as he talks of the time of the conscious states of mind. He talks of evolution of time of thought and feeling of the permeated states of consciousness. Hence it is a continuous and, in turn, circular or cyclical time. The time that we draw from things in space is discrete and the time that we draw from the conscious states of mind is continuous and cyclical.

Even in the modern physics time is relative. It depends on motion. Albert Einstein believes that the present, the past and the future all exist simultaneously. In

1952, in his work *Relativity*, in discussing Minkowski's *Four Dimensional Space*, he writes:

Since there exists in his four dimensional structure (space-time) no longer any sections which represent 'now' objectively, the concepts of happening and becoming are indeed not completely suspended but yet complicated. It appears therefore more natural to think of physical reality as a four dimensional existence, instead of, as hitherto, the evolution of a three dimensional existence. (51-56)

The time is commonly perceived as the past, the present and the future. But the most real perception of time is the present moment. However, the present moment too is a fleeting moment. The instant present moment of time soon becomes the past. Hence, the time is only an illusion. And it is the change or the motion or the evolution in the three dimensional existence that provides the illusion of time (51-53). The combination of time as the present, the past and the future into one large block in a line looks the linear continuum of time. Thus, in discussing the structure of this experienced entity "time", we can typically picture it in two different ways – the linear and the cyclical ones.

The Linear Concept of Time

The linear time means the flow of time that moves forward from the past through present to future. It is unstoppable, continuous and discrete with a beginning and an end. In other words, the time moves forward as a straight line which would continue onward forever. In the linear time, one can move forward in time; there is a beginning and an end in it. But one cannot go back in time or in past from it.

Regarding the beginning and the end of the linear time, Philosophy Forum writes:

“when there is linear, you can only move forward in time, there is a beginning and there must be an end. You cannot go back in time, although you can move far into the future” (1).

There is nothing strange in seeing the beginning and an end in the linear concept of time. Because our general concept of things or of events or of life is that what begins must end too. If there is the beginning, there must be the end too. At the same time, as the nature of it shows, there is no stopping but continuity in the linear concept of time. Christine Wright in his *Cyclical vs. Linear Time* writes: “Linear time is simply the view that time stretches onwards into space; that cannot be stopped and one cannot see the end of it, because time is infinite” (2).

The Cyclical Time

The belief that time moves in a huge cycle refers to the concept of cyclical time. It emphasizes in repetition and is very much influenced by the cycles apparent in the natural world. Life is seen as a part of endless cycle of birth and death and rebirth. Time is like a wheel spinning ceaselessly. In short, the cyclical time is continuous in contrast to the discreteness and continuity of the linear time.

The cyclical or the circular time has also the beginning and an end. One can go back to the past through present to future. But such beginning and the end is the beginning and the end of many beginnings. In other words, the beginning and the end of the cyclical time is a continual cycle of many beginnings and many ends. The time-the present, the past and the future is simply seen as a cycle. Regarding the circular time with no beginning and no end, Jeff A. Benner in his *Concepts in Time*, writes:

With a circular view of time our perspective on the beginning and end of the earth and man change. No longer is the beginning the beginning and the end the end, but a continual cycle of beginnings and endings.

While this view of time is contrary to our western way of thinking, it is consistent with other views from other cultures. The ancient Hebrew of the Bible and the people of the orient have always understood time, the past, present and future, as circular. (2)

It is obvious, that the circular time is timeless as it has no beginning, no end. And it has simply a present. One can go back into the past and go into the future reviving or reincarnating the previous era.

Another characteristic feature of the cyclical time is that it is stoppable, though its nature is ever going onwards. The events can occur over and over again in one way or another. Christine Wright in his *Cyclical vs. Linear Time* writes:

Native American time is cyclical - of, relating to, or characterized by cycles. This means, that instead of having a single line of time, going onward and onward without any stopping (as is the belief of common day America), but that time was like a circle, or a spiral. The same events would happen over and over again, in one way or another.

Time, in their sense, was stoppable. (1)

Thus, the cyclical time is ever ongoing or continuous in its nature. But it takes place by a break as the events in it have a repetitive nature. The same events can repeat one after another in the same or the other way in the cyclical concepts of time.

The next great characteristic feature of the circular time is that it is not discrete but rather continuous. The time of the conscious states of mind is continuous and not discrete one like the linear time of a thing in space. Henry Bergson views time as the continuous flow of the permeated states of consciousness of mind while for Kant, time is discrete and divisible in which one event takes place one after another dividing them. In other words, the time in the linear nature is discrete and divisible whereas the time in the circular nature is ever continuous. Regarding the discreteness of the linear time in contrast to the circular time some anonymous writers in their *The Effects of Circular and Linear Time Orientations on....* write:

Under a linear time orientation, there is a past, present, and future, and time is separable into discrete compartments and moves toward the future in a linear fashion. Under the circular time orientation, in contrast, time is not perceived as a straight line stretching from the distant past to the far future, but rather, it is seen as a circular system in which the same events are repeated according to some cyclical pattern (Graham 1981). (2)

The cyclical time in which there is no beginning and no end but a continual cycle of many beginnings and end is like the wheel of time which is infinity and which will go on forever. In short, in the cyclical time, there is no end to time and infinity is the part of one's existence. On the other hand, in the linear time, the time becomes infinite by its nature that flows continuously in a line. At the same time, the linear time is discrete with a break and the circular time is continuous without any break. The linear time is continuous forever but the cyclic time is stoppable. This means that there is no time in the circular nature of time. In short, we can see the end of time in it by its stoppable nature and hence, it is infinite. On the other hand, in the

linear time, there is infinity too but it is due to its incessant and continuous flow in time.

The Psychological Time

Cyclical time is continuous. The linear time is too continuous but it is discrete one in the sharp contrast to the ongoing cyclical time. There is another kind of time that is the psychological one. The psychological time is variously defined by various writers and philosophers. According to Droit Volet S, a French writer, human being in psychological time is the subject to distortion of time under the effect of emotions. (1)

In the psychological time, one drops out the present moment and dwells on a situation mentally. The psychological time is the time in which a person does not stay in present or in the clock time but feels the period of time differently. Regarding the distortion of mind in the psychological time Myrko Thum in his work *Clock Time vs. Psychological Time* writes:

If we create this psychological time, we get trapped in our mind. It happens that we create a problem out of a situation and the mind won't let go of it. For instance, if you watch the news and you see something terrible, did it happen to you that you could not let go of it for several minutes or even hours? It burdens you. Funny enough there are a lot of very pleasant things going on right now, but the news showed exactly the very bad thing and the mind could get trapped in it. (1)

The present or the clock time is left in the psychological time. A person feels the time differently in different states of mind. If he is engaged in a dull work, the time feels endless to him. At the same time, if he is engaged in a pleasurable thing, the

time feels shorter to him. In short, boredom lengthens the period of time and excitement or pleasure contracts (shortens) it. Thus, the psychological time is the subjective experience of the passage of time. It passes faster when one is in the pleasurable mood and slower when he is in the bored mood. This means when the time passes faster in the pleasant mood of the person, he feels slowness of time. The time becomes shorter or slower for him in pleasant mood. But when he is in the dull mood, the time becomes unending or slower that does not end for him.

The Arrow of Time

The arrow of time is a concept in which the time flows in a certain direction. It is the “one-way direction” or asymmetry of time. In other words, the increase of disorder or entropy with time by which something that distinguishes the past from future is called the arrow of time. There are three arrows of time. Regarding the three arrows of time Stephen Hawking in his *A Brief History of Time* writes:

Then there is the psychological arrow of time. This is the direction we feel time passes, the direction in which we remember the past but not the future. Finally, there is the cosmological arrow of time. This is the direction of time in which the universe is expanding rather than contracting. (153)

The fact time is observed to flow inexorably from past to present and to future is known as time’s arrow. In the thermodynamic arrows of time, the system tends to move towards great disorder or entropy of time. The cosmological arrow of time is the direction of time in which the universe is expanding. And the psychological arrow of time is our subjective sense of time in which we remember events in one direction of time (the past) but not the other (the future).

The End of Time

There is no such thing as time. Julian Barbour, a British theological physicist believes that time is an illusion as there are only timeless 'nows' in the flow of time. Regarding the timeless concept of Julian Barbour in his *The End of Time: The Next Revolution in Our Understanding of Universe*, the editor writes:

Time is an illusion. Although the laws of physics create a powerful impression that time is flowing, in fact there are only timeless 'nows'. In *The End of Time*, the British theoretical physicist Julian Barbour describes the coming revolution in our understanding of the world: a quantum theory of the universe that brings together Einstein's general theory of relativity - which denies the existence of a unique time - and quantum mechanics - which demands one. Barbour believes that only the most radical of ideas can resolve the conflict between these two theories: that there is, quite literally, no time at all. (1)

Barbour believes that if nothing happened or if nothing changed then time would stop because time is nothing but change. If there is no change, then there will be no time too. In short, the term 'now' is not any time. It is only the continuous whole of the present and the past. If there is no arrow of time, there is no 'becoming' but only 'being'. And 'being' contains no time as there is no change in it.

In the black hole also, there would be no end of time for the collapsing body or anyone who falls into it. In regard the end of time, Stephen Hawking in his *A Brief History of Time* states: "According to general relativity, there must be a singularity of infinite density and space-time curvature within a black hole. It is rather like the big

bang at the beginning of time, only it could be an end of time for collapsing body and the astronaut” (93).

In the black hole, time ends for the falling body into it. At the same time, if the whole universe re-collapses, even then there would be the end of time. In short, in the state of re-collapsing of the universe and in the black hole, there would be the end of time. Stephen Hawking in his *A Brief History of Time* further states:

Similarly, if the whole universe re-collapsed, there must be another state of infinite density in the future, the big crunch, which would be an end of time. Even if the whole universe did not collapse, there would be singularities in any localized regions that collapsed to form black holes. These singularities would be an end of time for anyone who fell into the black hole. (183)

In the linear time, the time flows infinitely in a line. In the cyclical time too, it flows infinitely in circle as there is no beginning and no end but the infinite or the endless rotations of the events. In the black hole or in the collapsing or re-collapsing of the universe too, there would be the state of infinite density. Similarly, in the permeated states of consciousness of mind, there is the state of infinity and wherever is the infinity, there is the end of time for the person or the thing fallen into such states (of the black hole).

Emily Dickinson, being strange and different from her early tender age composed thousands of poems on the theme of love, life, nature eternity and time and so on. But all of her poems have the sad and painful note of the lost love. Sufferings, the pain of lost love and the deep irresistible desire to possess her loved ones are the

recurring themes of all her major poems. Moreover, her poems show the cold, chill, numb, frozen, still, silence and other motionless states of her consciousness.

The afore-said states of her consciousness indicate time and timelessness. And the time and the timelessness are still mystic and ambivalent in her poetry. In other words, her poems show the time as one, eternal 'nows' (infinity or timelessness) or the evanescence of life. Another great reality of her poems is the chill, snowy, still and degreeless (timeless) condition of not only the clock time but also of the still and numb state of human consciousness. Thus, despite the single moment of 'nows' that is realized as infinity and timeless, her poems reveal the end of time through the images of the chill and degreeless condition of time to which I connote zero. The linear time of the eternal 'nows' is converted into the circular time (zero) in Dickinson's poetry. The zero is the end of time in my present study on Dickinson. So, this dissertation seeks to account for the ambivalences through a reading of Dickinson's poems relating to time, timelessness and eternity from the perspective of philosophies of time.

More elaborately, zero is a concept. It connotes absence, loss or nothingness which, in turn, is realized as something sublime or divine in Emily Dickinson's poetry. The zero is further related with time in more particular notion as a loss or the end of time. And this loss or the end of time can be understood as 'no' time or as timelessness. Time is enigmatic in Dickinson's poetry. The time or the timelessness can be seen at least in two or more than the two ways in her poetry: the linear concept of time and the cyclic concept of time. The linear concept of time is the time that 'is'. The time is 'is' only and nothing more. It has no (arrows of) present, past or future but the infinite present. Despite the single moment of the linearity of time, Dickinson's poetry deals with the circulatory or the cyclical concept of time as no time. Above all,

the psychological time is the most forceful and effective time in some of her poems dealing with pain in which the time is contracted relatively to the complete end of it.

The enigma of the linear and the cyclic time has vividly been shown in her poem "A Clock Stopped". The clock has stopped and is in the standstill condition (just now dangled still-5 and this pendulum of snow-11). The linear time of minute, hour, present, past and so on all vanishes here and there is only the presence of one 'pure' moment of time 'is' only there. In other words, there is the evanescence (presence) of life or a single moment in it. Despite the linearity of time or the evanescence of life or the infinitely one pure moment of time-'is', the present poem leads us to the cyclical state of time. The image of "into Degreeless Noon" (line no. 9) suggests the end of the clock time or as no time. In short, the stopping of clock is the very stopping of the human conscious state of mind and, in turn, time too. When the mind is in the stand still or in the numb state, time does not exist there. To this degreeless time, one calls 'zero'. Thus, the circulatory time is 'no' time in Dickinson's present poem.

The psychological infinity of the time by the contraction of it in the reversed state can be seen in her poems like-I can Wade Grief (J-252), Before he Comes We Weigh the Time (J-834), Too Happy Time Dissolves itself(J-1774), To Wait an Hour is Long (J-781) and so on.

Concepts of Finite and Infinite

The finite is the term which is measurable, limited, countable and graspable by human mind. It denotes some kind of lack and inability also when compared to some objects which have infinite qualities.

The term “infinite” refers to whatever is infinite. It is merely the concept of being not finite. Bradley Dowden in his essay “The Infinite” published in Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy has shown that the term “infinite” is used in three distinct senses: actually infinite, potentially infinite and transcendently infinite (2). The ancient Greeks generally use the term “infinite” as formless, characterless, indefinite, indeterminate, chaotic and unintelligible (3). Aristotle spoke of the potential infinity as never ending process over time but which is finite at any specific time (3). In ordinary discourse these days, the term “infinite” is used to be endless, immeasurable, inconceivable and paradox (4). The actual infinite is very different. It is neither endless nor unlimited nor immeasurable (4). The transcendental infinite transcends human limits and detailed knowledge (4). The transcendental infinite can lead to paradox and even ‘defeat’ the mind. So, the transcendental infinite makes the infinite somehow beyond comprehension (4). The metaphysicians use the term infinite in all three ways: potential, actual and transcendental infinite. When they use the term ‘infinite’ for God, they use it transcendently to imply that God is beyond human understanding and for some lack in man. Regarding the metaphysical use of infinite, Bradley Dowden writes:

When metaphysicians speak of infinity they use all three concepts: potential infinity, actual infinity, and transcendental infinity. But when they speak about God being infinite, they are usually interested in implying that God is beyond human understanding or that there is a lack of a limit on particular properties of God, such as God's goodness and knowledge and power. (3)

Thus, the term “infinite” is defined as unlimited, unbounded, unintelligible and paradox. The actual infinite is finite but is graspable in technical and scientific fields. In mathematics, physics, cosmology, black hole all have the use of the actual infinite. Metaphysicians use all of the three forms of infinite.

The infinite is one of the basic qualities of the linear as well as the cyclical time. In the linear time actual infinite seems to appear. In the cyclical time, the potential infinite as well as the transcendental infinite both type seem to appear.

In Emily Dickinson's poems also, we find the potential as well as the transcendental infinite. Her poetry is enigmatic because of her use of the finite-infinite, paradox. Being finite she presents the paradox of the infinite God or of the eternity which is beyond her grasp or her understanding.

Enigmatic and Mystic

The term ‘enigma’ refers to something that is mysterious in some senses. The ideas used behind the enigmatic works puzzle the mind of the reader to grasp in clear way. Many of Dickinson's poems are enigmatic in the sense that they show her greater inclination to the worldly love and on many occasions they show greater inclinations transcendently to the love of God, eternity, heaven etc. She sometimes believes in finite and in the circumference but later on she shows her greater inclination for the center or the infinite or the eternity. Her contrastive views make her poetry look enigmatic.

Mystic is the term which is basically applied in poetry for the mystical love of God. The mystic poets seem to yearn for the unity with God and like to wed with Him submitting fully to His will. In this sense, Dickinson is not a true mystic. True

yearning for the unity with the God is greatly lacking in her poetry. She has some irresistible desire to possess her lovers on the earth. So she descends from being wedded with the God like a true mystic in her poems.

The concept of zero as personless or timeless state is widely described by various philosophers, scholars and scientists.

In Buddhism, there is the discussion of time as 'no' time or as timelessness. This can be linked with Charles Seife and Robert Kaplan also. They have broadly discussed the idea of zero as nothingness or the personlessness and as the absence or the end of time. In Buddhism, zero is used in the philosophical term for the conscious states of mind. It is a concept that connotes the nullity or void. It places the spot light on 'Nirvana'-that is, attaining salvation by merging into the void of eternity. In regard to the transformation of self in Buddhism, Hossein Arsham in his essay *Zero in Four Dimensions: Historical, Psychological, Cultural and Logical Perspectives* states: “Zero as a concept, was derived, perhaps from the concept of a void. The concept of void existed in Hindu philosophy and the Buddhist concept of Nirvana, that is: attaining salvation by merging into the void of eternity” (2). Nirvana is the cessation of all becoming. It is the cessation of the three-fold fire of lust, malice and delusion. It is the cessation of all the transitory-ness in the self or the soul. In short, nirvana is attained after the realization of those temporary and impermanent voids of the self. In Patanjali Yoga also, zero is the state of super consciousness “Samadhi” (3.3). In deep meditation, a person loses himself which is the state of Samadhi. In zero knower, knowledge and known all is lost, that state is the state of zero in the Yogasutra. Dickinson's concept of time and zero also lead us to the same nullified state of consciousness of human life.

Charles Seife, an American science journalist talks of zero in term of physics in his work *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea*. Extending the history of zero from the ancient Greek universe, created by Pythagoras, Aristotle and Ptolemy to the modern physics, he gracefully surveys the mystery of modern physics through zero. He finally, reveals that zero holds the secret of our universe. In regard to the Greeks' understanding of the twin concepts of zero as void and as infinite, he states:

The Greeks saw the usefulness of zero in their calculations, yet they still rejected it. So it was not ignorance that led the Greeks to reject zero, nor was it the restrictive Greek number-shape system. It was philosophy. Zero conflicted with the fundamental philosophical beliefs of the West, for contained within zero are two ideas that were poisonous to Western doctrine. Indeed, these concepts would eventually destroy Aristotelian philosophy after its long reign. These dangerous ideas are the void and the infinite. (50)

The Greeks were bound to believe in the concept of zero. Aristotelian universe was smashed before the stern reality of the introduction of the void and the infinite that was the result of zero.

Seife further shows the ancient theological concept of zero by the example of Chandogya Upanishad in which the Hindus believe that the universe was born out of the void. The concept of zero is further more expressed by Seife through Atman, the spirit which is smaller than the smallest atom and greater than the vast spaces.

Regarding the basic nature of zero he writes in the same book:

At the same time, though, the cosmos never truly abandoned its original emptiness. Nothingness was what the world came from, and to achieve nothingness again became the ultimate goal of mankind. In one story, Death tells a disciple about the soul: “Concealed in the heart of all beings is the Atman, the Spirit, the Self,” he says “Smaller than the smallest atom, greater than the vast spaces.” (61)

Zero is the result of emptiness or the state of void in self or soul. The self or the soul is smaller than the smallest atom. So the smallest nature of self is nothing but zero and in such smaller self or soul than the smallest atom like zero, the time cannot exist there at all.

In Renaissance period, Brunelleschi painting shows zero in the center of the painting that contains a vanishing point or the infinity of space (71). Rene Descartes too believed in zero. He argues that God must exist as infinity and perfect being (75). All other beings are finite and less divine. They all exist somewhere between God and naught. They are a combination of infinity and zero. Blaise Pascal (1648) was a great turning in the history of zero. For the first time in the history, he proved by experiment that zero exists in certain point or height of place. And nature has no repugnance for vacuum. It admits vacuum without difficulty or without resistance. About his scientific idea of zero, he writes: “But when it was upended in a dish of mercury, there was no air to replace the mercury in the tube. If nature truly abhorred a vacuum so much, the mercury in the tube would have to stay up so as not to create a void. The mercury didn’t stay up. It sank downward a bit, leaving a space at the top. What was in that space? Nothing. It was the first time in history anyone had created a sustained vacuum” (76).

For the first time in history, science also entered into the discussion of zero in real way. It proved the existence of zero by experiment. The vacuum or the void that was found in the experiment of Pascal is nothing but the state of zero.

Pascal even believed to seek God's existence in zero and the void after his experiment of mercury in the tube on the top of mountain. In this context, Seife states: "It was also in zero and the infinite that Pascal, the devout Jansenist, sought to prove God's existence" (78).

Zero is the state of infinite not only in science but also in the revelation of the self or the soul. The attainment of such state of zero or the infinite is the redemption or the nirvana a person. In short, god can be realized by zero only when the self of the person comes in the state of the infinite or the nothingness or zero.

Seife furthermore explains that zero is at the center of universe. Different scientific theories like quantum mechanics, general relativity, special theory relativity, thermodynamics, big bang and black hole are all based on the concept of zero. Regarding the existence of zero in the heart of every field of science he writes:

Zero dwells at the juxtaposition of quantum mechanics and relativity; zero lives where the two theories meet, and zero causes the two theories to clash. A black hole is a zero in the equations of general relativity; the energy of the vacuum is a zero in the mathematics of quantum theory. The big bang, the most puzzling event in the history of the universe, is a zero in both theories. The universe came from nothing—and both theories break down when they try to explain the origin of the cosmos. (124)

Zero rules over all sciences. Quantum mechanics, general relativity, special relativity, thermodynamics, big bang and black hole all have their roots in the concepts of zero. In short, science strongly believes in the existence of the zero that prevails in the whole universe.

Seife finally explains the end of time which is consequently regarded as zero when a spaceship approaches the speed of light. Regarding the end of time and its positing as zero, he states:

When a spaceship approaches the speed of light, time slows down more and more and more. If the ship were to travel at the speed of light, every tick of the clock on board would equal infinite seconds on the ground. In less than a fraction of a second, billions and billions of years would pass; the universe would have already met its ultimate fate and burned itself out. For an astronaut aboard the spaceship, time stops. The flow of time is multiplied by zero. (119)

In the same pace, he explains that the time ends in the blackhole too. When the hydrogen, electron, neutron, quark and all other fuels finish off, the dying star gets infinitely smaller, smaller and smaller. Then it becomes zero space which is called as a black hole. Concerning the zero-point of the black hole he writes:

When an extremely massive star collapses, it disappears. The gravitational attraction is so great that physicists know of no force in the universe that can stop its collapse—not the repulsion of its electrons, not the pressure of neutron against neutron or quark against quark—nothing. The dying star gets smaller and smaller and smaller. Then...zero. The star crams itself into zero space. (120)

The dying stars turn into smaller to smallest state which is named as zero. By the loss or the extinction of all their fuels the stars turn into zero-point. Similarly, when the self of a person extinguishes, then that lost or extinguished state of the person is known as the zero. And such state of personless, time does not exist. In the black hole also, there is the end of time for the object fallen into it.

Like Charles Seife, Harvard University mathematician, Robert Kaplan also discusses broadly about the concept of zero and time in terms of religion and philosophy in his work *The Nothing That Is: A Natural History of Zero*. He exposes zero as nothing. Ellen Kaplan, the editor of the book *Nothing That Is: A Natural History of Zero* states: "It is a symbol for what is not there. The zero is a lens for looking not only into the evolution of mathematics but into the very nature of human thoughts also" (1). Zero is not merely a numeral but also a concept and symbol that connote nullity or void. We use the term 'zero' as shunyam meaning a blank or void. Indian philosophy has glorified the concepts like the material world as being an illusion (Maya), the act of renouncing the material world (Tyaga) and the goal of merging into the void of eternity (Nirvana). Regarding zero as the symbol of nirvana Robert Kaplan in his *The Nothing That Is: A Natural History of Zero* writes:

High romance has gathered around this pregnant moment. A hundred years ago people said such things as: 'The philosophy and religion of the Hindus uniquely fitted them for the invention of zero,' and that their inventing a symbol for zero was like making Nirvana dynamic. In that bible of our grandparents' generation, *The Decline of the West*, Oswald Spengler wrote that zero was 'that refined creation of a wonderful abstractive power which, for the Indian soul that conceived it as a base for a positional numeration, was nothing more nor less than

the key to the meaning of existence'. The Greek soul, he informs us, is sensual and so could never have come up with this key: it takes a Brahmanic soul to perceive numbers as self-evident. (46)

Kaplan states that zero is in the heart of nirvana of Buddha. In the Indian philosophy or in the philosophy of Hindus too the concept of zero is highly appreciated.

Moreover, Albert Einstein reveals the great power of zero in his physics (Charles Seife's book entitled *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea*- (113-130). Zero in his quantum mechanics showed that the entire universe including vacuum is filled with the infinite amount of energy which is called the zero- point energy.

Einstein's special theory of relativity shows that time changes with motion. The time is relative to the speed an observer is travelling. As fast or slow the observer travels, so fast / slow the time will be. Thus, existence of time depends on the speed of traveler or space. Einstein further presents the ultimate zero and the worst infinity (the black hole) in his general theory of relativity. In his equation, he treats time and space as the synonym of each other. Time is space and space is time together. Together they form space -time (continuum). In his space-time correlation, he suggests that in different spaces or as the acceleration changes in different spaces the time also changes with them. He presents his concept of zero or the time by the analogy of a rubber sheet. When a heavy object is kept on the rubber sheet, it is distorted by its pressure. The same way, space also becomes distorted or curved by the heavy weight of the sun's mass or by the dying star's massive weight - black hole. Along with the curvature of the space, the time too becomes curved. As the curvature gets greater and greater, the time becomes slower and slower and finally it ends to zero point. The most striking event of zero is the collapse of star and its conversion into the black

hole. When the star collapses after losing all of its fuels like hydrogen, nuclear fusion, electron, proton, neutron quarks, it gets smaller and smaller and finally shrinks into the zero point or the zero space.

Thus, at the center of everything, every particle or every theory, there is the concept of zero. The cosmic nature is also the zero. It is the root of the universe. From ancient to mathematical routes, equations, black hole, big bang, GR, STR and several other scientific and philosophical theories we see the presence of zero.

The concept of zero shown in Buddhism, by Charles Seife, by Robert Kaplan and Albert Einstein is realized greatly in most of Dickinson's poems too.

Whereas Buddhism, Charles Seife and Robert Kaplan talk of the concept of zero or the end of time, Henri Bergson, Albert Einstein, Stephen Hawkins and others talk of the concept of time. In his two works *Time and Free Will* and in *Creative Evolution* Bergson highlights his philosophy of time as one single moment, continuous and indivisible state of consciousness which is divorced from present, past and future (arrows of) time.

More elaborately, Henri Bergson highlights his philosophy of time as continuous and indivisible state of consciousness in his work, *Time and Free Will*. He focuses on the pure duration sharply in contrast to physics and mathematical homogenous time of thing in space. Time in physics or thing or object is based on space which is discrete, countable and external to another. Consciousness states of homogeneity postulated by Kant are also like physical objects that occupy space. Kant shows time homogeneously as space-time. (133) But Bergson bases his concept of time heterogeneously on consciousness itself. For him, the pure time is the flow of the inner life which finds permeated with its own states of various arrows of time. (100) In the extreme flow of consciousness or the inner life, one comes across of the change

from the painful, sad, deplorable or joyous or aesthetic state of past to a new mingled, permeated and creative state of present that is no more discrete but one single time of present that seems ever continuous, ever new and evolving. Thus, for Bergson, the pure duration or time is the evolution of the permeated states of consciousness that is reducible to change, creation, maturity, freedom etc. (10) In short, time is not a separate entity but change, mobility, evolution, maturation, creation, freedom and so on. Inside them all is the very idea of time.

Bergson's philosophy of time is more vividly explicated in his *Creative Evolution*. Reality is not discrete and stoppable. It is a perpetual flux of duration. Duration is a flow of conscious states of mind that change and evolve perpetually. He focuses on the vital impetus (*élan vital*) in the heart of lives and changes. (128) To clarify his idea of time more vividly he distinguishes between the two realities of the intellect and the intuition. Intellect is divisible to inert matter and space. On the other hand, the intuition is indivisible that moves to life and change that can be superseded (reducible) variously as time, creation and free will. (101) In short, time is reducibly the name of the various changes. The intellect is quantitative multiplicity of time. But the intuition is qualitative multiplicity of it. It is heterogeneous in nature. In creative evolution, he finally focuses on his notion of life that evolves in the direction of greater maturity, creation and free will. Unlike Charles Darwin, who believed in the survival of the fittest and the exclusion of the unfit in his theory of evolution (*The Origin*) of Species, Bergson believes in the real fact of evolution in the creative surge of life. (97) Instead of the natural selection of the species, he emphasizes on the reality of the very vital force of life that is in the change and mobility superseded in many forms like time, creation, freedom etc. (100)

Some of the general concepts of time that are commonly known of them have also been described in this dissertation. For example, time is what clock measures. It is the action or the event that is the mental cause of time. Time is manifested by event. It is the measure of change but time is not change itself. In modern time, time is related to the change of position. While being changed or the position of matter changes, time is created. In short, time is man's (observer's) inertial position and speed.

In philosophy, time is the form of becoming. When becoming ends or being begins, then time too ends. As long as one is becoming something or evolving to something more and more progressing, more elated, the time too evolves with him relatively. In losing self, he/she does not evolve. Then the time ends psychologically. It becomes zero in the loss of the extinction of self.

On seeing carefully on the concept of zero explicated by Charles Seife, Robert Kaplan and Buddha, we come to two conclusions. Zero reveals the state of nothing. When the 'self' extinguishes, then the result is zero. In short, the extinction of self is the state of zero. At the same time, the concept of zero reveals the end of time. The zero point in quantum mechanics, thermodynamics, and relativity and in the black hole is nothing but the zero – point time. In short, zero is ambiguously used for the extinction of self and, in turn, for the end of time.

In short, Bergson in his philosophy of time explicates time as a continuous flow of consciousness. Time is the mobile and changed state of permeated moment of consciousness. It is not discrete but continuous one – ever flowing, single moment (pure duration or *duree*). If so is the case, then there are two different realities of time in my study on Dickinson. In the philosophy of zero explicated by Charles Seife, Robert Kaplan, Einstein, Buddha and others, there is the state of nothingness or the

void of self or soul which is known as the state of zero. In such state of void or self the time does not exist. The non-existent self is the state of zero where time ends. On the other hand, Henri Bergson explicates time as a continuous flow of the permeated states of consciousness of mind. Thus, time has two realities. This has created enigma. Like the enigma of Dickinson's poetry, time is also enigmatic in my present study. I find the end of time in most of Dickinson's poems.

Emily Dickinson's poetic spirit resembles greatly with the philosophy of Ashtavakra. Ashtavakra's philosophy is based on the agentless or personless state of man (1/6). Man is really a non - existent being (1/ 15). He is really a soul that is non-existent. In this conscious state of the self or the soul, the time does not exist. In short, self is zero and time does not exist in the zero state of the self. Regarding the non-existent self of a person Ashtavakra writes:

(Dharmādharmau sukham duḥkham mānasāni na te vibho
na kartāsi na bhoktāsi mukta evāsi sarvadā.) (1.11-12)

(Righteousness and unrighteousness, pleasure and pain are purely of
the mind and are no concern of yours. You are neither the doer nor the
reaper of the consequences, so you are always free.)

Man is neither the body nor the body is his. He is not even a living being. He is just an integrated conscious being. He is a sensible, awakened and acknowledged being. Ashtavakra further states that man is even not a living creature (Jive). In the twentieth two verse of the second chapter, he writes:

(nāham deho na me deho jīvo nāhamaham hi cit
ayameva hi me bandha āsīdyā jīvite spṛihā). (2.43-44)

(I am not the body, nor is the body mine. I am not a living being. I

am consciousness. It was my thirst for living that was my bondage.)

If man considers himself as if he is not existed, then he is free from all the bondages of the Maya or the illusions of the world. In short, a person must attain the state of the void or the selflessness to be free from the various illusions of the world.

The zero it-self does not exist any longer. In other words, zero becomes zero, and beyond everything. And with the extinction of zero its twin like redemption too extinguishes leaving conscience behind it only. Regarding the idea of zero Ashtavakra writes in the first verse of the twentieth chapter:

(kva bhūtāni kva deho vā kvendriyāṇi kva vā manah

kva śūnyam kva ca nairāśyam matsvarūpe niraṁjane. (20 .1-2)

(Janaka: In my unblemished nature there are no elements, no

body, no faculties no mind. There is no void and no despair.)

Ashtavakra even goes beyond zero. For him there is no existence of zero at all. He believes that the knowledge is the knowledge of not to have the knowledge of anything in the world. Hence, he does not believe even in the existence of zero. He wants to be empty from all the knowledge.

Ashtavakra furthermore reveals his idea that there is no sorrow, no happiness, no attachment, no detachment, no freedom and no salvation for him. Man is neither sorrowful nor pleased. Nor does he heavenly ascend nor does he hellishly descend. He is only and nothing more. He is not happy in happiness and sorrowful in sorrowfulness. He is in the state of being which devoid of all identities. Regarding this

unperturbed and free self-actualized being he writes in the ninety sixth verse of eighteenth chapter:

(na sukhī na ca vā duḥkhī na virakto na saṁgavān

na mumukṣurna vā muktā na kiṁcinna ca kiṁcana) (18.192-193)

(Neither happy nor unhappy, neither detached nor attached, neither seeking liberation nor liberated, he is neither something nor nothing.)

The worldly sorrow suffering and pleasures of all kinds are only the illusions. They keep the people tied with life projective-ly or in various ways. In other words, the sorrows and the pleasures of all kinds are our own projections of life in which we wander and never escape from them throughout our lives. We can realize these illusions behind us in certain conditions. If we realize the worldly sorrow, sufferings and pleasures of various kinds as our own projections and as illusive, then we can become free from them all. For this we must undergo the loss of our selves or souls. Extinction of self to the point of zero is the necessary condition for being free from our various projections of life. On attainment of such selfless condition, the sorrows or the pleasures of any kind cannot make us sorrowful or pleasurable any more. They mean nothing for us. Sensibly we are aware of them as illusions only on one hand and we are not existed being on the other hand. Hence they cannot affect us in any way.

The end of knowledge, knower and knowledgeable (Jnana, Jnata, and Jney) is the state of zero. All knowledge (except the knowledge of zero), knowledgeable things and knowers are not reality. They appear to be true only because of our ignorance and projections. The real man is formless and hence something non-existent. Ashtavakra reveals in the fifteenth verse of the second chapter:

(jñānam jñeyam tathā jñātā tritayam nāsti vāstavam

ajñānād bhāti yatredam so'hamasmi niramjanah). (2.30-31)

(Knowledge, what is to be known, and the knower - these three do not exist in reality. I am the spotless reality in which they appear because of ignorance.)

When a person has no knowledge of all knowledge (Jnana) and when he has no knowledge of his own existence (Jnata) and when he is forgetful of all that he can know or has known (jney), and then he attains the state of void of self. These three things (Jnata, Jnata, Jney) are not reality. When he feels no trace of those illusive things in him, then he attains the pure self or 'being'. In other words, knowledge is the knowledge of not to have the knowlrge of anything at all. As long as one knows anything, he knows nothing at all. Emily Dickinson is also of the same view in her poem *What Mystery Pervades a Well* (1400) that nature is a stranger yet. The ones that cite her the most have never passed her haunted house, nor simplified her ghost. (17-20). She further states in the same poem that those who know her know her less (27). She means to say that the one who can lose himself can find him the best. Thus, the enlightened one always is empty of all the phenomena of Jnana, Jnata and Jney. This state of emptiness or void is the state of zero in which time does not emanate.

Dickinson has well realized the sorrows and the sufferings of her life as her projections and became free from them. In other words, she has well understood the mystic nature of life that Ashtavakra is trying to reveal in his philosophy. Her poems like *What Mystery Pervades a Well* --vividly reveal the mystic nature of knowledge as emptiness of all knowledge. Hence, her poetry is full of the personlessness or selflessness. So there does not exist the time. In other words, she has realized her

‘being’ as non-existent or nobody. ‘Being’ is enough for her. And in such state of consciousness without any self or sense of existence, there is no time. Obviously, being is zero and time does not exist in zero state of the being or consciousness. One is unperturbed from every event and is free in the realization of such state of being.

In Dickinson’s poetry too, time does not evolve at all. Change or mobility does not occur there in her poems. Her mind stops and does not move at all. Cold, chill, numb, frozen, still, silence and other motionless states are frequently seen in her poems. If the mind does not move, the time does not begin there too. In other words, in chill, still, cold, numb, silent states of consciousness in her poetry, there is no existence of the psychological time.

Moreover, time in Emily Dickinson’s poetry is enigmatic. It is mystic and ambivalent. There are two types of time discussed contrastively in her poems. There are the contrast of the linear time and the circular time in her poems. In other words, some of her poems deal with the linear nature of time and many of them deal with the circular nature of time. The linear time, as we know, is the ever extending time. The duration of time from second, minute, month, year, decade, century to--- is the linearity of time. In short, the continuity of this very moment ‘now’ is linearity of time. And the extension of time into many nows is infinite in Dickinson’s poems. On the other hand, the circulatory or the cyclic time is the time in which the event or the action stops cyclically or one after another. It is a motionless state of consciousness in her poems. Still, numb or frozen state of consciousness shows the circulatory nature of time. Despite these two types of the linear and the circular time, there is the evanescence (presence) of life in her poetry. In other words, time appears in them but is for a very short (zero) moment. The linearity of time, the cyclicity of time and the evanescence (presence of both of them) of life have made her poems look enigmatic

and ambivalent. In other words, the enigma and ambivalence are due to the complexity of linearity of time and cyclicity of time and evanescence of life or both of the two times in her poems.

Thus, the time is enigmatic and ambivalent in her poems. The linear time is infinite or timeless as it is sliding every second. The circular time is completely static as it does not move or evolve at all. In short, the linear time is infinite and hence timeless. The circular time is static and hence it is infinite too and has no time. In both of the conditions, there is the end of time in her poetry.

The end of time is connotatively equal to zero. In other words, zero is nothing but the end of time. The time of thing or of person ends when self-extinguishes. In other words, when the self or the person extinguishes, time ends there. The extinction of self or the personlessness is the state of the end of time. The personlessness or the extinction of self or soul is equal to zero where time does not seem to exist any longer. Thus, the state of nullity or the void is the state of zero. And in the state of zero, there is no existence of time.

More elaborately, zero is a concept. It connotes the absence or the loss of personhood or of the nothingness. When the human consciousness permeates or self-extinguishes, one does not exist. He/she simply 'is' and nothing more. The being as 'is' is in a state of zero. And the zero which is realized at the permeated or annihilated states of consciousness has no existence of time. In short, in still or unmoved or un-stirring state of consciousness, time does not exist at all. The personless state is zero where time ends. In other words, when the time ends, the person or the self also ends and vice versa. Thus, the end of time is the result of the loss of self.

The entire poetry of Emily Dickinson is the poetry of personlessness or the loss of self. Her poetry shows the complete loss of her self or soul. In the love for her lovers, she suffered and pined for him and is finally extinguished. So she shows the numb, still, frozen state of her self or her personhood in most of her poems. In short, the extinction of self or personhood is zero where time does not seem to exist in her poetry.

In this way, zero is a concept. It connotes absence, loss or nothingness which, in turn, is realized as something sublime or divine in Emily Dickinson's poetry. The zero is further related which time in more particular notion as a loss or the end of time. And this loss or the end of time can be understood as 'no' time or as timelessness. Time is enigmatic in Dickinson's poetry. The time or the timelessness can be seen in two ways in her poetry: the linear concept of time and the cyclical time. The linear time is the time that 'is'. The time is 'is' only and nothing more. It has no (arrows of) present, past or future but the infinite present. Despite the single moment of the linearity of time, Dickinson's poetry deals with the circulatory or the cyclical concept of time as no time.

The linear concept of time can well be seen in Dickinson's poem, *Forever Is Composed of Nows*. She expresses her concept of time as an absence of time in which it turns into infinity. The duration of time from the second to millennium is our single time- now(s) only. In a way, the time from zero point (Anno-Dominos) is ever extending (exhaling) into second, minute, month, year...pause-less-ly. This extension of time into many 'nows' is infinity not only of the time but to the human consciousness too. It is our only home where we can have the permeated conscious time, no past, and no before but only one single time- now. In short, from Anno-Domine to present time, there is no different time, but one eternal time – “nows”.

Regarding the evanescence of time and life (consciousness) as present and absent
Dickinson writes:

Forever -- it composed of Nows --

'Tis not a different time-----

No different Our Years would be

From Anno Domini's – (J-624)

The human consciousness at the permeated state also feels this forever-ness or the presence of self at every moment of life. The self annihilates by this time of grasping the pure moment of the forever and one simply remains as 'is'. The being as 'is' is the very essence of infinity. Thus, for Dickinson eternity is the realization of this very essence of infinity. In other words, nows mean the idea that one 'is' and the (one) 'is' is timeless one. Claudia Schwartz in his *Emily Dickinson Journey beyond Time* believes Dickinson's present grasping of the pure moment of nows as timeless. In his view, nows constitute the experience of eternal time-dateless realm of consciousness in which the linear time month, years, present, past and future evaporates like fumes:

Dickinson "transcends all time by experiencing it in the dynamism of the present moment (Kher 1974:148). Thus, the celebration of the moment enables the poet to step outside the timely restriction by means of the imagination (language). The imaginative experience of "nows" constitutes the experience of eternal time, the mythic moment and the dateless realm of consciousness in which linear months and years evaporate like fumes in the atmosphere of perpetual sunshine. (Kher 1974:24)

The concept of zero can well be seen in her poem *A Narrow Fellow in the Grass*. She presents a sense of consciousness to a zero degree or degreeless noon in this poem. With a mixed feeling of terror and fascination (cordiality), she has a sudden notice of a snake appearing and disappearing. He occasionally rides. When she, as a child, goes to catch him, he wrinkles and vanishes. Regarding her sense of terror and awe that the snake's presence can cause, she writes in the fourth stanza:

A narrow Fellow in the Grass

Occasionally rides - --

When stooping to secure it

It wrinkled, and was gone – (J - 986)

Remarkably, the snake is not seen as one of the Nature's mysteries. Rather, he is presented as a courtly lover: 'fellow', 'rides', 'combs', 'floor (suggesting a house)'. Thus, on seeing the snake as a rider, a courtly lover of Dickinson herself, one gets the vision of her sad ending in the last two stanzas. She says that she has never met and attended any company of him. Being frustrated, she led a single and lonely life that was more painful and freezing of the heart to the zero point. Regarding the freezing point of her self in the love of her lover she writes:

Several of Nature's People

I know, and they know me –

.....

And Zero at the Bone – (J-986)

Sharon Leiter in his *A Critical Companion to Emily Dickinson* has described Dickinson's reaction to her vision of the snake or the man (zero at the bone) in term

of chilling, a complete frozen state (death) or as a degreeless noon which lies beyond the dial of life of the everyday. Regarding Dickinson's reaction, Sharon writes:

Whatever the significance of the snake to the speaker, its impact is fearsome and chilling. The entire poem's attempts to view it in civilized, domestic terms break down at the end. Visual images give way to "Zero at the Bone." For Dickinson "Zero" is an image of death, associated with frost and belonging to the same semantic context as "Degreeless Noon," which lies beyond the "Dial life" of the Every day. The long o sound of alone and Bone at the conclusion produces a mournful mood that reinforces the sense of this "Zero". (56)

The consciousness when frozen (annihilated) into zero (degree) does not evolve any further. Like the stopping or the stillness of pendulum of the clock, the consciousness too stops or becomes still. In short, zero is the fused state of consciousness that does not evolve any further and hence time also does not seem to evolve or continue. Thus, zero is state of consciousness in which time ceases to exist in one hand but this cessation of time is the very state of a higher maturity and creation of the consciousness.

Like the unmoved, still, stony condition of human soul in *The Narrow fellow in the Grass*, Dickinson's linear yet circular concepts of time can vividly be seen in her poem *A Clock Stopped*. She explicitly expresses the image of chillness, snowy, still, un-stirring (not stir), cool, concern less and quivering out of decimals into degreeless noon to show the human condition in the present poem *A Clock Stopped*. The clock has stopped. It was not a mantel's clock. But even not the best Geneva's skilled watch maker can set it right and make it move again. In other words, it has

become still. At the last time of dangling, it quivered with pain as if in awe and then went on shrinking out of decimal into degreeless noon. Now, it will not stir anymore for anyone (doctor or shop man). This has become the pendulum of snow that has frozen to the zero degree. It is cool and concern-less (numb). Its pointer's will not chime any second or hour of time. The stationary pendulum of snow is the very state of void or of zero. According to Christopher Nield, "Degreeless also carries the meaning of being deadly cold which leads us to the image of stationary 'pendulum of snow'. Snow, in term, conjures up a vista of where all shapes and forms are slowly lapsing, into a stark white void". Regarding the void of self and the time she writes:

A Clock stopped --
The Figures hunched, with pain --
Then quivered out of Decimals --
Into Degreeless Noon --
.....
The Dial life --
And Him – (J-287)

Metaphorically, the chill (snowy), still, degreeless (timeless) condition of the clock is the very chill, still and numb condition of human soul. The people, who suffer from some deep loss, undergo the chill, still and irreparable clock's condition. As a result, he/she feels zero in the bone – a degree less noon which is beyond the dial life of everyday (clock time). The stopping of the clock is the very stopping of the conscious state of mind too.

Dickinson's poem *A Clock Stopped* is a perfect illustration of this double faced image of time (Gudrun Grabher). The clock provides an objective description of the

standstill of a human life. She transforms a common place object, a mantel clock, into a metaphysical conceit for depicting the end of life (Paul J. Ferlazzo; Gudrun Grabher). At the same time, Gudrun Grabher in her essay *Forever is Composed of Nows: Emily Dickinson's Concept of Time* describes the clock as the double faced image of time. The clock in her view is both timeless and evanescence of life. Regarding the double aspect of time, Grabber writes: "For the human being who has overstepped the boundaries of his/her earthly existence, there is no sense of motion because motion by definition takes place only in time" (261).

Like Gudrun Grabher, Indra Nath Kher in his work *The Landscape of Absence: Emily Dickinson's Poetry* also believes in the same double images of time in the poem *A Clock Stopped*. The image of 'Degreeless Noon' suggests the end of the clock time in one hand and the evanescence of life on the other hand. Regarding the end of time or the Degreeless Noon Kher in his *The Landscapes of Absence: Emily Dickinson's Poetry* writes:

However, the action that is described by the verbs used in the past tense – "stopped," "dangled"" came", "hunched", "quivered" - still refers to the human being alive, to her very last moments. Thus the first two stanzas describe the transition from measured time to timelessness: "The anguish of death is presented through the figures hunching with pain. As the trinket refers to man's temporal clock – existence, the figure refers to the numerical symbols of hours in man's transient show on earth. But then, dying means quivering 'out of Decimal,' out of narrow arithmetic of life, into 'Degreeless Noon,' the noon in which clock-time does not exist". (Kher 206)

In the same vein, Claudia Schwarz in *Emily Dickinson's Journey beyond Time* also considers the stopping of clock as the perfect conceit for the moment of death (93). And in death or in the motionless state, time ceases to exist. The zero degree-noon is like the shine for eternity. 00, thus, are boundless and nothingness fused in the single syllable (94). The word 'no' of noon also indicates that there is no way back to life (94). Thus, noon is associated with death and eternity.

Dickinson's linear as well as circular concept of time can further be seen in her poem *Time Looks So Vast*. Time looks linearly just a simple thing like passing of second, minute, hour, and week. But it feels so vast and tensed. If there were no idea of eternity in the conscious mind, life would have been burdensome. One would have been engrossed in the circumference of finite (worldly) life. God would have been excluded. But it is the language and consciousness by which the finitude of man slowly extends to larger and larger dimensions and becomes stupendous vision. In other words, under the heavy weight of time, one is bound to be crushed with deep anguish. After the loss of the most loved one, the time feels so vast to bear but as the finite consciousness merges with the infinite by the language and the permeated consciousness the time disappears. Thus, time that feels so finite and vast is finally felt as infinite and timeless on being fused with eternity. The time and the self look finite, limit, tense and vast at first and then infinite extension, external, timeless for the permeated consciousness. Regarding the vastness and infiniteness of time she writes:

Time feels so vast that were it not
For an Eternity --
For the Stupendous Vision

.....
Of his diameters – (J-802)

In Emily Dickinson, as in Emerson and Thoreau, eternity and infinity and God himself can best be taken as the encircling infinity into which the individual may expand in accordance with his inner capacity. Circumference comes to serve as a complex symbol for those disrupted moments. When in some sense, time transcends time. Circumference signifies ecstasy in its expensiveness, in its self-contained wholeness (122-123).

Similarly, in other of her poem *I Felt Funeral, in my Brain* the cyclical time as no time can vividly be realized. The images (my mind was going numb -8; I and Silence- 15; and finished knowing then- 20) focus on the ending of self. In the extinction of self, time does not exist. In other words, if there is no self then there is no time too. The following images of ‘numb, silence and finished knowing then’ clearly lead us to the cyclical concept of time as self-extinguishes or stops in the numb, silent and knowledge less state or in the zero state of knowledge. I call this conscious and permeated state of mind as zero where time, consequently, comes to an end.

The study on “Zero: The End of Time in the Poetry of Emily Dickinson” has been divided into five chapters.

The first chapter entitled “Time, Zero and Rendering of Time in Emily Dickinson’s Poetry” introduces the major arguments of the research and highlights the theoretical approaches applied to carry out the study. Further, it deals with zero, time and timelessness. First of all, the historical description of zero in terms of physics and other sciences has been graphically presented in this chapter. The zero from its origin

of ancient time to the twentieth century concepts has been presented with the special discussion and citation of Charles Seife's book entitled *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea*. Similarly, the history of zero in terms of philosophy and religion as explained by the Harvard University mathematician, Robert Kaplan in his book *The Nothing that is: A Natural History of Zero* has further been described in this chapter. Buddha's concept of zero has also been discussed in this chapter. It has been shown as the empty state of the self that ultimately makes one aware of the nirvana as the pure light of the self.

The concept of zero has not been used in term of time as zero is a concept that connotes nullity or void or personlessness. To prove the non-existent state, zero is presented here in historical manner. Charles Seife in his book presents zero in terms of physics where he also shows the non-existent state or the void of thing. Kaplan too shows personlessness or nothingness or the void in terms of philosophy and religion. In other words, zero is connotatively nullified state of thing. They all talk of the zero in the same sense of nothingness or personlessness. So in various ways, zero has been presented here to prove the void or the personless state. In short, zero is nothing or everything. Zero shows the void or the nothingness or personlessness in which we do not find time at all.

Likewise, the modern and scientific concept of time has also been presented in this very chapter. Henri Bergson's philosophy of time has been specially chosen to present the modern idea of time. His two major books entitled *Time and Free Will* and *Creative Evolution* have been vividly described in this chapter. Some of the modern concepts of time as propounded by Albert Einstein, Stephen Hawkins, Ashtavakra and others have also been described in this chapter.

The second chapter entitled “Theoretical Insights on Zero and Time in Emily Dickinson's Poetry” widely discusses the theoretical aspects of time and zero under different sub-titles. Henri Bergson’s philosophy of time has been discussed with its special characteristic features. The notion of zero has further been depicted with its two basic features of the void and the infinite in physics. The concept of zero has furthermore been depicted showing the void and infinite in the self of man. The concept of zero (shunyam) has still been discussed as it is found in the Buddhists ‘philosophy. Finally, Ashtavakra’s philosophy of personlessness, agent-less-ness, unrelatedness and seerlessness has been discussed in this chapter.

The third chapter entitled “The Notions of Time and timelessness in Emily Dickinson's poetry” deals with the poetic visions of Emily Dickinson in the terms of time and timelessness. The Philosophy of zero and time described in the first and the second chapters has been applied in some of the major poems of Emily Dickinson and then the idea of zero, time and the end of time has been exposed in her poems. In other words, some of her major poems have been analyzed in terms of time and zero which are revealed in Buddhism, by Charles Seife, Robert Kaplan, Einstein, Stephan Hawking, Bergson, and Ashtavakra and by others. Thus, by the discussion of their concepts of time and zero, it has been tried to expose that her poetry is timeless and infinite and hence a profound and stern revelation of self or soul that is out of the boundary of time or that has no time.

The fourth chapter entitled “Zero: The Time and the End of Time in the Poetry of Emily Dickinson” is the revelation of critical aspects of Dickinson’s poetry. Some of the peculiar and cryptic concepts of life, death, love, time and immortality or eternity as used by Dickinson have been discussed in this chapter. It has been tried to show the enigmatic view of her poetry in terms of god, eternity and man. It has also

been tried to show that for Dickinson the worldly love or her earthly love for her lover is more valuable to her than the love of god. In the face of this enigma, it presents how she fluctuates between these two kinds of worldly and eternal love by her sublime images of circumference. In short, Dickinson sometimes shows her greater inclination to the love of god and eternity in some of her poems. At the same time, she shows her greater love for the earthly love in circumference in many of her poems. Dickinson' enigmatic concepts of center and circumference have been described in this chapter where time ends and the self or soul is felt as free and redeemed.

The fifth chapter entitled "Summary, Conclusion and Implications" gives the summary and conclusion, recommendation of the dissertation on zero: the end of time in the poetry of Emily Dickinson. Dickinson is not a true mystic poet as there is no mystic union but the earthly one is her poetry. She measures her love for earthly lovers against death, eternity, mortality, God and finds it to be superior to them.

Christianity, Puritanism, Calvinism and so on are faith based. Dickinson finds her eternity, immortality or God not in the so called faith based religions but in the very finite infinity of earthly love that she experiences directly by being the bride of awe. Love is all in all for her and her love is in her eternity in the circumference.

Most of her major poems on the theme of love, death, immortality, pain and sufferings show the numb, tomb, still, frozen state of permeated consciousness that connote degreeless noon or the zero state. In such motionless (zero state), the linear time ends. Thus, zero is the end of time. Yet there is evanescence of life in it. In other words, there is one single moment; 'now' made forever. Nothing is so eternal in human life than this very end of time or silence or zero. Silence supersedes eternity

and, in turn, eternity is superseded by zero and finally zero is superseded by Dickinson or vice-versa.

There is a continuous enigma in her poetry. In one after another of her poems, she looks back towards time (finite) and forward to God of Him (infinite). Thus, contradiction, indeterminacy, un- decidability, enigma and uncertainty are some of the characteristics of her poetry which perplex us greatly like the eternity.

To sum up, Emily Dickinson is very strange and different since her early age. While everybody in her family was religious, she was quite skeptic *to Bible*. Her separation from the society or from the social norms and religious values make her look so strange. She never thought of the life of wish and desire like many of the common people. This makes her lead a different life from the other people. Another signs of strangeness and difference are seen in her poetic treatment. She wrote thousands of poems on the theme of lost love. Life, death, nature, eternity and time are the various subjects of her poems. But in all of these poems she comes back to the very point or the ideology of the lost love of her own with several of her lovers. Instead of the discussion of the center of the God she is decentered from it. She posited her belief in the circumference of the earthly love. The finite and the infinite both are intermixed in her poetry. She is a term in-between that is, backward to time and forward to timelessness or to God. In other words, suffering of her bereft heart or the pain of the lost love and the deep irresistible desires to possess her loved ones are the recurring themes of most of her major poems. Some of her poems on time, eternity and nature reveal the linearity of time. Moreover, these poems dealing with her bereft or frustrated heart of the lost love show no sign of the one single moment of time as they reveal her extinguished self. In the state of the extinction of the self the linearity of time is not seen in her poems that directly reveal the extinction of her self.

Hence they are timeless. In other words, her poems do not deny the unstoppable passage of time. They reveal the ultimate end of individual time too through death. Thus, there is the end of time in her poems showing the extinction of her self. And the very end of time is / has been presented as zero from the end of self in this dissertation.

CHAPTER 2

2.1 Theoretical Insights on Zero and Time in Emily Dickinson

Zero is not merely a numeral but also the concept and symbol that connote nullity or void. It is the state of nothing in the metaphysical context; it is the empty state of the self (Anatman) in Buddhism. Zero has mainly been used for the conscious state of mind that is empty of all essences (Skilton 118). In other words, zero is the concept of non-existent state of consciousness of human mind. In the metaphysical context zero is used as non-being or non-existent state of being or nothing, infinite possibility. But in Buddhists' philosophy the term "non-existent" is used as empty state of the self. There is no such thing as the self or the soul (Anatman) in Buddhism. In disinterested, egoless, desire less, personless and fused or permeated state of consciousness, the self is metaphysically realized as the non-existent and, in turn, as infinite, unbounded and free. On the other hand, in Buddhism, the self is realized as Anatman or soullessness which is permanent and of self nature, devoid, empty of all essences or existences. In disinterested, egoless, desire less, personless and fused or permeated state of consciousness, the self is realized as non-existent or empty and, in turn, as infinite, unbounded and free. The term 'void' or 'blank' is used in Buddhism for egoless or empty state of self (Anatman) but in Ashtavakra the void is used as personless. It is the state of consciousness that is empty of all actions or being the agent of any action.

In the Buddhist philosophy, zero is mainly understood in the term of "*Shunyam*" that means a blank or void (Abe Masao 67). Shunyata is the very ground of self, the realization of Shunyata is precisely the self-awakening of the Dharma. Sunyata emerged from the Buddhist doctrines of Anatta (Sanskrit: Anatman – the

non-existence of the self or Atman). It is the empty state of the self or soul which is transitory, interrelated and has no self-sufficiency. Regarding Sunyata as the empty state of soul Wikipedia article *Buddhism; Details about Sunyata* states: “Sunyata signifies that everything one encounters in life is empty of soul, permanence and self nature. Everything is interrelated, never self-sufficient or independent; nothing has its independent reality” (1). The material world is regarded as illusion in Buddhism. By renouncing the material world (Tyaga) or by being egoless, and by desire-less-ness one can merge into the void of eternity (Arsham 2). In other words, zero is regarded as a symbol of Nirvana in Buddhism.

In the Ashtavakra’s philosophy too, zero has been expressed as the void state of consciousness. But the zero as the void state of consciousness has been described in some different light than from the Buddhist philosophy. Ashtavakra does not take the world as illusion. He even does not emphasize on renunciation, acceptance or cessation of it either like Buddha. Rather he takes real self or the soul as ‘nothing’ but he emphasizes on consciousness itself that alone exists. More elaborately, man is not body. Rather he is personless and something different from the body. At the same time, he is not the doer or the agent of any of the actions that he does. In other words, he is action less and unbounded from all the actions done by him. Only he is the seer or the eye-witness of those actions that occur and pass from the screen of his mind. Distinct from the person, actions and bondages (of the action) he is a self-illuminated, changeless, infinite, immovable and unperturbed conscious being. In other words, the self that is distinct from body, actions and agency is ‘nothing’ but a state of mind or the consciousness itself that is self-awakened and free.

The next, Charles Seife's concept of zero has been described to draw, in parallel, the concepts of the void and the infinite in science too. Seife describes zero

in term of physics in his work *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea*. He also explains zero in the sense of nothing or emptiness from all substances. He explains several scientific discoveries in physics pointing out how the zero is at the center of them all. In other words, different scientific theories like Pascal's experiment on vacuum, quantum mechanics, general relativity, special relativity, thermodynamics, big bang, black hole, string theory all are based on the concepts of zero. At the center of everything, every particle or every theory, there is the concept of zero. The cosmic nature is also zero. The universe began from zero and will contract or end in the same zero.

Like Seife, Robert Kaplan also exposes zero. He explains zero in term of philosophy. Zero is a symbol for what is not there. It is lens for looking not only the evolution of mathematics but into the very nature of human thoughts also. In other words, zero is not merely a numeral but also a concept of symbol that connote nullity or void of human thoughts, feelings, and ideas and so on. He states that zero is in heart of nirvana of Buddha and of the “*Mukti*” of the Hindus (46).

The Buddhist, Ashtavakra, Charles Seife and Robert Kaplan all have viewed the zero in term of nothing or the void. For them zero is the empty state of a thing or a person. The Buddhists’ concept of zero or *shunyam* is a non-existent, egoless, desire less conscious state of mind. It is self-awakening or the self-enlightened state of consciousness through renunciation. In short, the zero is a concept that connotes nullity or the void. To be nothing is to be self-enlightened in Buddhism. On the other hand, Ashtavakra's concept of zero or the void is based on the consciousness itself. Devoid from body, actions (Karmas) and bondages of those karmas, one is the seer or the eye-witness only of his karma. In this very awakening of the self, he is free. In

other words, zero is the consciousness itself that is distinct from body, action and bondages.

The philosophers like Ashtavakra and Charles Seife all come to the same conclusion of the zero as nothing. Ashtavakra talks of the zero as nothing in the term of consciousness which has infinite possibility whereas Charles Seife discusses the zero as nothing in the term of physics which too has infinite possibility. In other words, Seife finds zero in the heart of all discoveries in physics. Ashtavakra finds the zero as nothing in the human consciousness. Thus Ashtavakra and Charles Seife are placed in the same footing of zero but they are placed in different disciplines or fields of consciousness.

Charles Seife views the concept of zero as nothing at the center of all the scientific discoveries from the big bang, quantum mechanics, and relativities to the string theories and black hole in physics. Robert Kaplan views zero in the same way as nothing in philosophy. Zero is a concept and symbol that connotes the void state of human thought, feelings and idea and so on.

Emily Dickinson and her poetry also lead us to the same nullified state of consciousness that Buddhist, Ashtavakra, Charles Seife and Robert Kaplan have discussed in their work. There is a state of nothing or a void in her self and in her poetry. Like the Buddhist, she was a virtuous nun. She was desire less and disinterested from everything in the world. Her poetry shows a non-existent state of her consciousness that is the merging of the self into the void of eternity. Like the Buddhists who come into the pure consciousness from their unconscious through their concepts of *shunyam*, Dickinson is also trying to come into her consciousness from her unconscious states of life and her time.

Dickinson's life and poetry resemble greatly with the philosophy of Ashtavakra too. Ashtavakra's philosophy is based on consciousness itself. It focuses on agentless, personless and action less state of self and thus a non-existent state of consciousness. Dickinson's poetry also deals with the extinction of her self. Her poetry shows the personless or the non-existent state of her self. Many of her poems show the cold, chill, numb, frozen, still, silent state of her consciousness that reveal the extinction of her self and her self-awakening towards eternity, freedom and God.

The poetry of Emily Dickinson shows cold, chill, numb, frozen and other negative aspects of consciousness that is the result of her lost love. When the self extinguishes, then the negative aspects of consciousness of the long and enduring past time permeates in the consciousness of the present and she becomes self-conscious. In short, the negative aspect of consciousness represents the full aspect of consciousness in her poetry in the permeation with the present consciousness. In this state of consciousness, she simply 'is' like the zero that (too) simply 'is'. In this nullified and permeated state of consciousness, there is no joy, no sorrow, nothing as the self extinguishes. But this is really a blissful state that is free from sorrow, sufferings and the joy of material world.

On the other hand, Charles Seife shows that there is the existence of zero even in science. Zero rules over science from the big-bang, quantum mechanics, thermodynamics, relativities, black hole to the string theory. He describes the non-existent or the void state at the center of all of these scientific discoveries and in human self too. Many of Dickinson's poems also show the void or the non-existent state of her self like sciences. The extinction of her self is like the extinction of things, atoms, and stars in physics. Like the extinction of all substances, all fuels in the dying

stars turning into a black hole, her poems also show the extinction of her self in the extreme.

Dickinson's poetry can be linked also with the concept of zero that Robert Kaplan has discussed in his book *Nothing that Is: A Natural History of Zero*. Kaplan has discussed the void state of self or the soul that merges into the eternity or God. Dickinson's poetry mostly deals with the void state of her self that is desperately trying to merge into the eternity, God and infinite. But instead of being solely merged into the eternity, she remains at the circumference of earthly reality. In other words, instead of finding her mystic union with god and eternity, she prefers to remain at the earthly love and its circumference.

Whereas Buddhists, Ashtavakra, Charles Seife and Robert Kaplan have mainly focused on the concept of zero as the nullified state of human consciousness in which time is viewed as absence as its end. The time is viewed as absence as its end while discussing the concept of zero. Henri Bergson discusses time as a one single moment, continuous and indivisible. There is the ambivalence of time in Dickinson's poetry. Her poetry talks of the two or more than the two various concepts of time: the time (one single moment, continuous and indivisible) and the end of time (timelessness). Reversely, the contraction of time into timelessness in some her poems dealing with the pain is very superb concept of time in her poetry. Thus, it looks contradictory due to the ambivalent nature of time in her poetry.

Henri Bergson, Albert Einstein, Stephen Hawkins and others have focused on the concept of time. Henri Bergson in his works *Time and Free Will* and *Creative Evolution* highlights his philosophy of time as a one single moment, continuous and indivisible state of consciousness in the contrast to Emanuel Kant's homogenous

multiplicity of consciousness that is divisible and discrete like the things in space. Time in physics or in things or in objects is based on space which is countable, stoppable and external to one another. The conscious states of homogeneity that Kant had postulated are like the physical objects. The notion of space applicable to the physical objects is quite inapplicable to the notion of states of real consciousness. Kant's concept of time as the quantitative multiplicity of human consciousness is homogenous as it is stoppable, countable and divisible like the things in space. On the other hand, Bergson views time as the qualitative multiplicity of human consciousness that is unstoppable, indivisible and continuous. In short, time is a qualitative multiplicity of the permeated states of consciousness that is continuous and indivisible. At the same time, time which is the evolution of the permeated states of consciousness is reducible into creation, freedom, eternity, infinite and God and so on. Therefore, for Bergson, time is qualitatively the heterogeneous multiplicity of the change of the permeated states of consciousness.

As Bergson believes in time that is the one single moment, it is continuous, unstoppable and indivisible one. His concept of time seems to be linear one which moves forward as a straight line forever. There is no discreteness, divisibility and beginning and end in the linear time in Bergson's concept of time. His concept of time is also divorced from the distinction of past, present and future.

The time in Dickinson's poetry is also the revelation of the qualitative change of the permeated states to her consciousness. Her long, enduring, bitter and agonized states of youth and other events of life of the past permeate with the present state of consciousness to which Bergson calls the pure duration of time. In permeated states of her consciousness, she seems to be greatly conscious and self-enlightened. She simply 'is' just as Bergson, Ashtavakra, Seife, Kaplan and others state that time simply 'is'.

When the person loses his/her rupa self (form) or when self-extinguishes, then he/she attains the self as fully awakened or enlightened. The change of the permeated states of consciousness of Dickinson from her long enduring sorrow and sufferings of the past is her pure consciousness, her self-awakened and highly enlightened state of being in which she simply 'is' like the time itself that simply 'is'. In short, time does not exist when self-extinguishes. The extinction of self is the end of time. In her poetry, Dickinson seems to herself or her person. In such personless state of consciousness, the time does not exist. Only there is the one single moment in the fused permeated state of consciousness in which the person simply 'is' devoid of all essences that is fully awakened and self-enlightened state of consciousness.

Dickinson's poetry too reveals the non-existent state of her self in which time ends and she appears as self-enlightened or a being that simply 'is' like the absolute time of Bergson that simply 'is'. In other words, time is the evolution, creation and self-enlightenment of her permeated state of consciousness in the present from her long enduring sufferings in the past states of consciousness. Therefore, there is no such thing as time but only evolution, creation and enlightenment in the qualitative change of the permeated states of the consciousness from the long enduring embittered states of suffering in Dickinson's poetry.

Sorrows, sufferings contract the time in her permeated state of consciousness. In other words, when she attains the state of extinction of her self, then those sorrows and sufferings or pains do not appear in their actual painful forms; they also extinguish with the extinction of her self and then time too is contracted along with the contraction of her self and her very painful states of mind.

2.2 Henri Bergson's Philosophy of Time

2.2.1 Bergson's Concept of Time in his work *Time and Free Will*

Henri Bergson's philosophy of time is a very dynamical philosophy of life. Bergson presents his philosophy of time in sharp contrast to physics and mathematical homogenous time of things in space. Time in physics or in things or in external object is based on space which is discrete – countable, external to one another. As things are separate happening one after another- (in two inertial points) first this thing and second that thing. Consciousness states of homogeneity are also like the physical objects occupying space. Bergson clearly seems to be contrastive, hostile to this homogenous concept of mathematical, physical, time occupying space like things as well as the states of consciousness as postulated homogeneously by Kant. On the contrary, as the notion of space applicable to physical objects is inapplicable to the notion of the states of real consciousness, he postulates his own concept of time that is based on heterogeneity. Unlike Kant's concept of time based on space, he conceptualizes time as being based on the states of consciousness themselves which are permeated with one another. Kant's basis of time is homogeneously space-time; his basis of time is heterogeneously in consciousness itself. Thus, true time is in the consciousness and not in space. It is not discrete but continuous and indivisible. For Bergson, time is the flow of the inner life which finds permeated with its own states of the various arrows of time. In the extreme flow of consciousness or the inner life, one comes across of the change from the painful, sad, deplorable or joyous or aesthetic states of past to a new, mingled, permeated and creative state of the present that is no more discrete but one single time of present that is ever continuous, ever new and evolving. It is the state of ever new, forever nows. Thus, it is consciousness that brings qualitative change, maturity, creativeness of being lived one incessantly. In

short, time is in consciousness (flow of inner life) but consciousness is not time in itself. All the consciousness is in time, but it itself is not time. Time is in the consciousness mingled there in the states of consciousness in the way as melting of notes of music into one another or as the flakes of snow into one another or like the melting of the past states in the present (permeated) into one another. For Bergson, the past and the present states of mind have no separate, discrete existence. They are permeated, mingled into one another from which the time appears to be realized. So they are reducible into one another. In other words, time is consciousness and consciousness is time. They are not two different things but mingled, permeated thing into one another.

There are two types of time. One is the discrete multiplicity of time in space that is conceptualized by Emanuel Kant and the other is the successive multiplicity of conscious states of mind that Henri Bergson has conceptualized. Bergson's concept of time as the multiplicity of the conscious states is qualitative, successive and continuous without distinction. Distinguishing the two types of time conceptualized by Kant and by Bergson F.L. Pogson in the preface of the book *Time and Free Will* states:

He finds that there are two forms of multiplicity: quantitative or discrete multiplicity involves the intuition of space, but the multiplicity of conscious states is wholly qualitative. This unfolding multiplicity constitutes duration, which is a succession without distinction. The idea of a homogeneous and measurable time is shown to be an artificial concept, formed by the intrusion of the idea of space into the realm of pure duration. (xi)

For Bergson time is the qualitative multiplicity of the psychic conscious states of mind. And for Kant time is the quantitative multiplicity of conscious states of mind which is divisible and discrete. On the other hand, Bergson's concept of time is continuous and reducible. The quantitative multiplicity of time is not true perception of time by the human mind. The true time is indivisibly qualitative multiplicity of change of the conscious states of mind in permeated moments.

Time is the qualitative change of conscious states of mind. It is qualitative multiplicity of the change of the permeated state of consciousness from the past states of mind. Regarding the qualitative concept of time as mobile, creative and free, Henri Bergson in his work *Time and Free Will* states:

Thus converting them into one single feeling of effort, of growing intensity, so it will hypostatize under the form of a growing desire the gradual alterations which take place in the confused heap of co-existing psychic states. But that is a change of quality rather than of magnitude. (9)

Bergson's idea "Time is consciousness and consciousness is time" is not the two different things. Time is consciousness in the permeated moments and consciousness is time reducibly. For Bergson, time can be reduced into creativity, freedom, evolution and into any other consciousness.

Time is the qualitative multiplicity of change. This qualitative multiplicity of change which is successive without distinction or division is realized well when one is in a joyful state of mind from inside. In regard to the time as the qualitative change in joyful states Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states: "There are several characteristic forms of purely inward joy, all of which are successive stages

corresponding to qualitative alterations in the whole of our psychic states” (10). In extreme joyful state the change of the conscious state of mind is the qualitative multiplicity. And the pure time is in the very qualitative multiplicity of the change of conscious states of mind.

The qualitative multiplicity of change in the conscious states of mind is realized in the best way in the agonized states of sorrow and sufferings. On being permeated the sorrow and sufferings of long past states is no more felt as the sorrow and sufferings in the present state of consciousness but it is intensely felt as somber, quiet and peaceful. In regard to the creative and qualitative change of the past sorrowful states and their blissful fusion in the present conscious state of mind Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states:

Sorrow begins by being nothing more than a facing towards the past, an impoverishment of our sensations and ideas, as if each of them were now contained entirely in the little which it gives out, as if the future were in some way stopped up. And it ends with an impression of crushing failure, the effect of which is that we aspire to nothingness, while every new misfortune, by making us understand better the uselessness of the struggle, causes us a bitter pleasure. (11)

Time is creative for Bergson. The bitter sorrow and sufferings of the past time or of the adolescent age transform into peaceful and pleasurable somber state of mind. The change from the sad or the sorrowful states into the serious pleasure and peacefulness is the qualitative multiplicity to which Bergson calls pure time. In short, the pure duration or time is the qualitative change of the sad or sorrowful past states of mind into blissful, peaceful and serious pleasure in their permeation in the present consciousness.

Time is the qualitative multiplicity of change of the permeated states of mind. The qualitative change from the fusion of the past states into the present state of consciousness is more strikingly felt in the aesthetic moment. In regard to the higher aesthetic transformation and creation from the fusion of the past states of consciousness into the present consciousness in the aesthetic moment Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states: “The aesthetic feelings offer us a still more striking example of this progressive stepping in of new elements, which can be detected in the fundamental emotion and which seem to increase its magnitude, although in reality they do nothing more than alter its nature” (11). Time is the qualitative change of the permeated state of consciousness for the realization of pure beauty.

The fusion of the states of consciousness is felt in a perfect degree in the lives of the poets. The poets have so strong emotional feelings that they come to a great transformation (mobility) of their souls from some of their passive, frustrated and bitter past to the blissful present conscious state. In such transformed state they feel themselves as the ‘beings’ that are truly free, emancipated and unified whole. In regard to the fused state of change, maturity and creation of the poets Bergson in *Time and Free Will* states:

In seeing these images pass before our eyes we in our turn experience the feeling which was, so to speak, their motional equivalent: but we should never realize these images so strongly without the regular movements of the rhythm by which our soul is lulled into self-forgetfulness, and, as in a dream, thinks and sees with the poet. (15)

The poets and the writers are often sentimental. They undergo certain sufferings and pleasures of their lives. So their long and enduring sufferings and the pleasures of the past time qualitatively permeate in the present state of consciousness

evolving into a new, creative and mature force which is reducibly called time. In short, time is creation, maturation and evolution.

Time is the qualitative change of conscious state of mind. The qualitative changes are seen variously in various persons. When one is in a great joyful state of mind, he changes qualitatively. On seeing Daffodils Wordsworth's heart fills with the excessive joy and he changes qualitatively. At the same time, when one is in the great sorrow and sufferings, he changes qualitatively. From her long and enduring sorrow and sufferings, Dickinson changes qualitatively. Similarly, in aesthetic moments too one changes qualitatively. Thus, in the various state of consciousness, the qualitative changes of the conscious state of mind are seen. So there is no contradiction in these two arguments of the joyful state of mind and the agonized state of it.

The poets and literary writers in the great joyful, the sorrowful state of mind and the aesthetic moment, come to a great qualitative change of their minds. That change is time.

Time is the qualitative multiplicity of change of the conscious states of mind. There are two types of multiplicity. One is the multiplicity of the material objects counted in space and other is the multiplicity of the conscious states which are not countable unless they are symbolically represented in space.

Material objects counted in space and the conscious states which are not countable unless they are symbolically represented in space. Space is a homogeneous quantitative multiplicity. Notion of space is applicable to physical objects. But it is inapplicable in states of consciousness. The objects that occupy space are marked out as external to one another - that is, happening one after another. Such duration in multiplicity occupying space is discrete series so as to admit of being counted. The

time which makes distinction and count is nothing but space. And the conscious states that Kant postulated are like the multiplicity occupying space. This space occupying time is discrete or not true time. In short, the time making distinction and count is not the pure duration but space only. On the other hand, the multiplicity of the change of the qualitative conscious states is continuous. It is the succession of interpenetrating states which lacks in the multiplicity of materials, things or homogeneous states of consciousness. Instead of the static long or a short time, occupying in space, the pure duration or time of the qualitative multiplicity of change is a ceaseless flow (mobility) of consciousness evolving to a new, creative force. Regarding the discrete multiplicity of the material objects and the continuous multiplicity of conscious states Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states:

Our final conclusion, therefore, is that there are two kinds of multiplicity: that of material objects, to which the conception of number is immediately applicable; and the multiplicity of states of consciousness, which cannot be regarded as numerical without the help of some symbolical representation, in which a necessary element is space. (86-87)

The qualitative multiplicity of change of the conscious states of mind is continuous and not discrete one. It is not the multiplicity of material objects that can be localized in space. Rather, it is permeable and inter penetrable. In other words, feelings, sensations, ideas are such things or such emotions that cannot be counted but they can permeate into one another. The quality of inter penetrability or interconnection greatly lacks in the multiplicity that occupies space. In regard to the inter penetrability of the conscious states into one another and the impenetrability of the space occupying matters Bergson in *Time and Free Will* states:

Hence to assert the impenetrability of matter is simply to recognize the inter-connection between the notions of number and space, it is to state a property of number rather than of matter. Yes, undoubtedly; but, just because they permeate one another, we cannot count them unless/we represent them by homogeneous units which occupy separate positions in space and consequently no longer permeate one another.

Impenetrability thus makes its appearance at the same time as number; and when we attribute this quality to matter in order to distinguish it from everything which is not matter, we simply state under another form the distinction established above between extended objects, to which the conception of number is immediately applicable, and states of consciousness, which have first of all to be represented symbolically in space. (90)

The events of the material objects are countable and divisible as they occur separately in different spaces. But the feelings or the sensations of the conscious states of the past time and the present cannot be countable. Rather they are permeable or mingling into one another. The two events of the conscious states of the past and the present state can fuse together and continue to be one unified whole. In other words, the qualitative multiplicity of change of the conscious states is permeable and continuous one.

In the heterogeneous multiplicity of consciousness of the pure duration that Bergson talks about, the conscious states of the past time and the present time cannot be countable. They are continuous and one single moment. But the homogeneous multiplicity of conscious states of past and the present time that Kant talks of is countable. The conscious states in the homogenous multiplicity are nothing but space

only. Like the two material objects happening in two different times – firstly the one event happens and secondly the other event happens, the conscious states of homogenous multiplicity are countable. So their change is divisible and discrete one. In regard to the discrete time that can be counted Bergson in *Time and Free Will* states:

Has true duration anything to do with space? Certainly, our analysis of the idea of number could not but make us doubt this analogy, to say no more. For if time is a medium in which our conscious states form a discrete series so as to admit of being counted, and if on the other hand our conception of number ends in spreading out in space everything which can be directly counted, it is to be presumed that time, understood in the sense of a medium in which we make distinctions and count, is nothing but space. (91)

There are two different kinds of reality. One homogeneous namely space and the other heterogeneous that is of sensible qualities. Time in homogeneity takes interval that can be counted. The states of consciousness as Kant had described are treated as homogeneous – physical objects external to one another. Like the separation of the two physical objects, the states of consciousness that Kant has described are also the separated ones. Even by being permeated to one another, they do not grasp pure time or duration. In other words, though the states of consciousness by Kant are not essentially external, but they become so by being spread in time regarded as homogeneous medium. The notion of time of such separated conscious states like things happening discretely (one after another) is false or spurious one only. The change of such conscious states is divisible and hence discrete, static and quantitative. They are not reducible to anything also. On the other hand, the change of

the qualitative multiplicity is continuous. The time from such change of the quantitative multiplicity of conscious state is reducible to many things like change, creation, transformation, fusion and so on. In regard to the reducibility of time into change, creation and other things Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states:

Moreover, we can understand that material objects, being exterior to one another and to ourselves, derive both exteriorities from the homogeneity of a medium which inserts intervals between them and sets off their outlines: but states of consciousness, even when successive, permeate one another, and in the simplest of them the whole soul can be reflected. We may therefore surmise that time, conceived under the form of a homogeneous medium, is some spurious concept. While showing how they have been misled, we shall see that time, conceived under the form of an unbounded and homogeneous medium is nothing but the ghost of space haunting the reflective consciousness. (99)

Kant's concept of the multiplicity of the conscious states is homogenous as they are spread out in time. On the other hand, Bergson's concept of the multiplicity of conscious states is heterogeneous as they are reducible to many things like change, creation, mobility, evolution, creation, maturation and so on.

States of consciousness that are separable or countable due to their homogeneous nature are space. They don't have pure duration, but discreteness. The pure duration does not count but continues and evolves in ever new, newer forms and creativeness. Time is God with the act of creation, evolution and maturity in which ultimate ego realizes and measures the infinite wealth of his own undermined possibilities. When ego lets one live and he changes by being fused/permeated from

the sad, bitter past state of consciousness to the unique, living self in present (state of time), the true duration is felt. In other words, the bitterness of the past time or the states of mind of the past time melts (permeates) by the stern realization of truth of some kind through the loss of his personhood in the present time. In other words, when the two states of the two different times melt into one another, then the pure duration is felt as fused together with the consciousness which is ever new, ever newer flow. Concerning the idea of the pure duration by the melting of states of conscious Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states:

Pure duration is the form which the succession of our conscious states assumes when our ego lets itself live, when it refrains from separating its present state from its former states. For this purpose, it need not be entirely absorbed in the passing sensation or idea; for then, on the contrary, it would no longer endure. Nor need it forget its former states: it is enough that, in recalling these states, it does not set them alongside its actual state as one point alongside another, but forms both the past and the present states into an organic whole, as happens when we recall the notes of a tune, melting, so to speak, into one another. Might it not be said that, even if these notes succeed one another, yet we perceive them in one another, and that their totality may be compared to a living being whose parts, although distinct, permeate one another just because they are so closely connected? (100)

The states of consciousness that is separable or countable like physical objects measure duration. But the conscious states that are continuous do not measure duration. The things in the physical world are external; they are naturally distinct or separate from one another. So there is no realization of any genuine succession of the

things in the physical world. On the other hand, in the pure duration there is the succession of the two states of consciousness which are not like the things in the external world or like the space. Duration and succession belong only to the qualitative multiplicity of consciousness that retains their states in their co-existence by being permeated into one another. In other words, the states of external world exist by themselves. They are distinct and separated from one another whereas the states of consciousness exist by being permeated into one another by retaining the external world in this permeability. In other words, the duration belongs to consciousness only. But there is neither duration nor succession in space for the successive states of external world (physical things) exist alone and do not multiply in real way or permeate either. In regard to the successive, permeable and interpenetrative multiplicity of the states of consciousness Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states:

We can thus conceive of succession without distinction, and think of it as a mutual penetration, an inter connection and organization of elements, each one of which represents the whole, and cannot be distinguished or isolated from it except by abstract thought. Such is the account of duration which would be given by a being who was ever the same and ever changing, and who had no idea of space. (101)

In the same spirit, the pure duration is extensity and succession. It is continuous and not discrete one. On the other hand, the duration of space has no interpenetrating nature into one another. In short, the duration of the multiplicity of space is not the pure duration but simultaneous one only. Concerning the duration of extensity and succession of the qualitative multiplicity and of the duration of simultaneity of space Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states: “We express duration in terms of extensity, and succession thus takes the form of a continuous line

or a chain, the parts of which touch without penetrating one another. Note that the mental image thus shaped implies the perception, no longer successive, but simultaneous, of a before and after” (101). The qualitative multiplicity of the change of conscious states is successive and continuous. On the other hand, the quantitative multiplicity of consciousness in space is not interpenetrating into one another. Hence they are bound to be discrete and divisible.

The pure duration is qualitative change of the conscious states. It is reducible to many things like changes, maturity, creation and freedom. Concerning the reducibility of the pure duration into the various forms Bergson *Time and Free Will* states: “The pure duration might well be nothing but a succession of qualitative changes, which melt into and permeate one another, without precise outlines, without any tendency to externalize themselves in relation to one another, without any affiliation with number: it would be pure heterogeneity” (104).

The pure duration of the change of qualitative multiplicity is reduced to time in which the states of consciousness melt into one another. The ego realizes the illusion of the past state of living and changes into a genuine new form or state. In short, the past state continues into the present evolving to a new creative realization of beauty, truth and eternity and so on. On the other hand, the discrete (divided) time denoted by our clock into equal portions (short / long) is measurable and hence something different from the true duration. In regard to the distinction between the true duration and the discrete time Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states:

Granted that inner duration, perceived by consciousness, is nothing else but the melting of states of consciousness into one another, and the gradual growth of the ego, it will be said, not withstanding, that the

time which the astronomer introduces into his formulae, the time which our clocks divide into equal portions, this time, at least, is something different: it must be a measurable and therefore homogeneous magnitude. (107)

The pure duration of the qualitative conscious states is interpenetrative into one another but the duration of the quantitative and homogenous conscious state is not inter-penetrable. They simply measure the time intervals. Hence they are divisible, countable and discrete.

The pure duration of the qualitative multiplicity of conscious states is progression from the past state to the present state. It is motion – a passage from one point to another. The conscious states of the past and the present co-exist by a kind of mental synthesis known as permeation (fusion) into one another. The evolution of the fusion of the conscious states of the past to the present consciousness is the true duration. Regarding the pure duration by the fusion of the two states of consciousness Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states:

Now, if we reflect further, we shall see that the successive positions of the moving body really do occupy space, but that the process by which it passes from one position to the other, a process which occupies duration and which has no reality except for a conscious spectator, eludes space. We have to do here not with an object but with a progress: motion, in so far as it is a passage from one point to another, is a mental synthesis, a psychic and therefore un-extended process. Space contains only parts of space, and at whatever point of space we consider the moving body, we shall get only a position. If consciousness is aware of anything more than positions, the reason is

that it keeps the successive positions in mind and synthesizes them.

(113)

In the qualitative multiplicity of the conscious states, several states of consciousness are organized synthetically into a whole by permeation of one another. Therefore, the pure duration or time is the synthetic change of the multiplicity of the several conscious states of mind. In regard to the permeation of several conscious states of mind in a more evolving and creativeness Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states: “Thus I said that several conscious states are organized into a whole, permeate one another, gradually gain a richer content, and might thus give any one ignorant of space the feeling of pure duration” (122).

The pure duration or time is permeable. In other words, it is the permeability of the several conscious states of mind that is responsible for the pure duration. Hence the pure duration cannot be possible without the permeability of the several conscious states into one another.

There are two kinds of multiplicities of conscious states: one is the homogeneous multiplicity of conscious states and the other is the heterogeneous multiplicity of conscious states. The consciousness into homogeneous space is refracted and broken into parts. It is not a true self but a shadow only. It is applicable only in social life. On the other hand, the multiplicity of heterogeneous kind is the continuous and melting or fusing of the several states of mind which by continuous succession form an organic whole. This is a ‘being’ which is synonymously known as duration. In other words, the pure duration is the fusion of the several states of mind of the past time into one evolving and heterogeneously creative form in the present time. Concerning the pure duration of successive and melting or forming organic whole Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states:

We should therefore distinguish two forms of multiplicity, two very different ways of regarding duration, two aspects of conscious life, Below homogeneous duration, which is the extensive symbol of true duration, a close psychological analysis distinguishes a duration whose heterogeneous moments permeate one another; below the numerical multiplicity of conscious states, a qualitative multiplicity ; below the self with well-defined states, a self in which succeeding each other means melting into one another and forming an organic whole. (128)

Time is the permeation or the melting of several states of consciousness of the past time into one unified whole in the present time. The permeation of the states of consciousness of the past and the present time is realized in violent love and other such strong feelings. The bitter, confusing or anguished heart or self and other such elements dissolve; a person's self-extinguishes and the fusion occurs resulting in a new, creative and free form of life. In regard to the creative and free form of life by the dissolved states of consciousness Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states:

This overwhelming of the immediate consciousness is nowhere as striking as in the case of our feelings. A violent love or a deep melancholy takes possession of our soul. Here we feel a thousand different elements which dissolve into and permeate one another without any precise outlines, without the least tendency to externalize themselves in relation to one another; hence their originality. We distort them as soon as we distinguish a numerical multiplicity in their confused mass: what will it be, then, when we set them out, isolated from one another, in this homogeneous medium which may be called either time or space, whichever you prefer? (132-133)

In violent love and other such strong feeling of suffering, the conscious states of past and present time are permeated so naturally that there is no much need of externalizing them. The bitter feelings of sufferings of past time dissolve and result in a new and creative force.

Time is the evolution of the permeated states of consciousness. It evolves to any dynamic and free course of self. In short, time or pure duration is reducible into any free course. When one acts, he is free. In this regard of time of free action Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* writes: "It is the whole soul, in fact, which gives rise to the free decision: and the act will be so much the freer the more the dynamic series with which it is connected tends to be the fundamental self" (167).

Time is the change of the permeated state of consciousness. The self which feels thinks and acts has a blending or permeable capacity. As soon as the two selves or the two conscious states of past and present blend or permeate, the change takes place evolving into a new and creative way. The evolution of the permeated state of consciousness in the present time is reducibly a true 'being', freedom, creation. Regarding the reducibility of pure duration into several evolutions Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states: "A dynamic series of states is thus formed which permeate and strengthen one another, and which will lead by a natural evolution to a free act" (171).

The time is the evolution of the permeated states of consciousness. While expressing one's personality, the conscious states fuse together into a new innovative form or self. In other words, it is the conscious expression of the self in which the embittered past fuses with the present state of mind changing the whole personality

into a mature and free self. In regard to the time as free play of mind Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states:

In short, we are free when our acts spring from our whole personality, when they express it. But, as soon as this blending takes place, it must be admitted that the change which has supervened in our character belongs to us, that we have appropriated it. In a word, if it is agreed to call every act free which springs from the self and from the self alone, the act which bears the mark of our personality is truly free. --In truth, the deeper psychic states, those which are translated by free acts, express and sum up the whole of our past history. (173/185)

Time is the evolution of the permeated states of consciousness. When one acts in free way, he can change himself in any way he likes. Time is the change of the consciousness reducibly in the way he likes.

The pure duration is nothing but the permeation of some psychic state of mind which are heterogeneous as they belong to two different moments of a life story. In other words, it is some deep seated and repressed thoughts or feelings of the several parts of the past time that consciously fuse with the present state of mind resulting in a new, innovative, mature, evolving self which is known as time, creation, freedom and so on. Concerning the idea of true duration by the permeation of self Bergson writes: "Now, if duration is what we say, deep seated psychic states are radically heterogeneous to each other and it is impossible that any two of them should be quite alike, since they are two different moments of a life-story" (200).

Time is the qualitative multiplicity of the change of the permeated states of consciousness which is not discrete but the continuous evolution of the permeated self. The real time is the succession or the continuity of the permeated states of

consciousness. The successive moments of the real time are not bound up with one another. The principle of causality binds the future to the present. But the successive moments of the real time are free from such bondages. No logic can prove that what has been will be or continue to be. Therefore, there is the succession of one moment, one time. In short, the whole duration or the time of the heterogeneously permeated states of consciousness is confined into one present moment. The duration of all things or all events is contained in one single moment which is eternity. Descartes and Spinoza were all well aware of this secret of the successive nature of time of all states of consciousness contained in one single moment. In respect to the continuous and one single moment of the qualitative multiplicity of change Bergson writes:

Descartes understood this so well that he attributed the regularity of the physical world and the continuation of the same effects to the constantly renewed grace of Providence; he built up, as it were, an instantaneous physics, intended for a universe the whole duration of which might as well be confined to the present moment. And Spinoza maintained that the indefinite series of phenomena, which takes for us the form of a succession in time, was equivalent, in the absolute, to the divine unity: he thus assumed, on the one hand, that the relation of apparent causality between phenomena melted away into a relation of identity in the absolute, and, on the other, that the indefinite duration of things was all contained in a single moment, which is eternity. (208)

The real time is continuous absolute and one single moment. The necessary conditions to feel the time as continuous and one single moment are the change and the endurance. To be changed is to feel the absolute time. Endurance is another cause of the change of the conscious states. The embittered, frustrated states of mind or of

consciousness of the long period in the past find permeation that evolves to a new mature consciousness. All these permeation of a newer self becomes possible only because one (the sufferer or the oppressed) endures those embittered, sad feelings of long period of childhood or adolescence. In other words, time is the change or the evolution to a new and creative self and the change is due to the endurance of the embittered and frustrated states of consciousness of the past time. The idea of the time as the change because of the long endurance is greatly lacking in the concept of the time as the change of the homogenous multiplicity of consciousness or of things in space. In Regard to the creative force of change and endurance Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states: "That under the influence of the same external conditions I do not behave today as I behaved yesterday is not at all surprising, because I change, because I endure. But things considered apart from our perception do not seem to endure" (209).

Duration is the characteristic form of conscious state. Endurance is the necessary condition to come to this point of 'time' in life. Thus, the duration and the endurance are the basic safeguards of human freedom. Concerning the duration and endurance as safeguard for a free force Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states:

Sometimes, on the other hand, duration is regarded as the characteristic form of conscious states; in this case, things are no longer supposed to endure as we do, and a mathematical pre-existence of their future in their present is admitted. Now, each of these two hypotheses, when taken by itself, safeguards human freedom; for the first would lead to the result that even the phenomena of nature were contingent, and the second, by attributing the necessary determination of physical phenomena to the fact that things do not endure as we do, invites us to

regard the self which is subject to duration as a free force. Therefore, every clear conception of causality, where we know our own meaning, leads to the idea of human freedom as a natural consequence. (216)

Time or the inner duration is a qualitative multiplicity of the conscious states of mind which is something internal event or evolution. On the other hand, the time of the homogenous multiplicity of consciousness is something external. There is no duration but simultaneity (sameness) in the homogenous multiplicity of consciousness. There is no doubt that external things change, but their moments do not succeed one another. To put duration in space is really to contradict oneself and place succession within simultaneity. Hence, the external things do not endure. Regarding the qualitative multiplicity of the inner duration and simultaneity of external things in space Bergson in *Time and Free Will* states:

What is duration within us? A qualitative multiplicity, with no likeness to number; an organic evolution which is yet not an increasing quantity; a pure heterogeneity within which there are no distinct qualities. In a word, the moments of inner duration are not external to one another. What duration is there existing outside us? The present only is, or, if we prefer the expression, simultaneity. No doubt external things change, but their moments do not succeed one another. We observe outside us at a given moment a whole system of simultaneous positions; of the simultaneities which have preceded them nothing remains. To put duration in space is really to contradict oneself and place succession within simultaneity. (227)

The time of the change of homogenous multiplicity of consciousness which is like the things in space is simultaneous without succession. There is something

external in it also. On the other hand, the time of the change of qualitative multiplicity of consciousness is successive and continuous. There is no externality in it also. In regard to the multiplicity of the space and the multiplicity of pure duration Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states:

Thus in consciousness we find states which succeed, without being distinguished from one another; and in space simultaneities which, without succeeding, are distinguished from one another, in the sense that one has ceased to exist when the other appears. Outside us, mutual externality without succession; within us, succession without mutual externality. (227)

Pure duration is the qualitative multiplicity of the conscious states of mind. The multiplicity is an absolute heterogeneity. It restores its original purity in developing of inner psychic states, their interpenetration (fusion) and thus evolving continuously to a free person in a new and newer way. In regard to the heterogeneous, qualitative and interpenetrative multiplicity of conscious states Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* writes: “But inner phenomena in their developing, and in so far as they make up, by their interpenetration, the continuous evolution of a free person. Duration, thus restored to its original purity, will appear as a wholly qualitative multiplicity, an absolute heterogeneity of elements which pass over into one another” (229).

Time is the qualitative multiplicity of change of the fused or the permeated states of mind. Several states of consciousness of the past time fuse with the state of mind of the present time and thus succeed evolving into a new and mature self. Kant did not see this reality of duration or time as the permeation of several states of consciousness inside one another. Rather, he saw time as a homogeneous multiplicity

of change of the conscious states. He put the self which is free outside both space and time. In short, Kant saw time in space. But for Bergson time is in the consciousness. It is the mobility or the change of the states of consciousness that permit resulting as a unified creative whole. In regard to the idea of time as the permeation of states of consciousness, Bergson in *Time and Free Will* states:

Kant's great mistake was to take time as a homogeneous medium. He did not notice that real duration is made up of moments inside one another, and that when it seems to assume the form of a homogeneous whole, it is because it gets expressed in space. Thus the very distinction which he makes between space and time amounts at bottom to confusing time with space, and the symbolical representation of the ego with the ego itself. (232)

Emanuel Kant views time as the change of the homogenous multiplicity of the conscious states of mind which is divisible and discrete like the material objects in space. On the other hand, Bergson views time as the change of heterogeneous multiplicity of conscious states of mind that fuse together forming a new unified whole.

Time is the qualitative multiplicity of change of the permeated states of consciousness in which the change is within the conscious states of mind of the past and the present time. In other words, duration or free self is outside space or into a self and it is heterogeneous in nature. On the other hand, Kant confused duration with space. For him, consciousness was incapable of perceiving psychic states that fuse and form a new unified whole. Therefore, he made genuine free self within space that became discrete and outside time. In other words, the notion of his homogenous time was discrete and not as the continuous permeation of the conscious states. In regard to

Kant's notion of time in space as homogenous and discrete, Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states:

The controlling factor in the whole of this theory is the very sharp distinction between the matter of consciousness and its form, between the homogeneous and the heterogeneous. Kant preferred to put freedom outside time and to raise an impassable barrier between the world of phenomena, which he hands over root and branch to our understanding, and the world of things in them. (235)

Time is the qualitative multiplicity of change of the permeated states of consciousness. In course of the permeation of the conscious states of past into a new unified whole, the self evolves heterogeneously into any freeway like creation, maturation, eternity, salvation and so on. In other words, the states of consciousness if permeated to one another would be free and redeemed. Concerning the free act of the heterogeneous multiplicity of conscious states Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* states if "an attentive consciousness, permeated one another instead of lying side by side, and if these moments formed in relation to one another a heterogeneity within which the idea of necessary determination lost every shred of meaning, then the self-grasped by consciousness would be a free cause" (235).

One is free whenever he is willing to get back into his self where the action is freely performed. But one must not fall in the illusion through which he confuses succession and simultaneity, duration and extensity, quality and quantity from which one can filter true duration or true time.

Time is not discrete. It is not the discrete homogeneous multiplicity of consciousness in space like the physical things. Rather, it is a heterogeneous

multiplicity of consciousness in mobility or duration. It is a single moment of the present. It is one instant present which ever continues forming a unified whole. In short, time is an extremely continuous flow of human psychic states.

Time is synonymously reduced to duration, permeation, blending, mingling, fusion, change, mobility, incompleteness, evolution, maturation, creation, invention, transformation, eternity. Inside them all is the very idea of time. The 'time' is nothing in itself; it bears the afore-said names. If we put these names aside, then time is nothing. In other words, time is an absentee without these mobile, creative and free acts; it is found nowhere if we search no quality in them. Hence, time is the qualitative entity.

2.2.2 Bergson's Concept of Time in his work *Creative Evolution*

Time is a change of the permeated states of consciousness. Sensations, feelings, volitions, ideas and so on are all ever changing phenomena into which one's life is divided and which shape it evolving to a new to newer self. In other words, he changes without ceasing. If the conscious states cease to change or if the mobility or the change itself stops, then the time cannot emanate. It will cease to exist in itself. Regarding the time that emanates from the change Bergson in his *Creative Evolution* states:

I say indeed that I change, but the change seems to me to reside in the passage from one state to the next: of each state, taken separately, I am apt to think that it remains the same during all the time that it prevails. Nevertheless, a light effort of attention would reveal to me that there is no feeling, no idea and no volition which is not undergoing change

every moment: if a mental state ceased to vary, its duration would cease to flow. (8)

Time is the change of the permeated states of consciousness. And the very change is life in its permeation. After a long endurance the consciousness posits the change variously from one state to another evolving to a new mature and creative self. In other words, to exist is to change and to change is to mature and to mature, in turn, is to go on creating oneself endlessly. Regarding the time as evolution of change, maturity and creativity, Bergson in his *Creative Evolution* states: “We are seeking only the precise meaning that our consciousness gives to this word “exist,” and we find that, for a conscious being, to exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly” (10).

Time is evolution of the conscious states of mind in their permeation. It is reducible to maturity, creation, redemption and so on.

Time is change and evolution and reducibly creation. Each of the moments of one's life is a kind of creation. Everyone is like the artisans. As the talent of a painter is embodied (formed or deformed) in his painting and thus is modified and evolved under the influence of his work, so each of the states of consciousness modifies his personality which evolves more and more mature to a new and newer self. In short, duration is creation in the process of getting more and more evolved. What one does is the creation of self by self. In regard to the time as evolution and reducibly creation Bergson in *Creative Evolution* states:

Even with regard to the moments of our life, of which we are the artisans. Each of them is a kind of creation. And just as the talent of the painter is formed or deformed—in any case, is modified—under the

very influence of the works he produces, so each of our states, at the moment of its issue, modifies our personality. we are, to a certain extent, what we do, and that we are creating ourselves continually. This creation of self by self is the more complete, the more one reasons on what one does. (10)

Time or the pure duration is an evolution. It is continuous and not discrete. For mathematicians there is interval. He places himself at a certain point at a particular moment. He divides the interval in to infinitely small parts. For him each moment of things is a static moment and not flowing time. The world of mathematicians deals with a world that dies and is reborn at every instant. But for Bergson and Descartes time is indivisible and continuous. Evolution implies a real persistence of past in the present. Duration is the continuity of change and preservation of past in the present. A living being or natural system comes across these attributes with consciousness. In shorts, life is evolution and invention. It is an unceasing evolution and creation. Regarding the successive and continuous evolution of time to a newer self Bergson in *Creative Evolution* states:

The world the mathematician deals with is a world that dies and is reborn at every instant—the world which Descartes was thinking of when he spoke of continued creation. But, in time thus conceived, how could evolution, which is the very essence of life, ever take place? Evolution implies a real persistence of the past in the present, a duration which is, as it were, a hyphen, a connecting link. Continuity of change, preservation of the past in the present, real duration—the living being seems, then, to share these attributes with consciousness.

Can we go further and say that life, like conscious activity, is invention, is unceasing creation. (10)

Life is evolution; time is evolution. Life and time are reducibly the evolution to a newer self in which the past psychic or embittered states of consciousness is preserved in the present state of consciousness. In short, time is nothing but the continuous evolution and creation to an ever new and newer self from the several psychic embittered events of the past that permeate in the present resulting in new evolution.

Time is a continuous evolution and creation in the permeated states of consciousness in of the present time. The more one is conscious to his permeated self, the more evolving or progressive he will be towards his existence or towards the pure duration. In this evolution he is free. In other words, freedom lies in being conscious to the permeated state of self in the present time. It is in this awakening of the consciousness to his permeated self or to the pure duration that life and actions are free. In regard to the evolution, consciousness, pure duration and freedom Bergson in his *Creative Evolution* states: “The more we succeed in making ourselves conscious of our progress in pure duration, the more we feel the different parts of our being enter into each other. It is in this that life and action are free” (80).

Intuition is a very essential factor for the evolution of conscious states of mind. As the evolution for the conscious states is continuous from the long enduring past to the present state of permeation, there need a great intuition for it. Intelligence will be an astray for such continuous evolution of the conscious states of mind because the intelligence is basically needed for the static and discrete evolution of matter or the things in space. In other words, true evolution of the conscious states of

mind cannot be possible without the long enduring intuition. Regarding the long enduring intuition in the evolution of time and creation Bergson in his *Creative Evolution* states:

The object of philosophy would be reached if this intuition could be sustained, generalized and, above all, assured of external points of reference in order not to go astray. Every human work in which there is invention, every voluntary act in which there is freedom, every movement of an organism that manifests spontaneity, brings something new into the world. True, these are only creations of form. (93)

Time is evolution which can be reduced into anything like creation and maturation. The creation of a world is a free act. In vital activity (*élan vital*) one can see a reality which is remaking itself in a real or which is unmaking itself. In other words, the illusion of reality is presented in the free act of creativity. Reality is the remaking. God, as defined, has nothing of the already made. He is unceasing life, action and freedom. Similarly, creation is not a mystery. One experiences it in himself when he acts freely. In regard to evolution and creation as free act Bergson in his *Creative Evolution* writes:

I do not present this center as a thing, but as a continuity of shooting out. God thus defined, has nothing of the already made; He is unceasing life, action, freedom. Creation, so conceived, is not a mystery; we experience it in ourselves when we act freely. (96)

The impetus of life is in creation. It cannot create if it is confronted with the matter which is the movement that is inversed of its own. In regard to the impetus of creation Bergson in his *Creative Evolution* states: “The impetus of life, of which we

are speaking, consists in a need of creation. It cannot create absolutely, because it is confronted with matter that is to say with the movement that is the inverse of its own” (97).

For the creative evolution of the conscious states of mind intuition rather than intellect is greatly needed. The intellect and the intuition represent the two opposite directions. The intuition goes in the direction of life and the intellect inversely goes in the direction of matter. Though these two forms of consciousness are greatly needed for a complete and perfect humanity, the intuition is completely sacrificed to intellect. In regard to the intuition in the evolution of the conscious states Bergson in *Creative Evolution* states:

Consciousness, in man, is pre—eminently intellect. It might have been, it ought, so it seems, to have been also intuition. Intuition and intellect represent two opposite directions of the work of consciousness: intuition goes in the very direction of life, intellect goes in the inverse direction, and thus finds itself naturally in accordance with the movement of matter. A complete and perfect humanity would be that in which these two forms of conscious activity should attain their full development. (101)

Time is the vital evolution of the conscious states of mind in their long and enduring permeation. It (the vital revolution) is continuous like the child’s development from infancy, adolescence, maturity to the old age. When the child becomes a man, there is imaginary stop. The reality is the transition from the childhood to the manhood. In this transition from the childhood to the manhood, the child becomes man. There is no discrete process of the child's development. Rather

there is becoming from the childhood to the manhood. In other words, there is successiveness or the continuity of the progress of the child evolution divorced from the discreteness. In analogy to the child's development, the evolutions or the changes are a succession of the states of consciousness. It is continuous and not discrete one. In regard to the vital evolution of conscious states as continuous Bergson in *Creative Evolution* states:

That the child can become a youth, ripen to maturity and decline to old age, we understand when we consider that vital evolution is here the reality itself. Infancy, adolescence, maturity, old age, are mere views of the mind, possible stops imagined by us, from without, along the continuity of a progress. The reality, which is the transition from childhood to manhood, has slipped between our fingers. We have only the imaginary stops "child" and "man," The truth is that if language here were molded on reality, we should not say "The child becomes the man," but "There is becoming from the child to the man". (119-120)

Like the continuous evolution of child's development time is also continuous, indivisible evolution. It is the qualitative changes of the conscious states in their long and enduring permeation. In contrast, the quantitative homogeneous changes of conscious states are not continuous in nature. It is like the objects in science which is discrete. Science deals discretely with the qualitative description of objects in which the changes are presented one after the other. But such changes occurring one after the other are no longer the changes of quality. Rather they are quantitative variations only. In regard to the homogenous changes of consciousness which are not changes of quality but quantitative Bergson in his *Creative Evolution* states:

A science that considers, one after the other, undivided periods of duration, sees nothing but phases succeeding phases, forms replacing forms. The changes which are produced from one moment to another are no longer, by the hypothesis, changes of quality; they are quantitative variations, it may be of the phenomenon itself, it may be of its elementary parts. (127)

Time is the flux or the mobility of being. This flux or the mobility of being is greatly lacking in the scientific knowledge of the things in space that is discrete and immobile. Concerning the discreteness, stopping and immobility of the scientific knowledge of things of the homogeneous changes of consciousness Bergson in his *Creative Evolution* states: “But it always considers moments, always virtual stopping-places, always, in short, immobility. Which amounts to saying that real time, regarded as a flux, or, in other words, as the very mobility of being, escapes the hold of scientific knowledge” (128).

Quantitative multiplicity of conscious states of mind is like the matter in space. The time acquiring space and succession one after another has nothing to change. In other words, homogenous multiplicity of change is not the change as there is no idea of succession in specific context and no fluency of duration either in the homogenous multiplicity of conscious states. In regard to the discreteness in the change of science and homogeneous consciousness Bergson in his *Creative Evolution* states: “Time thus spreads itself out in space and succession becoming juxtaposition, science has nothing to change in what it tells us, we must conclude that it takes account neither of succession nor of time in what there is in it that is fluent. It has no sign to express what strikes our consciousness in succession and duration” (129).

Time or pure duration is related to the conscious states of mind which evolves in their permeated state of present in creative way. So duration is not the fact of matter, but that of the life. In short, duration is creation and freedom. In regard to the duration as life and creation and not as matter in space Bergson in his *Creative Evolution* states: “This duration may not be the fact of matter itself, but that of the life which re ascends the course of matter; the two movements are none the less mutually dependent upon each other. The duration of the universe must therefore be one with the latitude of creation which can find place in it” (129).

Time is the ever evolving and continuous process of the permeated states of consciousness. It is the evolution which is interchangeably time. The evolution is reducibly creation, invention, succession, mobility, eternity, maturity, continuity, God and so on. Descartes long ago believed this interchangeable evolution of conscious states of mind in their long and enduring permeation. For him, the real duration is in his free will, change, invention, creation and so on. Regarding the interchangeability of evolution, creation and freedom Bergson in his *Creative Evolution* states:

Descartes believes in the free will of man. He superposes on the determinism of physical phenomena the indeterminism of human actions, and, consequently, on time—length a time in which there is invention, creation, and true succession. This duration he supports on a God who is unceasingly renewing the creative act. --The first would have led him to the denial of free will in man and of real will in God. -- In following the second, on the contrary, he would have been led to all the consequences which the intuition of true duration implies. Creation would have appeared not simply as continued, but also as continuous. The universe, regarded as a whole, would really evolve. (131)

There is no such thing as time. Time is the change of the state of mind. Time is evolution. Whatever one does is time. As long as the life evolves, the time too evolves to a newer self which is creation, freedom and other newer state of mind or consciousness. Thus, it can be said that every new act of creation represents life and time. So life is evolution and time is evolution in Bergson's concept of time in which every new act of creation represents life and time and so on.

The creative evolution is continuous, indivisible and unstoppable. Duration is superseded by change, mobility, eternity, God. On the contrary, Kant and his followers were deviated from the idea of the true process of evolution and duration. Kant's followers knew the idea of becoming, of process, of evolution. But duration does not play any part in it. They were still discrete by adding some new form from one complete form. They did not know that the real duration is that in which each form follows out of the previous form. Leibniz and Spinoza had long ago understood the reality of time as the continuous evolution of the conscious states of mind. In regard to Kant's deviation from the idea of true duration that is continuous evolution of the conscious state of mind Bergson in his *Creative Evolution* states:

It was to a non-temporal intuition that the immediate successors of Kant turned, in order to escape from the Kantian relativism. Certainly, the ideas of becoming, of progress, of evolution, seem to occupy a large place in their philosophy. Real duration is that in which each form flows out of previous forms, while adding to them something new, and is explained by them as much as it explains them; but to deduce this form directly from one complete Being which it is supposed to manifest, is to return to Spinozism. It is, like Leibniz and Spinoza, to deny to duration all efficient action. (137)

Science is based on material assumption. It knows divisibility of the matter that is discrete. There are intervals between the two events or matters as firstly this and then that happen. Bergson refutes this scientific and the Kantian idealism of discreteness of matters that is based on intellect. In a sharp contrast to the matter in space, he presents his continuum idealism of the vital force of life (*élan vital*) that leads one to change, creativity and free will superseded by time.

Bergson's creation, his principle of creation is primarily based on duration which, in turn, is further based on mobility in which he sees the vital force of life (*élan vital*).

Time is an ever evolving process of the conscious states of mind in their long enduring permeation. For such conscious being to exist into change, to change into mature, to mature into go on creating oneself endless. In regard to the ever evolving and continuousness of the qualitative changes of the conscious states of mind Bergson in his *Creative Evolution* states:

We are like an artisan who paints modifying his painting each time. We, in the process of getting more and more evolved and mature, create continuously. This process of creation is duration. In other words, duration or time is the creation in the process of getting more and more evolved and, thus, being mature. What we do is the creation of self by self. (10)

Duration is a continuous and not discrete thing. Science places the matter or thing at a certain point at a particular moment. It divides the interval into infinitely small parts. Each moment of things is, thus, a static moment in which the things occur

one after another. On the other hand, for Bergson and Descartes time is an ever evolving, continuous and indivisible flow of consciousness.

Evolution implies a real persistence of past in the present. Duration is the continuity of change and preservation of past. In short, life is invention. It is unceasing creation and evolution.

Bergson distinguishes intellect and intuition which turn in an opposite direction to each other. The intellect moves towards matter and the intuition moves towards life. Thus, there are two forms of reality which are complementary to each other as each of the thoughts leads the other forming a coherent whole to evolution.

After this, he explains that freedom lies in being conscious to the pure duration. The more one is conscious to the pure duration, the more he can feel evolved from his inner being. In this very awakening of the consciousness to the pure duration of life and actions he is free.

Bergson next distinguishes between the multiplicities of the inert matter and the vital-impetus (*élan vital*). He sees consciousness in two different ways. Consciousness is in evolution and permeation in one hand, and it is in the matter on the other hand. The consciousness that is evolution and permeation is the qualitative multiplicity of conscious states of mind. And the consciousness that is like matter is the homogeneous multiplicity of consciousness. The consciousness that is like the matter passes through the fragments, divisions and hence it is discrete. On the contrary, the consciousness that is ever evolving and continuous is vital impetus which is full of pure duration and creation and hence it is heterogeneous quality which manifests to it when creation is possible.

In *Because I could not Stop for Death* (J-712) Dickinson shows chill atmosphere that is the chillness coming in her path of eternity in the symbolic “chill” state time does not emanate. In short, time ends in chill state of consciousness. The image of setting sun - (9) reminds of her setting life, her own death and no progress to eternity.

The poem *Because I could not Stop for Death* (J-712) is the creative multiplicity of the change of her past states of her false notion of eternity to its disillusionment in the present consciousness. At first the journey in the company of the Death was pleasant (We slowly drove, He knew no haste - 5). But soon she becomes disillusioned from it. Suddenly she felt grimness, uncertainty and chillness of her death. Her gown or her shawl was not capable enough to protect her from the chillness. (Or rather – he passed us, the Dews drew quivering and chill, for only gossamer, my gown-7-10). The evil images – He passes us, quivering and chill, and gossamer made her feel that instead of the horses’ heads facing towards eternity, they were facing her to the path of her death.

Thus she becomes quite disillusioned from her thoughts of the false notion of eternity. Eternity is infinite in her present consciousness. The trouble of the past fuses in present giving the feeling of continuity of the conscious states of mind. Time is change and to change is to mature and to mature is to create endlessly for Dickinson also.

In the poem *I Heard a Fly Buzz* (J-464) she becomes disillusioned of the possibility of eternity or her after life. At her last onset in death’s bed, she believes that God will be witnessed by her (For that last onset – when the king, Be witnessed in the room – 8-9). But suddenly her aspiration of being witnessed by God dwindles

by a fly's interference between her and the window through which the God was to come. (Their interposed a fly – between the light and me, and then the window failed and then I could not see to see – 11, 13-15). This change from of her past thought of eternity to the present realization that eternity is impossible and infinite is her permeated state of consciousness.

A pure duration is the consciousness in which a person becomes fully aware of the illusions of life after being fused with the past confused and troubled states of mind. The change in the consciousness in the permeated state is time. The past state of consciousness fused in the present giving a sense of continuity of time. Time in her poem is also a continuous multiplicity of her conscious state of mind from the past to present.

Time is reducibly consciousness and creation for Bergson and for Dickinson also time is change. To exist is to change and to change is to mature and to mature is to go on creating endlessly in the permeated state of consciousness in her poetry also.

In the poem *Just Lost, When I was Saved* (J-160) Dickinson's idea of cyclical time is seen. The eternity or after-life (heaven) is impossibility. The boat taking her to eternity is so slow that centuries and centuries of time will pass but she will not reach there. Time appears so slow that centuries will wheel again and again in reaching eternity (slow tramp the centuries; And the Cycles wheel! (14-15) This realization is her permeated state of consciousness in which she realizes the illusions of eternity and comes to the real earthly ground where the true eternity is.

In the poem *Behind Me – Dips Eternity* (J-721) too, Dickinson shows her qualitative multiplicity of the permeated states of her consciousness. Eternity is an infinite thing for her. She has already experienced eternity is infinite. It lies behind her

as impossibility. Before her there is immortality. She finds her condition in-between. Before the gain of immortality, death appears at the very dawn or before the sunset or before the west begin (Death but the drift of Eastern Gray, Dissolving into dawn away, before the west begin – 3-6). Being disillusioned from the past states of troubles, bitter experiences and eternity behind her, she becomes conscious enough of the truth of life. The present realization of the truth that eternity and immortality both are impossibility is her permeated state of consciousness. Time is the change of the permeated state of consciousness for Bergson. For Dickinson also time is the change. To change is to mature and to mature is to go on creating endless.

In the poem *Embarrassment of One Another* (J-612) Dickinson shows the change of her permeated states of consciousness. She held the belief that divinity lies in the revelation of God. But later on she changed from this view of life and found that eternity is embarrassing and infinite. Really divinity is sealed (Divinity dwells under a seal – 7). Hence there comes a change in her understanding of the divinity that it lies in one's own self. It is her conscious state only to whose permeation she realized the eternity. Thus divinity does not lie in eternity but in the revelation of her own self.

In her poem *Success is Counted Sweetest* (J-67) her past state of sad, lost love is permeably felt as sweetest and soothing to her tortured heart. (As he defeated – dying, on whose forbidden ear distant strains of triumph bust agonized and clear – 9-12) The following lines show that vanquished soldier in war knows the value of victory more than the victors. Similarly, Dickinson being vanquished or frustrated in love knew the value of love and life more than the winner in love. In her agonized state the absence is felt as sweet, somber and soothing. This is the change of her life

from her past frustrated life to the present realization of the sweet and soothing permeated states of consciousness. In short, like Bergson, time is evolution, maturation and endless creation for Dickinson also.

Time is the qualitative multiplication of the change of the permeated states of the long and enduring past in the present conscious state. Dickinson's most of major poems are the result of her permeated state of consciousness. Her poem *For Each Ecstatic Instant* (J-125) is a superb example of her permeated state of consciousness (for each ecstatic instance, we must anguish pay. For each beloved our, sharp pittance of years, bitter contested far things, And coffers heaped of tears – 1-2,5-8). For each moment of love one must pay heap of tears. Tears of years fused relatively into a great ecstasy for Dickinson. In short, tears of years changed into the ecstasy. This was her qualitative change of the past tear into ecstasy in her present conscious state of mind. Like Bergson, she also believed that time is change. Change is evolution, creation, maturation in the permeated state of consciousness.

In her poem *Pain – Expands Time* (J-967) also Dickinson shows the change of her conscious states of past troubles and pains into great pleasures of eternities in her permeated state of consciousness in the present time. Pain expands time which seems as ages to have passed in a minute. (Pain expands time, ages coil within, the minute circumference – 1-4). But the expansion of time is really the contraction (shortening) of the time for Dickinson in her permeated moment of consciousness. Pain contracts the time and the pleasure of the infinite eternity is felt in the conscious moment. (The pain contracts the time, gamut's of eternities are as they were not – 5, 7-8). In short, in the permeated state of consciousness pain does not expand the time. Rather it contracts it. The change from the expansion of time in pain to the contraction of the time to the very pain is really a great permeated state of consciousness of Dickinson's life.

2.3 Zero: The Void and The Infinite in Physics

Charles Seife, one of the greatest modern figures, has vividly presented the history of zero in term of modern physics. He is a well-known science journalist of America. He has occupied a notable place in the hearts of many people for his great writing on zero entitled *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea*. Through this book he takes one on a historical, mathematical and scientific journey from the infinitesimal to the infinite. He claims that zero is among the most fertile and therefore most dangerous ideas that humanity has ever devised. Presenting the history of zero from the ancient Greek universe, created by Pythagoras, Aristotle and Ptolemy to the modern physics, Seife gracefully surveys the mystery of the modern physics where vacuum exerts pressure and where notions of “zero- point energy” inspire the fantasies of space- travel to stars that looks so alarming and challenging and almost impossible one at the present time.

In the light of these grim dangerous realities, Seife sees that the logic is failing at the zeros of the universe. Quantum theory and relativity fall apart. Finally, he reveals that the zero holds the secret of our existence. It is both nothing and everything.

Charles Seife begins his essay chronologically with the concepts of zero by discussing how the Babylonian invented it, the Greek banned it, the Hindus worshipped it and the Church being always tied with the Aristotelian universe used it to fend off heretics only.

In ancient time, there was no trace or the existence of the number – zero. To express or denote the lack of something, the modern people use zero as we have zero

banana or his balance in bank is zero. But the ancient people did their daily works without the use of zero. There was no need of the zero to them in those days. It never came up to them either.

The history of the origin of zero is very ancient one. Its roots are deeply found thousands years before the first civilization, long before human could read and write. For the ancient people zero was a foreign thing and frightening. But for the easterners, zero was a concept which evoked the images of a primal void. In regard to the origin of zero as the image of a primal void Charles Seife in his *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea* states:

The story of zero is an ancient one. Its roots stretch back to the dawn of mathematics, in the time thousands of years before the first civilization, long before humans could read and write. But as natural as zero seems to us today, for ancient peoples zero was a foreign—and frightening—idea. An Eastern concept, born in the Fertile Crescent a few centuries before the birth of Christ, zero not only evoked images of a primal void, it also had dangerous mathematical properties. Within zero there is the power to shatter the framework of logic. (34)

Zero is the concept of ancient as the image of a primal void in everything. The ancient people did their daily works without the use of zero. At the same time, they had different notion of time keeping. More than five thousand years ago, they used the moon instead of the sun to keep track of the passage of time. The moon used to determine the day, month, year for them. But they still did not have or need the zero. In regard to their system of the lunar year, Seife in his *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea* states:

Creating a stable calendar was a problem for most ancient peoples, because they generally started out with a lunar calendar: the length of a month was the time between successive full moons. It was a natural choice; the waxing and waning of the moon in the heavens was hard to overlook, and it offered a convenient way of marking periodic cycles of time. ---Since it is the solar year, not the lunar year, that determines the time for harvest and planting, the seasons seem to drift when you reckon by an uncorrected lunar year. (36)

Instead of the solar year, the ancient people had lunar year to keep track of the passage of time.

Zero has two dangerous ideas that are the void and the infinite. The Greeks remained quite blind to the notion of zero as the void and the infinite. Their concept about the earth as the center and the sun, moon, planets, stars all revolving around it was about to be shattered before the stern reality of the void and the infinity of zero. Therefore, they rejected it deliberately. In regard to the danger of the void and the infinity in zero for the Greeks Charles Seife in his work *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea* states:

The Greeks saw the usefulness of zero in their calculations, yet they still rejected it. So it was not ignorance that led the Greeks to reject zero, nor was it the restrictive Greek number-shape system. It was philosophy. Zero conflicted with the fundamental philosophical beliefs of the West, for contained within zero are two ideas that were poisonous to Western doctrine. Indeed, these concepts would

eventually destroy Aristotelian philosophy after its long reign. These dangerous ideas are the void and the infinite. (50)

The twin idea of the void and the infinite that became the bane of the end of the Pythagoras universe is in the heart of zero.

The concept of infinite and zero is wrapped up into one. The Greek believed in the empty space – an infinite void or the vacuum. There was the atomic school of thought in Greek which held the view that the universe was made up of little particles called atoms which are indivisible and eternal. The motion was the movement of these particles and there was an empty space for the atoms to move into. In regard to their belief in the concept of infinity and zero wrapped up into one Seife in his *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea* states:

The atomists believed that the universe is made up of little particles called atoms, which are indivisible and eternal. Motion was the movement of these little particles. Of course, for these atoms to move there has to be empty space for them to move into. After all, these little atoms had to move around somehow; if there were no such thing as a vacuum, the atoms would be constantly pressed against one another. Thus, the atomic theory required that the universe be filled with emptiness—an infinite void. The atomists embraced the concept of the infinite vacuum—infinity and zero wrapped into one. (53)

The atomists' concept of the motion is not so strange to the modern thinkers. But there is the need of emptiness – an infinite void or the infinite vacuum for the

atom of the thing to move. In short, motion needs infinite vacuum – infinity and zero permeated (wrapped) into one.

The idea of zero and infinite is greatly applicable in the eastern philosophy. According to the Chandogya Upanishad, the infinite is the source of joy (Seife 64). There is no joy in the finite. In Europe zero was an estranged thing. But in India, it flourished. At the core of Hinduism is monotheism and introspection. All gods are encompassed in one God known as the Brahma. The Hindu further believes that the universe was born out of void, as it is the infinite. In regard to the idea of the void and the infinite in the shape of the entire encompassing God, the Brahma Seife states: “Over centuries—centuries before Alexander arrived—the gods began to merge together. While Hinduism retained its popular rituals and devotion to its pantheon, at its core Hinduism became monotheistic and introspective. All the gods became aspects of an all-encompassing God, Brahman” (65).

The idea of the infinite and the void is mainly found in the deity Nishkala Shiva also. The Hindus strongly believe that the infinite and the void is the source from which the universe was born. Regarding the deity Nishkala Shiva that represents nothing or the void Seife states: “Shiva also represented nothingness. He was literally the Shiva “without parts.” He was the ultimate void, the supreme nothing—lifelessness incarnate. But out of the void, the universe was born, as was the infinite, the Hindu cosmos was infinite in extent; beyond our own universe were innumerable other universes” (61). Nishikala Shiva is regarded as the ultimate void or the supreme nothing. The universe too was born from the same ultimate void. Therefore, zero is a supreme creative force in Hindu philosophy.

The concept of zero is understood through the Atman, the spirit, the self, which is the smallest of all. Yet it is greater than the whole space; it does not travel at all but it is the speediest of all. The Atman as the pebble that helps in moving to everything but is move less or static in itself is the very image of the void. In regard to the Atman as the image of the void or the emptiness Seife furthermore states:

At the same time, though, the cosmos never truly abandoned its original emptiness. Nothingness was what the world came from, and to achieve nothingness again became the ultimate goal of mankind. In one story, Death tells a disciple about the soul: “Concealed in the heart of all beings is the Atman, the Spirit, the Self,” he says “Smaller than the smallest atom, greater than the vast spaces.”⁶¹)

The concept of void is seen in Atman which is smaller than the smallest atom and greater than the vast spaces. It is unmoved but it makes the life or body move.

Zero as the concept that connotes nullity or the void is apparently seen in the Hindu philosophy of the cycle of birth and death leading to the ultimate liberation too. When self-extinguishes and realizes the veil of Maya/illusion of the world in almost everything everywhere, then one becomes united with the Brahman. Regarding their concept of the self as nothing Seife states:

The goal of the Hindu is to free the Atman entirely from the cycle of rebirth, to stop wandering from death to death. The way to achieve the ultimate liberation through lifelessness is to cease paying heed to the illusion of reality. “The body, the house of the spirit, is under the power of pleasure and pain,” explains a god. “And if a man is ruled by

his body then this man can never be free.” But once you are able to separate yourself from the whims of the flesh and embrace the silence and nothingness of your soul, you will be liberated. Your Atman will fly from the web of human desire and join the collective consciousness—the infinite soul that suffuses the universe, at once everywhere and nowhere at the same time. It is infinity, and it is nothing. (62)

Ataman, soul or God is unthinkable without the presence of the zero- infinite and the void. It is the zero or the infinite of the soul that can alone help one in being liberated from the veil of Maya/illusion of the world in everything, everywhere.

In the same pace, Bhaskara, a twelfth century Indian mathematician, also believes that God is found unalterably in infinite and in zero. Regarding his conception of the infinite and the zero which equates God Seife states: “God was found in infinity—and in zero” (65).

Europe welcomed the zero and infinite during the Renaissance period. In many of the Renaissance paintings also the zero appeared. In Brunelleschi’s painting, a point at the center of drawing of a building becomes an infinitesimal, nothing with length, no width, and no height. In other words, the zero is shown as a vanishing point in the center of his painting. Regarding the appearance of zero as a vanishing point or the void in the painting Seife states:

In 1425, Brunelleschi placed just such a point in the center of a drawing of a famous Florentine building, the Baptistery. This zero-dimensional object, the vanishing point, is an infinitesimal dot on the

canvas that represents a spot infinitely far away from the viewer.

Everything sufficiently distant—people, trees, buildings—is squashed into a zero-dimensional point and disappears. The zero in the center of the painting contains infinity of space. (71)

The people of Europe also knew the value of the zero and the infinite during the Renaissance period. The vanishing point in the painting is the state of void in the Renaissance arts.

Rene Descartes born in 1596 in France also believes in the zero or in the concept of zero but he turns between the old and the new. He rejects the void but puts it at the center of the world. Like Plato, learning is just a remembrance for him. Concerning his double nature of the belief in zero and rejection of the void Seife writes:

Descartes assumed that nothing, not even knowledge, can be created out of nothing, which means that all ideas—all philosophies, all notions, all future discoveries—already exist in people's brains when they are born. Since we have a concept of an infinite perfect being in our minds, Descartes then argued that this infinite and perfect being—God—must exist. All other beings are less than divine; they are finite. They all lie somewhere between God and naught. They are a combination of infinity and zero. (75)

For Descartes God is an infinite perfect being where as other beings are in-between. They are infinite and finite intermixed.

The existence of zero, infinite and the void is seen for the first time in the history of science too. While raising water out of well and canals in Italy through a kind of pump, which was like a syringe, it was lifted only 33 ft. On lifting it for the second time the water level remained the same. Hearing the curious phenomenon of the water level from the workers, Galileo passed the problem to his assistant, Torricelli. In 1643, Torricelli made an experiment with the mercury filled in a tube and on upending it found that the level of mercury sank down a bit, leaving a space at the top. It rose 13 inches above the dish or the tube and the rest space was vacuum. This proved that there was the existence of the vacuum or the void. Nature abhorred a vacuum only 13 inches. The empty space was zero or nothing. Regarding nature's partial abhorrence of the vacuum and the empty space known as the zero Seife states:

In 1643, Torricelli took a long tube that was closed at one end and filled it with mercury. He upended it, placing the open end in a dish also filled with mercury. --But when it was upended in a dish of mercury, there was no air to replace the mercury in the tube. If nature truly abhorred a vacuum so much, the mercury in the tube would have to stay put so as not to create a void. The mercury didn't stay put. It sank downward a bit, leaving a space at the top. What was in that space? Nothing. It was the first time in history anyone had created a sustained vacuum. (76)

The Zero or the infinite and the void got the scientific approval for the first time in 1643. The experiment proved that there is the existence of vacuum in nature too.

The vacuum exists in nature. To test it in scientific way, Blaise Pascal made an experiment in 1648. He sent his brother-in-law to the top of the mountain with a tube filled with mercury who found that there was atmospheric pressure that was pushing up and down to the mercury in the tube. On the top of the mountain, there is less atmospheric pressure, so it was pushing down to the level of 30, 20 in the middle and 26 inches on the top of the mountain. In short, on the top of the mountain, the mercury rose less than 30 inches due to less atmospheric pressure. In regard to the evidence of the existence of the vacuum or the zero state Seife states: “Since the atmosphere cannot push infinitely hard, it can only drive mercury about 30 inches up the tube—and at the top of the mountain, there is less atmosphere pushing down, so the air can’t even push the mercury as high as 30 inches” (78). The experiment of Pascal shows that nature has no repugnance for the vacuum. It admits vacuum without difficulty and without resistance. This opened a new horizon of thinking for the first time in the history. Aristotle was defeated. People stopped fearing the void and began to study it.

In the kelvin’s scale, zero degree is absolute zero. In thermodynamics, the absolute zero is possible. But in actuality, there is a barrier in it and it, hence, is an unattainable goal. Everything in the universe is conspiring to stop anyone to attain absolute zero because any object that has energy is bouncing / dancing around and radiates light. So nothing can be in absolute state. Even a single banana in the box cannot be free from wiggled (struck) and bounced by the molecules of the box itself that radiates light and make the banana’s molecules move again. In regard to the existence of the zero that lacks its absoluteness Seife states:

Say you are trying to cool a banana to absolute zero. To get rid of all of the energy in the banana, you’ve got to stop its atoms from moving

around; you have to put it in a box and cool it down. However, the box the banana is in is made of atoms, too. The box's atoms are wiggling around, and they will bump the banana's atoms and set them in motion again. ---Light is constantly coming off of the box and striking the banana, getting the banana's molecules to move again. (109)

The absolute zero is impossible in reality as there remains some vacuum even in the center of the something by which the movement of molecule becomes possible.

On the other hand, in quantum mechanics the zero-point energy is possible. It holds the view that the entire universe including vacuum is filled with infinite amount of energy. It is called the zero-point energy which leads to the most bizarre zero in the universe that is the phantom force of nothing. In regard to Einstein's revolutionary idea of such zero- point energy Seife states:

Quantum mechanics got rid of the zero in the classical theory of light—removing the infinite energy that supposedly came from every bit of matter in the universe. A zero in quantum mechanics means that the entire universe—including the vacuum—is filled with an infinite amount of energy: the zero-point energy. This, in turn, leads to the most bizarre zero in the universe: the phantom force of nothing. (112)

In the same spirit, the zero-point energy is found in the quantum mechanics which is limitless or more powerful than stored in all the coal mines or oil fields. In regard to the immensely vast and limitless energy in the mass Seife states:

This is the zero-point energy, infinity in the formulas of quantum theory. Interpreted strictly, the zero-point energy is limitless.

According to the equations of quantum mechanics, more power than is stored in all the coal mines, oil fields, and nuclear weapons in the world is sitting in the space inside your toaster. (115)

The Heisenberg's uncertainty principle also believes in the existence of vacuum or the emptiness that an object or a thing occupies. The vacuum is the void state. It has no particles, no light, nothing. So there should have no energy at all in it. Yet it cannot be free from it. There is certain amount of energy in it but how much amount of energy it contains is quite uncertain because one cannot measure a particle's position and its velocity with perfect accuracy at same time. For example, the length of pencil and its velocity cannot be measured at the same time because the velocity changes slightly by the nudge or the touch of it. In regard to the fluctuating measurement of vacuum Seife States:

This means that in a sufficiently small volume, even in a vacuum, we have some uncertainty about the amount of energy inside. But uncertainty about the energy in a vacuum sounds ridiculous. The vacuum, by definition, has nothing in it—no particles, no light, nothing. Thus, the vacuum should have no energy at all. Yet according to Heisenberg's principle, we cannot know how much energy there is in a volume of the vacuum at any given time. The energy in a tiny volume of vacuum must be fluctuating constantly. (115)

Zero in quantum mechanics fills vacuum with the infinite energy but the zero in relativity creates paradox: a black hole. Einstein's special theory of relativity shows that time changes with motion. Time is relative to the speed an observer is travelling.

As fast or slow the observer travels, so fast / slow the time will be too. Thus, the existence of time depends on the traveler or space.

Einstein's general theory of relativity explains that the gravity warps and slows time and why time moves slightly slower in the region of high gravity, sun, stars, compared to the regions of less gravity such as planets. For example, when a plane travels east in the direction of earth rotation where the gravity is high, the clock on the plane becomes slow relative to the atomic clock on the ground. When the plane travels west where the gravitation is slow (low), the clocks on plane become fast. It is due to the gravitation of rotating earth or due to the time dilating effects. To sum up, time runs millions times slower on the sun's surface. The radar signals and their reflections from the planets are delayed (slowed) when the sun is near the path of the signal.

Due to the gravitation of rotating earth and of the time dilating effects the time slows down or it becomes fast. The time slowing effect can be realized when one of a twin child or an astronaut makes a space travel in the speed of light for twenty years. He will be of twenty years on his return to earth but other of the twin who remained on the earth will be of the age of his father and his father himself to grandfather. Concerning Einstein's relativity of the time dilating effect on age Seife states:

Einstein realized that there is one way around this: the flow of time changes, depending on an observer's speed. The clock on the train must tick more slowly than the stationary clock. Ten seconds for the observer on the ground might seem like only five seconds for somebody on the train. It's the same thing for a person who zooms away at great speed. Every tick of his stopwatch takes more than a

second from a stationary observer's point of view. If an astronaut took a 20-year journey (according to his pocket watch) at nine-tenths of the speed of light, he would come back to Earth having aged 20 years, as expected. But everyone who stayed behind would have aged 46 years. (117)

The beginning and the ending of time depend upon the velocity or the speed. In the slow movement, time slows down. But in the light's speed the time comes to an end. According to the general relativity, time stops in the black hole. It stops and becomes zero when a spaceship approaches the speed of light. Concerning the relativity of time and its slowing effect Seife states:

When a spaceship approaches the speed of light, time slows down more and more and more. If the ship were to travel at the speed of light, every tick of the clock on board would equal infinite seconds on the ground. In less than a fraction of a second, billions and billions of years would pass; the universe would have already met its ultimate fate and burned itself out. For an astronaut aboard the spaceship, time stops. The flow of time is multiplied by zero. (119)

Time is relative to the speed. It relatively ends in the speed of light. The speed of light is ultimate. But the speed of everything is limited. Nothing can move or travel in the speed of light. So, in actuality zero does not rule in physics. For example, as anyone / anything take the speed of light, he/it soon becomes massively heavy like the black hole and consequently cannot move further more. Thus, no speed of light is taken by any spaceship. And zero cannot rule there. Regarding the bizarre nature of the zero Seife states:

Luckily, it is not so easy to stop time. As the spaceship goes ever faster, time slows down more and more, but at the same time, the spaceship's mass gets greater and greater. It is like pushing a baby carriage where the baby grows and grows. Pretty soon you are pushing a sumo wrestler—not so easy. If you manage to push the carriage even faster, the baby becomes as massive as a car...and then a battleship...and then a planet...and then a star...and then a galaxy. As the baby gets more massive, your push has less and less effect. The spaceship—or for that matter any other object with mass—never quite reaches the speed of light. The speed of light is the ultimate speed limit; you cannot reach it, much less exceed it. Nature has defended itself from an unruly zero. (119)

Nature is highly disciplined as it limits the speed. Nothing beside the light has the ultimate speed. If anything takes the speed of light, it becomes massively heavy like the black hole.

Despite its limitation, zero is too powerful even for nature. Einstein presents the ultimate zero and the worst infinity (the black hole) in his general theory of relativity. In his equations, he treats time and space as the synonymous of each other. Time is space and the space is time together. They are the same thing. Together they form space-time (continuum). In the space-time correlation, Einstein suggests that in different spaces or as the acceleration changes in different spaces, the time also changes with it. In short, the time is different for different spaces or different acceleration in the movement through spaces. Discussing Einstein's idea of the power of the zero or the end of time in the black hole, despite its bizarreness Seife states:

However, zero is too powerful even for nature. The general theory of relativity—would describe the ultimate zero and the worst infinity of them all: the black hole. Einstein's equations treat time and space as different aspects of the same thing. We are already used to the idea that if you accelerate, you change the way you move through space; you can speed up or slow down. It can speed up the way time flows or slow it down. Thus, when you accelerate an object—when you subject it to any force, be it gravity or be it the push of a gigantic cosmic elephant—you change its motion through space and through time: through space-time. (119)

Time ends in the infinity of the black hole. The zero is the ultimate where the worst infinity, the black hole exists. Zero, infinite and the end of time can be understood through an analogy of rubber sheet too. When a heavy object is kept on a rubber sheet, it distorts by the pressure on it. In other words, the rubber sheet becomes curved, gravitated by the weight of the object. The same way, space becomes distorted or curved by the heavy weight of the sun's mass or by the dying stars' massive weight (black hole) or by other heavy weights. This distortion or curvature is gravity. Along with the curvature of the space, the time becomes curved too. As the curvature gets greater and greater, the time becomes slower and slower and finally becomes the zero point. In regard to the space-time curvature Seife states:

The easiest way to approach space-time is through an analogy: space and time are like a gigantic rubber sheet. Planets, stars, and everything else sit on that sheet, distorting it slightly. That distortion—the curvature caused by objects sitting on the sheet—is gravity. The more massive the

object that is sitting on the sheet, the more the sheet gets distorted, and the larger the dimple around that object. The pull of gravity is just like the tendency of objects to roll into the dimple. The curvature of the rubber sheet is not only a curvature of space, but a curvature of time as well. Just as space gets distorted close to a massive object, time does, too. It gets slower and slower as the curvature gets greater and greater. The same thing happens with mass. As you get into greatly curved regions of space, bodies' masses effectively increase, a phenomenon known as mass inflation. (119)

Like the distortion or the curvature of the space by the (heavy) object, time too distorts or becomes curved. It gets slower and slower by the curvature of the objects in space. In other words, time stops/ends when the curvature of the object in space is immensely massive. The time ends by the collapse of the stars turning into a black hole.

The stars get collapsed into zero space due to the failure of their fusion engines – hydrogen to burn, electron, neutron and quark. If a big ball of hot gas (hydrogen) is left on its own device, it will collapse under the weight of its own gravity or distortion. But they do not collapse in such way. They have another force known as nuclear fusion. The hydrogen atoms stick to one another and fuse creating helium and releasing large amount of energy. But this cannot last longer for their hydrogen fuel is limited. So one day, it also shortens and finally they collapse. In regard to the end of time by the collapse of the stars Seife states: “After a drawn-out series of death throes—the precise sequence of events depends, again, on the mass of the star—the star’s fusion engine fails, and the star begins to collapse under its own

gravity” (120). Stars collapse into the zero-space and in the zero-space time too slows down in the same degree. In other words, time ends in the black hole.

Chandrasekhar Subrahmanyam also discusses about the idea of zero-space and its relative time in the black hole. By dissenting from the German physician Pauli’s exclusion principle that no two things can be in the same place at same time and hence no stars can collapse in any way, he suggested that despite the reality of the exclusion principle there is limited ability to fight against the squeeze of gravity for a star. The star’s gravity will be so great that the electrons cannot move faster or in the speed of light. It cannot move fast enough to stop the matter from collapsing. The collapsing stars become so massive that they have 1.4 times the mass of sun. The electrons smash into protons creating neutron. But the neutron star also cannot live long as it also squeezes one day by breaking into quark which also lasts with hellish result. Thus, when the hydrogen, electron, neutron, quark and all other fuels finish off, the dying star gets infinitely smaller, smaller and smaller. Then it finally becomes zero-space. This zero-space of the dead star without fuels of any kind is the black hole. In regard to the great ending of the star forming a black hole after the loss of their all kinds of fuels Seife states:

When an extremely massive star collapses, it disappears. The gravitational attraction is so great that physicists know of no force in the universe that can stop its collapse—not the repulsion of its electrons, not the pressure of neutron against neutron or quark against quark—nothing. The dying star gets smaller and smaller and smaller. Then...zero. The star crams itself into zero space. This is a black hole,

an object so paradoxical that some scientists believe that black holes can be used to travel faster than light-and backward in time. (120)

The collapse of the star results into zero-space. As the dying star gets smaller, smaller and smaller, then it turns into the zero-space and in the zero space there will be zero point of time too. In other words, there is no existence of time in the zero space.

In the same pace, the zero-space, infinity and its relative time is seen in the peculiar event of the singularity in the form of a black hole too.

After losing all its fuels like hydrogen, the force like nuclear fusion, electron, protons creating neutrons and neutron quarks, the star shrinks into zero point or zero space. Yet it has mass. This mass distorts and curves the space time. As the curvature gets greater and greater, it goes off to infinity. As a result, the star tears a hole in space-time. This shrinking of star into zero point due to higher gravitation of massive weight is singularity. Regarding the zero-point and its infinitely massive weight as singularity in the form of the black hole Seife states:

The key to a black hole's strange properties is the way it curves space-time. A black hole takes up no space at all, but it still has mass. Since the black hole has mass, it causes space-time to curve. As you approach a heavy star, the curvature gets greater and greater, but once you have passed the outer edge of the star itself, the curvature decreases again, bottoming out at the center of the star. In contrast, a black hole is a point. It takes up zero space, so there is no outer edge, no place where space begins to flatten out again. The curvature of

space gets greater and greater as you approach a black hole, and it never bottoms out. The curvature goes off to infinity because the black hole takes up zero space; the star has torn a hole in space-time. The zero of a black hole is a singularity, an open wound in the fabric of the universe. (121)

The black hole shrinks into the zero-point. Yet it has mass and the mass becomes immensely massive as one approach to it. The curvature gets greater and greater on the top of the space. As it does not decrease at the bottom, the curvature goes off to infinity. In short, the mass can become immensely massive to which we call the singularity of the black hole and the singularity takes up the zero-space. In the zero-space of the singularity of the black hole, the time ends due to the greater curvature of the mass.

In the same pace, a terribly dangerous nature of zero, infinite and the relative end of time is seen in the singularity of the black hole that is censored by the nature itself.

The singularity of black hole is a terribly dangerous and ugly thing. Its pulling power, its gravity is so strong and space is so curved (with hole) that it can engulf the whole universe. Nothing can escape from its pulling power. Even not the light can escape from being pulled by the ugly force of singularity. At the same time, even if there remains any light shining inside the black hole itself, it cannot come out or escape from it and makes it dark, black or ugly. But nature has a cosmic censor. So she has shielded (covered) the singularity of the black hole and made it invisible preserving anyone from seeing the zero at the center of black hole. In regard to the cosmic censor and the invisibility of the singularity of the black hole Seife states:

The singularity of a black hole is so ugly, so dangerous, that nature tries to shield it, preventing anyone from seeing the zero at the center of a black hole and returning to tell the tale. Nature has a “cosmic censor.”

Black holes are so dense that if you get too close—past the so-called event horizon—the escape velocity is faster than the speed of light. Past the event horizon the pull of a black hole’s gravity is so strong—and space is so curved—that nothing can escape, not even light. Even though a black hole is a star, none of the light it shines ever escapes past the event horizon; that’s why it’s black.

Even though nature tries to shield the singularities of black holes, scientists know that black holes exist. In the direction of the constellation Sagittarius, at the very center of our galaxy, sits a super massive black hole that weighs as much as two-and-a-half million suns. (121- 123)

Nature censors and the makes invisible to the singularity of the supermassive black hole that weighs as much as two and a half million suns. And with the invisibility of the singularity of the supermassive black hole, zero too is invisible. Nature has censored and prevented one from seeing the zero at the center of the black hole. In such state of the invisible zero, time does not exist.

Time does not exist in the zero point. The theory of everything is based on the concept of zero. Zero is at the center of the universe. Different theories like quantum mechanics, general and special theories of relativities, thermodynamics and big bang

all are based on the concept of zero where time does not seem to exist. Revealing the existence of the zero in the heart of everything in science Seife states:

Zero dwells at the juxtaposition of quantum mechanics and relativity; zero lives where the two theories meet, and zero causes the two theories to clash. A black hole is a zero in the equations of general relativity; the energy of the vacuum is a zero in the mathematics of quantum theory. The big bang, the most puzzling event in the history of the universe, is a zero in both theories. The universe came from nothing—and both theories break down when they try to explain the origin of the cosmos. (124)

Zero is inevitable in science, philosophy and literature. The theory of everything is the theory of nothing. And in the space or the self without substance has no time. In short, time does not exist in the nothingness.

Zero looks terribly dangerous to many of the physicists. Being frustrated from zero point of black hole and electrons they are trying to give extra dimension (non-materialization) to them through the string theory about which Seife states: “It is not obvious how to get rid of zero, as zero appears and reappears throughout time and space. Black holes are zero-dimensional, as are particles such as the electron. Electrons and black holes are real things. But scientists can give black holes and electrons an extra dimension” (126).

Zero is a dangerous and difficult thing to handle by the physicists. Despite its danger and frustration, the scientists are trying to remove the danger of zero-point. According to the string theory, if the electrons (black holes) are treated as one

dimensional like a loop of string, then the infinities seen in general relativity and quantum mechanics will disappear. In other words, instead of zero dimensions, like a point, the electrons (black hole) will be like a string, one dimensional and then the infinite mass and the charge of electron will vanish. By this normalization there will be a nice, smooth and continuous surface in the space-time. Regarding the normalization of zero in the string theory Seife states:

If electrons (and black holes) are treated as one-dimensional, like a loop of string, instead of as zero-dimensional, like a point, the infinities in general relativity and quantum mechanics miraculously disappear. For instance, the renormalization trouble—the infinite mass and charge of the electron—vanishes. A zero-dimensional electron has an infinite mass and charge because it is a singularity; as you get closer and closer to it, your measurements zoom off to infinity. --As two particles merge, no longer do they meet at a point-like singularity; they form a nice, smooth, continuous surface in space-time (126)

If the singularity of the black hole is treated as one dimensional like a loop of string, then zero-point of the black hole will not be so dangerous. Time ends in the blackhole if it looks one dimensional like a loop and not as super massively heavy.

According to the string theory, the horror of infinite and zero can disappear and then the zero can appear as suitable, nice and smooth for everyone. In one dimensional loop of string the infinite mass and the charge of electron will vanish from the black hole. Zero-point or the vanished state will be present there. So there will not be the existence of time in such zero-point of the black hole.

Despite its danger in the quantum mechanics and usefulness in the string theory, there are some problems in seeing zero as smooth, nice and useful in it too. The four dimensional space will not be sufficient for the zero to work properly as there will be the need of some 10/11 dimensional space-times to work properly to the string theory. This universe had three dimensions – left-right, front-back and up-down (length, breadth and width). Einstein added one more dimension in it. That is the time. In the center of all events, there is the presence of time. So no event can be thought in absence of time. Thus universe has four dimensions: space-time continuum. Regarding the difficulty of zero point in the string theory Seife states:

The string theory had some problems. For one thing, it required 10 dimensions to work. For most people, four dimensions are one too many. It is easy to see three of them: left-right, front-back, and up-down represent the three directions we can move in. The fourth arrived when Einstein showed that time was similar to these three dimensions; we are constantly moving through time like a car that's speeding down a highway. (127)

Zero in the string theory needs some extra dimension to work properly. The four dimensional space-time is insufficient for the zero to work in nice and smooth way in science. Therefore, the zero-point cannot exist in proper way and time cannot end completely till it gets extra dimension.

Despite the bizarreness and dangers zero is at the center of everything, every particle or every theory. The cosmic nature is also the zero. There is the presence of zero in the heart of everything in the universe. From ancient to mathematical roots/equations, black hole, big bang, GR STR and several other scientific and

philosophical theories, there is the presence of the zero. So the universe cannot be thought of without the zero. Nature is highly balanced, controlled and disciplined by the zero. In short, the universe without the zero or without time is unthinkable. In regard to the inevitability of zero in everything Seife states:

String theory might well be correct, but we may never have the means to find out. Zero has not yet been banished; indeed, zero seems to be what created the cosmos. ---This is the primal zero, the birthplace of the universe: the big bang, a furious explosion that created the cosmos. It is from this singularity that all the matter and energy in the universe spewed forth, creating all the galaxies, stars, and planets that have ever—and will ever—exists. (128-133)

The knowledge of life and the whole universe is impossible without the consideration of zero. Zero is the source of creation of the whole universe. Big bang, galaxies, stars, planet, black hole, relativities all have been based on the very concept of zero.

At the same time the zero is not only thought to have the secret of the whole universe but it may also be responsible for the end of it. Regarding the zero as the beginning and the end of all the created things in the universe Seife concludes:

Zero is so powerful because it unhinges the laws of physics. --
However, zero cannot be ignored. Not only does zero hold the secret to our existence, it will also be responsible for the end of the universe. -
Even though scientists might never unlock the secrets of the universe's

birth, they are on the brink of understanding its death. The ultimate fate of the cosmos lies with zero. (134-135)

Zero is inevitable. Being itself nothing, it is the source of all created things. At the same time, zero is a very important concept for the human beings to reveal the mystery of God by unfolding the mystery of their own consciousness. In regard to the revelation of God and the whole cosmos by zero Seife states: “We would know the mind of God. But this time, zero might not be so easy to defeat” (134).

Zero is paramount. It cannot be defeated easily as it holds not only the secret of the existence of whole universe; it may also be responsible for the end of it. Zero, infinity’s twin is not like other number. It is both nothing and everything. Zero has become the quest for the theory of everything which was once considered demonic but today it plays a key role in our efforts to solve the most difficult puzzles of the universe.

Emily Dickinson's poetry resembles greatly with Charles Seife’s concept of zero in his book *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea*. Seife discusses zero in term of infinite in different contexts as black hole, Einstein's concept of time, thermodynamics etc. In the poem *Because I Could not Stop for Death* (J-118) Dickinson also discusses the idea of infinite. Eternity is infinite in her concept. She had a wish for the life of eternity. As she continued her journey towards eternity with the Death she felt a sudden quivering and chillness and her gown was not able to protect her from the chillness. She felt her death coming before reaching the eternity. At that time a minute or a day appeared to her like a century – that is massive and infinite like black hole (since then tis centuries, yet feels shorter than a day- 12-13). Thus the eternity appeared infinite to her.

In her poem *I Heard A Fly Buzz* (J-464) also there is the idea of infinite. She had held a belief of eternity or after life. But her belief of eternity or after life is marred by the image of the fly that interposed between her and the window through which she had expected the king or the God to come and meet with her (There interposed a fly, Between the light and me, And then the windows failed; I could not see to see-6,8-10). Thus she concludes that eternity is infinite.

In her poem *Just Lost, When I Was Saved* (J-160) also Dickinson presents her idea of infinite. Eternity is infinite in her experience to the journey of the eternity. It is impossibility as the door of heaven is closed and she comes back from there just to tell her experience of it. (Some pale Reporter, from awful doors, before the seal-10-11). After being called back from her journey of eternity, the next and next glimpse of the journey to eternity seems too infinite and impossible to her. The boat that is supposed to carry her to eternity seems so slow that centuries will wheel but she will not reach there. (The next time, to Tarry, While the ages steal-slow tramp the centuries, And the cycles wheel! -12-15). Thus eternity proves an infinite to her.

Black hole is the worst infinity in Charles Seife's discussion in his book *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea*. In her poem *Behind Me – Dips Eternity* (J-721) too eternity is an experience of the worst infinity for Dickinson too. She has already experienced eternity as infinite in her earlier journey to it. It lies behind her. Immortality has not come yet. She is a term in-between them. But there is death before the gain of the immortality. (Death but the Drift of Eastern Gray, Dissolving into Dawn away, Before the West Begin-4-7). Her experience of the horror of infinity is seen in the last line. The idea of immortality and eternity is only a maelstrom or a whirled pool for her (And Maelstrom – in the sky-18). In short, like the worst infinity in black hole Dickinson also feels the worst infinity in eternity.

In her poem *Embarrassment to One Another* (J-612) too the idea of the worst infinity is shown by Dickinson (Divinity dwells under a seal-7).

Charles Seife has shown the terrible ending of dying star to a zero- point in his book. Like the star, after losing its all hydrogen-fusion, electron, neutron, quark and other fuels, goes shrinking smaller and smaller to a zero point, Dickinson also shows the similar ending of her self in her poem *I Felt a Funeral in my Brain* (J-280). The high sounding of the funeral bell makes her uncontrolled. She loses her reasons and her control over them. Finally, she finishes knowing everything. Her ending of reason and self (And I dropped down, and down—And Finished knowing—then— -18, 20) is like the shrinking of star smaller and smaller to the zero point of the black hole.

Seife states that in the centigrade scale, zero degrees are the freezing point of water (109). In her poem, *A Narrow Fellow in the Grass* (J-986) Dickinson also tries to present the freezing state of her heart to the zero point. She meets a person and feels strange to meet him (But never met this fellow, Attended, or alone, Without a tighter breathing- And zero at the bone-21-24). The term zero at bone is a complete frozen state of death. Its impact is chilling upon her.

In *A Clock Stopped* (J-287) the term “pendulum of snow” (11) also indicates the freezing or frozen state of her consciousness like Seife’s discussion of the freezing point of water in zero degrees centigrade.

In her poem *Hope is the Thing with Feathers* (J-254) also she discusses the extremely freezing point of her self to the zero degree. (I have heard it in the chilliest land-9). The line indicates that she was there in that chilliest situation that was at the freezing point.

In her poem *Because I could not stop for Death* (J-712) also Dickinson uses the term 'chill' that is freezing her self to the zero degree. (The Dews drew quivering and chill-9). All these images of chill, still, chilliest, pendulum of snow in the aforesaid poems indicate the frozen state to zero degree or the extinction of her self.

Explaining Einstein's idea Seife states that the flow of time changes, depending upon the observer's speed. If astronaut took a 20 years' journey in lights speed, on return he would be 20 years. But everyone who stayed behind would have aged 46 years (117). When a space ship approaches the speed of light, the time slows down more and more and more. (119) Emily Dickinson in her poem *Pain expands Time* (J-968) too expresses the similar idea of time. Time becomes infinitely long in the hours of deep, anguished pain in daily normal wake of life or for the common people. (Pain expands time --Ages coils within a minute Circumference-1-2). But for Dickinson pain contracts time or the time is contracted by pain in the same ratio or degree in which it becomes infinite. Time slows down more and more and more in the ratio the pain increases the time. In other words, a minute seems to appear as ages and ages (Ages coils within a minute Circumference-2) in pain in normal walk of life. But for Dickinson, pain contracts her time and she feels eternal, everlasting bliss in it in her permeated state of consciousness.

In her poem *You Constituted Time* (J-7657) Dickinson presents her sense of eternity or eternal pleasure from the contraction of her eternal pain in the permeated state of her consciousness. She sees God as a jealous maker of time for her. He made time in which she attained eternity or the everlasting time in her pain. (You constituted time -- I deemed Eternity-1-2). He made time which is eternal and infinite for her by the contraction of it in the permeated moment of her life: Eternal pain and slower and slower time relatively. In other words, He made time as timeless for her by

extending her pain eternally in which she has no pain but enlightenment only. In short, the piercing, unending and eternal pain contracts time relatively to the zero degree which is like an eternity for her. She gets eternal pleasure from the contraction of her eternal pain that results in zero degree in the permeated state of her consciousness.

In her poem *The Zeroes – Taught Us – Phosphorous* (J-689) also the same idea of the contraction of time in which pain is not painful any longer is depicted. She suffered bedazzlement of heart (The Zeroes - taught us - Phosphorous -We learned to like the Fire -1-2). By the contraction of the permeated state of her consciousness that bedazzled and phosphoric heart is felt as soothing and quiet. (Paralysis our primer dumb-7) For there is time no longer in it for being contracted into zero degree. In short, Dickinson's poetry is the ocean of pain. By contraction of time in the permeated moment to the zero degree, it is the ocean of elixir that quietens even the most phosphoric and bedazzled heart. In short, if there is no time then there is no pain also in the permeated state of consciousness.

In her poem *Circumference Thou Bride of Awe* (J-1620) also, by contracting the time to the zero degree, Dickinson finds her groom of elixir and quietness. She herself is also that bride of awe and sufferings throughout her life. She warns the circumferential bride of awe that she (the personified bride of terror to her life) will be possessed and subdued if she tries to possess her or anyone like her. By the weapon of subtracting her pain by subtracting time she will be defeated and made less intensified (Possessing thou shalt be possessed by every hallowed knight-2-3). In other words, if she (the circumferential bride of awe) tries to possess and intensify her pain, then her intensity and force will be destroyed by the subtraction of her time in the permeated moments of her consciousness that is like a hallowed knight.

In her poem *To Wait an Hour is Long* (J-781) also Dickinson shows her power of contracting the time to the zero degree that cannot intensify her pain. She shows that waiting eternally appears short if there is the promise of union. (To wait eternity is short, if love rewarded the end-3-4). In contrast, an hour of time appears eternal in separated state from the loved one. In other words, time contracts in eternal waiting with the promise of union and expands eternally in separated state from the beloved one.

The time's contracting value is seen in her poem *Before He Comes We Weigh the Time* (J-834) also. The time of eternal waiting becomes too short if promise of union. In separateness an hour is eternal or very long. Union and separation of the lovers determine the length of time (Tis heavy and tis light-2). In contrast, by subtracting the time becomes too short in separation or in painful state and too long in union in the permeated state of consciousness that results in patience and impatience.

Seife states "The zero- point is infinity in the formula of quantum theory. According to the equation of quantum mechanics zero-point energy is limitless. It is more powerful than stored in coal mines and oil fields" (115). But zero is bizarre as it leads to some uncertainty. According to Heisenberg's Uncertainty principle one cannot measure a particle's position and its velocity with perfect accuracy at the same time. Even in vacuum, one is uncertain of energy inside as velocity can change slightly even by a slight touch in the particle.

Zero in special theory of relativity is also bizarre. Only the speed of light is ultimate. Nothing or nobody can take the light's speed. If any spaceship tries to take the speed of light, soon its mass increases greater and greater and it becomes massively heavy like a black hole and finally cannot move any further (119).

Thus zero is infinite in quantum mechanics, in Heisenberg's uncertainty principle and in the special relativity. The infinite zero of black hole is zero dimensional or a point like, yet it has mass. If the zero dimensional black holes, like a point will be like a string, one dimensional then the infinite mass will vanish. Thus, being naturalized, there will be a nice, smooth, continuous surface in the space time (126).

Emily Dickinson has also treated zero as infinite by the contraction of time. In her poem *Time Feels so Vast* (J-802) she has presented her idea of infinity by contracting the time. Time feels so vast and awe-some for her. By its contraction, its awe-some ness has been made passive and less intensified which is the very infinity or eternity for her. In short, it is the eternity by which time has been contracted and made its awe-some ness or vastness less intensified. Thus, Dickinson concludes that the contraction of time by the permeation of consciousness is the real eternity and infinity. The infinitely vast and awe-some looking time is turned into the infinite energy by its contraction in the permeated states of consciousness. Thus, not only the pain, awe-some ness or vastness disappears but also it enables her to feel the power of infinity or eternity. The very contraction of time relatively to the zero degree from which her agonized pain disappeared completely is the real infinity and eternity for her.

2.4 Zero: The Void and the Infinite in the Self

Zero is a concept that connotes a primal void or nothing. It is nothing in itself, but on looking through it, one can see the world. It is a lens for looking not only into the evolution of mathematics but into the very nature of human thoughts. It was once a symbol created to represent an idea, but the symbol itself gives rise to a new idea or new insights and enables one by his mental device to visualize the hidden. Regarding the importance of zero as a lens for looking into the very nature of human thoughts Robert Kaplan in his *The Nothing that Is: A Natural History of Zero* states:

If you look at zero you see nothing; but look through it and you will see the world. For zero brings into focus the great, organic sprawl of mathematics, and mathematics in turn the complex nature of things. -- With these mental devices we make visible the hidden laws controlling the objects around us in their cycles and swerves. (1)

Zero was used in mathematical term as a process of recursive abstraction, which, in turn, helps in seeing the complex nature of thing. It is a lens for looking into the very nature of human thoughts too. It is a concept that connotes nothing, emptiness, void or the extinction of self. And in the state of void or in the person less state there is no mobility or the motion that can give rise to time. In short, there is no evolution of time in the personless or the void state of thing or consciousness.

The concept of zero as nothing or emptiness is seen from its ancient history. The history of zero began in 326 BC. It was a Babylonian gift to India. It firstly appeared in several myths and folklores of India. During the Aryabhata, “Kha” was used as zero. It was used for space like ‘ambara’ (sky) and ‘akash’ (atmosphere), ‘sunya’ (emptiness) which soon became synonym of zero. In respect to the concept

of zero as 'sunya' or emptiness Robert Kaplan in his *The Nothing that Is: A Natural History of Zero* states:

Because once a name like 'kha' describes some aspect of zero, others will condense, until what zero is lies entangled in what it do, and what it resembles. Looking through the broken light, there - fifty years after Aryabhata, in Ujjain - stands Varahamihira, whom we met briefly, praising the Greeks for their astronomy. He hadn't a symbol for zero either, but a flurry of names for it: Aryabhata's 'kha', words for spaces, like ambara (sky) and akasa (atmosphere) — and sunya, usually translated 'empty' — which soon became zero's commonest name. (44)

In ancient India Zero was used to refer 'sunya' or 'emptiness'. It was connotatively used to refer something endless, infinite and vast like the sky (akash) also. In short, zero was/ is used in India connotatively to refer “emptiness”, “void”, “infinite” etc.

Two hundred years later in 830 BC zero was used in India from Hindu to Jains (Mahavira) retaining the older “kha” of Aryabhata that connoted “emptiness”, “infinite” etc. It was also used for something endless infinite, depth, firmament, Vishnu's foot print - middle air etc. Regarding the use of zero as endless, infinite in ancient India, Kaplan in his *The Nothing that Is: A Natural History of Zero* states:

Move two hundred years forward now to 830 AD; and 700 miles south to Mysore; and cross from one religion to another: from Hindus to Jains. Here is Mahavira, whose book, the Ganita-Sara-Sagraha, is meant to update and correct Brahmagupta's. He deals extensively with zero but still has no symbol for it — nor does he calls it 'sunya' but

retains the older 'kha'. Perhaps this accords with his zeal to revise Brahmagupta. Yet why should he have gone past Varahamihira in the number of synonyms for zero, drawn from kinds and qualities of sky and space: depth, firmament, the endless, thunderous names like jaladharapatha and gentle names like divine, and Vishnu's footprint and middle air, and some twelve near-synonyms for sky in all? (44)

Zero was used in ancient India to denote and to connote endlessness, emptiness and infinite. In the endless, infinite state of things or persons, time does not evolve any longer. In short, there is the end of time in the state of emptiness or infiniteness.

Zero is used connotatively to know the truth of self. It is used to know the mystery of human life. This world of appearance may be real or unreal or indescribable. In other words, zero is the lens through which the truth behind the world appearance can be unraveled. In ancient India, during the Jains lord – Mahavira, zero was used connotatively to know the reality of the mystery of life. From mathematics, it turned to the discursive use of language or to the philosophy of life. Concerning the use of zero as emptiness, infinite or as the philosophy of life in ancient India, Kaplan in his *The Nothing that Is: A Natural History of Zero* states:

'May the rule of that sovereign lord of the Jinas prosper who has destroyed the position of single conclusions and propounds the logic of the syadvada.' --Which best describes its status at that time, and our knowledge of it? The more names it had, you would think, the less of a proper number it was - still part of discursive language rather than mathematics. (45)

In ancient India also, zero was used to know the reality behind the world of appearance (Maya). It tried to unfold the mystery of soul that could be known only by being empty of all essences or by all worldly claims. In other words, zero was used as the philosophy of being empty or personless in those days by which the people tried to capture timeless and infinite in them.

In deeper level, zero is used to deal with the non-existent state of self or soul. For the revelation of self and its emancipation, zero is extremely essential. In ancient India also, zero was used to reveal the mystical nature of God and nirvana through the extinction of self by desire-less-ness and personlessness. It was the key to the very meaning of existence in those days. Regarding the philosophical connotation of zero that reveals the nirvana of self Kaplan in his *The Nothing that Is: A Natural History of Zero* states:

'The philosophy and religion of the Hindus uniquely fitted them for the invention of zero,' and that their inventing a symbol for zero was like making Nirvana dynamic. ---For the Indian soul that conceived it as a base for a positional numeration, was nothing more nor less than the key to the meaning of existence'. The Greek soul, he informs us, is sensual and so could never have come up with this key: it takes a Brahmanic soul to perceive numbers as self-evident. (46)

One needs to be zero to know and attain the self. Since ancient time the Hindus have been using zero as a means of their freedom (Mukti) by being desire less or selfless. In other words, they tried to attain timeless and infinite state of selves through the revelation of self as empty. The Greek failed to attain this timeless and infinite state of the self only because they did not see the zero as the key to be empty of self or soul.

Zero is the revelation of self or soul that, by its nature, is a non-existent being. In other words, the self or the soul is conceived as nothing in the concept of zero. In short, zero is the state of self. It is the void state of self. In ancient India dot was used as zero. It was used not only for number (bindu) but it had a philosophical connotation also. It was used for revealing the void, absence, infinite, invisible and so on. In regard to the ancient value of zero that reveals the infinite and invisible, Kaplan in his *The Nothing that Is: A Natural History of Zero* states: “For if you now look with dots in mind you'll find them everywhere, acting as zeroes or in ways that recall the void, the missing, the absent, the indefinite, the invisible” (43). Zero is undoubtedly the revelation of the void in self. It unmask the infinite, invisible and missing state of the self.

Zero is used to understand the mystery of God and infinite by unraveling the mystery of self as empty of all substances. Since ancient time dot was used to reveal the mystical significance of the God, Siva in Sanskrit also. In this respect Kaplan writes: “In Sanskrit, when the bindu (here called kha) represents the nasal n, it also carries great mystical significance, connecting it to the God, Siva” (55). Zero is the key to be merged with the God. It connects one to the infinite Brahman that pervades the universe and makes him infinite too. In other words, zero is the key of the transformation of self as infinite and timeless.

Zero is used to reveal the world as full of appearances or illusions and the one who can understand the imaginary veil of the Brahman can attain the perfection, Purnata. In Hindu and Buddhist philosophy also, zero is used to reveal the mystical nature of Brahman by unraveling the world of appearance as veil (Maya) of Brahman and through self as empty (sunya). Regarding the present nature of zero or the self, Kaplan in his *The Nothing that Is: A Natural History of Zero* states: “Our Law of the

Conservation of Matter, substance for them cannot disappear but can only change its form or nature: this fullness - Brahman - pervades the universe, and can no more increase or decrease than can the 'absolute element' that plays a similar role in Buddhism, which is empty (sunya) only of the accidental" (59). On being disillusioned from the world of appearance through the unraveling of self as empty, one becomes conscious of his real self. He simply "is" and the "is" is beyond the space and beyond the time.

Zero is the philosophy of the transformation of self from becoming into being. The term "becoming" is the philosophy of ever evolving and progressing in the material world. It is the philosophy of becoming greater and better in material life. On the other hand, the term 'being' is the philosophy not of the material progress. Rather, it is the philosophy of losing everything, every claim and thus being empty in all ways or of all substances. In short, being is the philosophy of the self as being empty in every way.

German romantic poet Holderlin had also used zero as the philosophy of the transformation of the self from becoming into being. Like Plato, he held the view that the world of appearance is the imitation of imitation which is thrice removed from the reality. Only by going beyond these appearances and by turning the self from becoming into being one could attain eternity. His idea was like the Buddhist theory of 'Sunyata' which held the view that everyone in reality is nothing or substance less. In ignorance only, he thinks himself as so and so. On attainment of knowledge he will ultimately find himself as being no one or by being lost, vanished only. In short, he ultimately finds himself as lost. In regard to the historical view of the zero that reveals the eternal behind the appearances Kaplan in his *The Nothing that Is: A Natural History of Zero* states:

German Romantic poet Holderlin: --The god, whose oracle is in Delphi, neither affirms nor denies, but points.' It is the essence of Plato's vision that appearances fleetingly participate in the Ideas, which are eternal. It is embodied in the Buddhist theory of *sunyata*, from about the first century AD, which holds that all entities are empty (*sunya*) of own being, as they put it. Most familiarly for us, it is the revelation embraced by Christianity and Mohammedanism but resisted by Judaism, the more ancient religion. (77)

Zero helps one in unraveling the self as non-existent or as empty of all substances. In short, zero is the philosophy of the state of being conscious or the self-enlightened which is beyond space and time. In short, being is 'is' only and nothing more. It is free from all substances and hence it is free from all times too.

Zero is the philosophy of devotion in which one resigns himself to the mercy of the divine God as having no ego, no pride of his own. In other words, zero is the philosophy of egoless ness and personless ness. In the time of Kwan in china also there existed a mysterious saint "Lao Tzu" who went beyond all prides, all the positive and negative aspects of life like happiness sorrow, success failure, lust and renunciation and became empty of everything, every desires. After losing all egos, being empty of every desire he left himself in the mercy of the divine spirit God. His desire was in the God's desire. One day, he saw a leaf separated from the tree and blowing in the direction of the wind. The leaf separated from the tree had left itself spontaneously in the mercy of the wind. This event changed the whole course of his life. Since then, he also left himself in the mercy of the divine One to whom he would follow where He would take him. In short, Taoism is the philosophy of being egoless and spontaneous like the leaf blowing with the wind. Like Ashtavakra's philosophy,

Taoism is also the philosophy of personlessness in which one acts as if he is not the agent of any of the actions done by him. In regard to the mystery of Taoism as being egoless, spontaneous and pure Kaplan writes: “There was a time, Kwan, when scholars toyed with the idea that zero arose from the emptiness of Taoism, which it then mingled with the Hindu sunya —'It may be . . .', 'We are free to consider the possibility . . .' have interlaced and smothered them away” (91). On resigning oneself to the mercy of God, one becomes self-enlightened and timeless as he has no self of his own.

Zero is the primal philosophy of the cyclical transformation of the self or the soul. Life and death is a cycle. One must free himself from the cyclical bondages of the birth and the death. In alchemy, a mythological creature, Ouroboros is also described as a dragon that swallows its own tail. Its tail is in its mouth. It has a zero shape which symbolizes infinity or wholeness. In regard to the mythical snake Ouroboros and its cyclical transformation, Kaplan writes: “In alchemy its shape appears as Ouroboros, the dragon that swallows its own tail, symbolizing the *prima materia*; and as *rota*, the circular course of the alchemical transformation. Its circle is everywhere in magic, marking off spellbound earth (96). Hindus also believe in the cyclical transformation of self where life is considered as the cycle of endless births and deaths. One must free himself from such cycles of life and death that can be possible only by the transformation of self as empty of all substances where time is an absentee. In other words, in enlightened state of consciousness, time does not exist.

Zero, in essence, is the philosophy disinterestedness from every desire. The disinterested self from every desires and claims equates God or divinity. In other words, he attains sublimity. Meister Eckhart, one of the great radical mystics of the 14th century Germany also believed in zero or in nothingness. He believed that man

possesses nothing in him and can possess his being only in his participation to the divine essence. And this can be possible only when he becomes disinterested from everything. Being removed from all worldly materials and other passions (lust) of the world, he can seek his union or attachment with God. The way to God is the way to detachment. The soul, in his view, lives without why; it has no will and does not act. It only exists. It purely wishes to be nothing. It is inner state of emptiness. God is without why. There is external cause or aim for His being. Man must realize this and live without aim. In regard to Eckhart's disinterestedness which is not only stoic but a concept of nothingness Kaplan writes:

A wonderful understanding of this positional zero emerged in the fourteenth century. Meister Eckhart, a radical mystic, taught that all creatures are nothing; that being empty of things is to be full of God; that God, who must lie past all knowledge and all Being, must therefore also be nothing has been immovably disinterested in his creation from the beginning, and still is- and disinterest comes so close to zero that nothing but God is rarefied enough to go into it. --Eckhart has a very different vision in mind, a vision in which he sees that he is God, and that anyone will be God if he goes beyond humility to disinterest. (100)

Zero equates god through the disinterestedness of self. It is the unperturbed state of the self from everything. Sorrow-happiness, life and death all are the projections of one's own mind. Hence, in the disinterested and unperturbed state of being one is self-enlightened, infinite and timeless.

Zero unfolds the mystery of the working of things. Kaplan. Zero is a lens to look into the very nature of human thoughts. It unfolds the mystery of universe for it

is the key to the understanding of how things work. In regard to the concept of zero as the key of the workings of things Kaplan writes:

. Thanks to calculus, zero holds the key to our making the most of any undertaking, and doing so with the least effort. It holds the key as well to our understanding how things work. -- Nature abhors a vacuum and so do we. Zero is intricately woven into the workings of our thought, but the temptation time and again has been to look for its original outside of the mind, in physical space: a silent desert amid the clamor of oases. (169/75)

Zero that unfolds the mystery of the workings of the mind or things is outside the space and the time for it connotes nothingness of self. Zero is the concept of mindlessness and hence of personlessness. Yoga or meditation too is the concept of the mindlessness. One can attain the state of being 'enlightened' through it. It is like Taoism in which one tries to quieting his mind. The mind of man is like a monkey which is never constant. It always jumps from one branch of the tree of desires to the other. In other words, the mind of man is also not constant like the monkey. It always floats in several dreamful wishes and desires. In controlling one's monkey- mind full of prides, anger and lust and so on one is always free from all fervors of life and is, thus, in a perfect state of being 'enlightened'. In regard to the mindlessness in Taoism or in yoga Kaplan writes: "Taoism, for example, or Yoga: calming the inner monkey, damping down the waves of fervor and despair to the steady state in which you can once again hear nature nurturing. Figure and ground reverse: not zero but all the noise becomes non-being" (197). The mindlessness that is practiced in zero is the state of non-being or non-existent which is outside the space and time in itself as the mind is

in move less state. In short, without the motion or the movement (of the mind), time does not emanate or evolve at all.

Zero is the art of aesthetic by emptying the mind for the presence of pure (beauty and truth). Some people like Walter Pater and John Keats believed in the aesthetic art of beauty and truth by emptying their mind for pure beauty. Regarding the aesthetic end of art through emptying mind Kaplan writes: "For some, however, the religious motive becomes aesthetic. The minimalist arts are presided over by the unadorned Graces of simplicity, innuendo and elegance, who steer philosophy too, urging apprentice thinkers to empty their minds that the truth may better be inscribed their presence of pure (199). The aesthetic lovers of beauty like Keats and Yeats had no self. Keats laid a life of void after the loss of his beloved, Fanny Brawn. It was his disinterestedness to which he made interested. In other words, in the loss and the negative state he saw the presence of pure beauty and truth. The absence was presence for him to whom he made infinite and timeless in his art.

Zero is the mystic concept of merging with the God by being egoless or by being nothing. Emerson too was a mystic as well as aesthetic. He did not believe in the mere beauty. He saw beauty in the invisible divine self. The ego must vanish. Like a mystic, he thinks himself just as nothing or part who only gets his perfection in connecting himself to God or Over-soul. He believed that when the wall of master or servant, great and small and other prides or egos falls down, he merges with the God. In regard to his transcendental idea of part that can become infinite in joining with the Over-soul (God) Kaplan writes:

Emerson was crossing the Common one winter twilight: Standing on the bare ground, - my head bathed by the blithe air and uplifted into

infinite space, — all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God. The name of the nearest friend sounds then foreign and accidental: to be brothers, to be acquaintances, - master or servant, is then a trifle and a disturbance.

(199)

Being nothing one can see all in the mystic merging with the God or Over-Soul. He becomes infinite, part or particle of God that is outside space and time as he has no self of his own in such state of being merged with the Over-Soul.

Zero is the philosophy of losing in oneself. The one who loses in himself or in others self find himself. In regard to the better working of mind in the lost moment Kaplan writes:

I mean the pleasure of reading, where he who loses himself shall find himself as another and another and another or as something more than an angel hovering over the scene. This elevation is what the invisible writer gives to the anonymous reader, without whom all the disappearing acts were in vain. (200)

The lost state of mind is the personless state of self in which time remains totally disappeared and the person himself has no knowledge of his own existence. In other words, with the disappearance of the self and the time one performs certain action in best way.

Zero is the eternal concept of positing oneself in any way he likes. God is zero and the zero is infinite intensity. Lorenz Oken in the mid-1800s' was also one of such persons who lived in exile from his native Germany. From despair he grasped his life

exhilarated and infinitely peaceful. Regarding his visionary idea of positing himself in the way he liked by the concept of the zero that is positing oneself in desire less state Kaplan writes:

I see him swathed in scarves, stamping along the Bahnhofstrasse, a faint exhalation of vapor and thought above him. Here it condenses to the words: 'Zero is the primary and eternal act, endlessly positing itself.' 'So God is zero, and zero is infinite intensity.' 'But Man is the whole of arithmetic, the whole of mathematics! Therefore, life . . .' He hesitates, moves unseeingly forward - 'life . . — there at the Credit Suisse he grasps life: 'Life is only a mathematical problem. (201)

In positing oneself disinterestedly as void, one becomes quiet and enlightened that is outside space and time.

Zero is the concept of 'being' – the idea that just to exist is enough. To be 'is' is enough. Parmenides too believed in the zero ideal of 'being'. Being is only and nothing more for him. It does not make the distinction of you me, here there, motion and change. Regarding the idea of zero as the self of 'being' Kaplan writes:

Parmenides said is: 'Being is.' You cannot think non-being, nothing, the void. Using negation, he told us we cannot use negation. All we can think is 'Being is.' We cannot think motion, change, difference, past or future, here and there, you and me, since each requires thinking 'not'. We can only think: 'Being is.' He wanted us to stop talking and listen. Like the background hum from the Big Bang, Being pervades. It fills and is the world. (218)

For the persons like Parmenides, Emily Dickinson and Ashtavakra 'being' is enough. The one who believes in just to live is always quiet and enlightened and remains outside space and time. In other words, the state of being is 'is' only. And the 'is' is without any substance and is outside the space and time.

In this way, zero is neither positive nor negative but it only is. In arts, literature and philosophy it is a concept of nothing that is something negative. But its negative presence takes an ironical turning and nothing is seen as everything. In short, zero is metaphysically the concept of nothing. On being self-awakened by permeation of the long and enduring past states of consciousness in the present consciousness, this state of nothing is realized as the supreme state of consciousness (redemption).

The concept of zero represents "something" that is 'not there' (exist but not available). If a person has no account in a bank, his/her account is nothing. But if he/she has an account, he/she may have an account balance of zero- "not there". Zero may be treated positively in philosophy, art, literature etc. Zero occurs in his/her life time leading to the final salvation.

The concept of zero was also originated in ancient India. In ancient India, this number was used in computation. It was indicated by a dot and was termed 'Parham Pujyam'. Even today we use this term for zero along with the more current term 'Shunyam' meaning a blank but queerly the term also means holy, respected or esteemed.

Zero is not merely a numeral but also a concept and symbol that connote nullity or void. One uses the term 'zero' as shunyam meaning a blank or void. Indian philosophy has glorified the concepts like the material world as being an illusion, the act of renouncing the material world (*Tyaga*) and the goal of merging into the void of

eternity (*Nirvana*). Here lies the reason how the material concept of zero got of philosophical connotation.

The origin of zero is controversial. Charles Seife discusses about the origin of zero as the Babylonian gift to India (P-38, 39). It is said that the concept of zero was also originated in the ancient India. The ancient Indian terms 'Kha', 'dot', 'Sunyam' and so on represents zero (Kaplan-44). Thus, the concept of zero is the Babylonian gift to India (east) and it was originated also in the ancient India.

Robert Kaplan exposes zero as nothing. Once it was a symbol created to represent an idea that symbol itself give rise to a new operation that, in turn, leads to new idea. Kaplan interprets zero in term of philosophy. Zero has been used to reveal the mystical nature of God and Nirvana-- the extinction of self like the extinction of flame through the desire less-ness. Emily Dickinson's most of the poems also reveal the mystical nature of god and nirvana. She shows the extinction of her self in them. Her poem *My Life Closed Twice Before Its Close* (J-1732) reveals the closed state of her life. In other words, her life extinguished for two times. The title itself 'My Life Closed Twice' indicates the closing or the extinction of her self in which she realized the heaven by its contraction and hell in its parting. (Parting is all we know of heaven, And all we need of hell-7-8). Her sad and troubled states of past is realized as blissful and heavenly in her permeated conscious state of mind.

Similarly, the poem *A Clock Stopped* (J-287) also represents not only the stopping of the clock but it represents the stopping of her life or the extinction of her self too. The poem *Pain-- has an Element of Blank* (J-650) also indicates the extinction of her self. The pain which was infinite led to the extinction of her self (Pain – has an element of blank, It has no future but itself—its infinite contain-1, 5-6).

By contracting the pain time is itself contracted into infinity that, in turn, led her to the more and more enlightened state. (Its Past—enlightened to perceive- New Periods—of Pain-7-8).

In alchemy, a mythological creature, Ouroboros is described as a dragon that swallows its own tail. It has a zero shape which symbolizes infinity or wholeness. In her poem *Just Lost, When I Was Saved* (j-160) also Dickinson has shown the idea of the cyclical nature of life. Eternity or after-life is impossibility. For her the boat carrying her to eternity was so slow that centuries of time will pass but she will not reach there. (Next time, to tarry, While the ages still—Slow tramp the centuries, And the Cycles wheel-12-15). Eternity is impossible. It will take ages and ages of birth and death. Even then reaching there to the eternity is an impossible for her.

Kaplan views zero as a lens to look into the very nature of human thoughts. It holds the key as well as to our understanding of how things work (169). Like Meister Eckhart, a radical mystic who held the view that to be empty of things is to be full of God. One is divine or God in disinterestedness (100). In her poem *Soul Selects her own Society* (J-303) also Dickinson has shown her mystic vision of love. After the selection of the one (chosen) only her mind's door is closed. She is quite unmoved to all from chariots to emperors. She is ultimately like a stone (Choose one –Then –close the valves of her attention—Like stone-11-12). she is independent of time as her consciousness is unmoved, shut up, and stony. There is a great void, absence in her self to which she is so impatient and consequently trying to fill the void. By unmoved manner, she is trying her soul move that is unmoved, mystical love of God. It is a love without loving. Without loving she likes mystically to love him (Divine majority—3) and thus fill the void of her life. In short, she disinterested and unmoved to

everything, everyone. She made divine love without love and without self. It is her self conscious state of divinity in itself.

Kaplan has discussed the concept of zero as emptying the mind, egoless and mindless as a means of silence in Zen and Taoism and in yoga (194,197,201). Emily Dickinson has also tried to empty her mind and attain silence like Zen, Tao and so on in many of her poems. In her poem *Silence is All We Dread* (J-1251) she has discussed about emptying her mind and attaining the silence. It is awful which by contraction gets its result of silence. In other words, when the awful and painful life extinguishes, then it results in silence. The end of the extinction of dread, sorrow, sufferings, awes result in silence that is infinity (silence is all we dread. But silence is infinity-1, 3). Like silencing the monkey mind of Taoism Dickinson also has tried to attain silence by contracting all the dreads and sorrows in her life. Her infinite dreads and awes have relatively turned into the infinite silence by the contraction of them.

Dickinson discusses the similar idea of silence in her poem *I Know that He Exists* (J-1338) too. Hiding His life, He has laid a fond ambush (Tis a fond Ambush - 6) that is piercing to her mind. Only after the extinction of such piercing sorrows and sufferings, silence is achieved. (Prove piercing earnest-- In Death's—stiff—stair— 10,12). God exists in silence. (I know that He exists- Somewhere-in silence, 1- 2). By emptying the mind and silencing it the silence of god can be achieved. In other words, one must end all his/her desires and wishes that causes sorrow and sufferings. Emptying the mind from every desires and sorrows is to attain the silence. Thus the contraction of sorrow and sufferings (fond ambush of god) by permeation of consciousness is the only way to attain silence in oneself.

Silence is the contraction of mind by the permeation of consciousness in which no sorrow, no sufferings, no world, no assent, no dissent, no attachment, no desire, no present, no past, no future, nothing exists. Dickinson's poem *Great Streets of Silence Led away* (j-1159) is a great gate way of achieving the silence. (Great streets of silence led away, To Neighborhoods of pause-- Here was no Notice-- no Dissent--No Universe-- no laws-- But Epoch had no basis here-- for Periods exhaled-1-5,8-9). Time ends in silence. In the contraction of mind by its permeation sorrows, sufferings, attachments, detachments, world, present, past, future time, god, zero itself, life, death, bondage all extinguish that results in silence. In short, the contraction of time is the very infinity of silence.

2.5 The Concept of *Shunyam* in the Buddhists' Philosophy

Zero is a concept. It has been derived perhaps from the concept of the primal void. More elaborately, zero is the state of mind in which a person is devoid of all thoughts, all ideas and all desires. In other words, zero is a personless, thoughtless and move less state of mind. The Buddhist philosophy is also full of the concept of zero. The Buddhists' concept of zero is mostly denoted by *sunyata* or *shunyata* in the Buddhist philosophy. It also refers something absence of self. Nishitani Keiji in his essay *Religion and Nothing* states: "*Sunyata* is 'nothing' in the Buddhist sense of the term" (43). Chogyam Trungpa has expressed the same idea that *Sunyata* of Buddhist is the emptiness of self. It is the complete absence of grasping-egolessness of subject and object. Regarding the *sunyata* of Buddhist, he in his work *The Heart of the Buddha* states:

Shunya means "empty" and *ta* makes it "emptiness". According to tradition, *Shunyata* empty of "I" and empty of "other", it is absolute empty. This experience of emptiness is realizing that there is no "I" as actor, no action and no "other" to be acted upon. It is the complete absence of grasping and fixation – the complete ego-less-ness of subject and object. It is therefore absence of separation between self and other. (135)

Andrew Skilton is also of the same view that Buddhist concept of *Shunyata* is the total, universal absence of inherent existence. Regarding the Buddhist concept of *Shunyata*, he in his *A Concise History of Buddhism* states: "He did not offer metaphysical proposition only the total universal absence of inherent existence – *Shunyata*. For Nagarjun, 'emptiness' itself is derived as being empty – *Shunyata* is *Shunyata*" (118).

The Buddhists' concept of *Shunyata* is very ground of self. It is nothing and everything. In other words, *Shunyata* encompasses even God, the object of mystical union as well as the object of faith. *Shunyata* is nothingness from which the God himself emerged. In regard to the concept of *Shunyata*, Abe Masao in his essay *God, Emptiness and the True Self* states:

The ground of our existence is nothing, *Shunyata* because it can never be objectified. This *Shunyata* is deep enough to encompass even God, the object of mystical union as well as the object of faith. The *Shunyata* is nothingness from which God emerged. *Shunyata* is the very ground of the self and there by the ground of everything to which we are related. The realization of *Shunyata* – as – such is precisely what is meant by the self-awakening of *the Dharma*. *Shunyata* as the non-object able ground of our existence expands endlessly into all directions. The same is of awakening *the Dharma*. (67)

The idea of *Shunyata* in the Buddhist philosophy is emptiness is also agreed by Suzuki Teitaro Daisetz. In his view, *Shunyata* is grand integration of mind. It is divine unconscious becoming conscious. It is reduced to one reality which is God, Brahman, Reason, Absolute and Emptiness. Concerning *Shunyata* as unconscious becoming conscious Suzuki Teitaro Daisetz in his essay *The Buddhist Concept of Reality* states:

The ultimate reality as conceived by Buddhist philosophy “pure experience” *shunyata*, a grand integration to which prior to the intellectual differentiations of subject and object; it is cosmic and divine unconscious becoming conscious.

In metaphysical field, when a world of magnitudes, of individual objects, of relative existence of particular phenomena is reduced to one

reality which is called God, Brahman, Reason, Absolute, élan-vital, *shunyata*, emptiness, undifferentiated, aesthetic continuum, what is it after all? (98-99)

Concerning *shunyata* of Buddhists Nishitani Keiji also has the same belief that *shunyata* is absolute nothingness. It enables one to attain his true being and his real truth. In regard to *shunyata* as real self, Nishitani Keiji in his essay *Science and Zen* states: “It (world) is the field of emptiness, *shunyata* or absolute nothingness or what may perhaps be called the None in contrast to and beyond the One, which enables the myriad phenomena to attain their true being and realize their real truth” (125).

Kobori Sohaku Nanrei sees *shunyata* of Buddhist in some higher plane. In his view, *shunyata* is the real self – that is, a non-ego centered system in which a person does not appear in the way he is. For example, flower is not flower; time is not time and life is not life. He distinguishes between “two-fold” selves – rupa self and real self. *Shunyata* self which is endless void is our real self and it simply “is”. In regard to *Shunyata* as the real self of endless void of emptiness, Kobori Sohaku Nanrei in his *A Dialogue: A Discussion between One and Zero* States:

There is however one system which might refer to the real self; that is, the non-ego centered system. Within this non-ego centered system you are not you, the flower is not a flower, time is not time, space is not space, love is not love, life is not life, death is not death, hate is not hate, suffering, desire, good bad are not themselves. There is only chaos, the undifferentiated facts that “ever renews its flowing”

You noticed that you see to be a “twofold” you, as you spoke of it. The you who has a name may be as the rupa self. Rupa means “form” in

Buddhist philosophy. And the “you” who dwells in the undifferentiated may be taken as the *sunyata* self. *Sunyata* generally means “emptiness” but in my view, the word emptiness is apt to be thought “endless void”. Therefore, one must be emptiness as suchness as, “As-it-is-ness”. As long as you never step into the midst of un-differentiation, the *sunyata* self and the *rupa* self continue to remain at a distance from one another, separate and unrelated. (141)

In Buddhism, there is no such thing as the self or the soul. It is empty of self. At the same time, world is empty. Due to ignorance one realizes that there is the self or the soul to which he tries to attach and liberates himself from the pain and sorrow of his life. But in Buddhism, there is no self or no own-being. Thus, *Sunyata* is not own-being or non-existent state of being. Rather, it is emptiness of all beings, all existences and all things. The realization of this very emptiness (*Sunyata*) or the non-being or non-self is nirvana.

All things, all persons or self lack a fixed essence. Hence they are empty of eternal, fixed and immutable essence. On the contrary, all existences are impermanent. They have no permanent self so they undergo some change and transformations. And nirvana is the result of the cessation of all existences. Concerning *sunyata* or the void nature of every existence, Lim Yang and S.N Rong in *Sunyata (Emptiness) in the Mahayana Context* writes:

The Buddha emphasised the significance of this attainment and encouraged the direct and profound contemplation on void-nature. He said, "Since there is no absolute self-nature thus every existence exhibits void-nature. Because it is void, there is no rising nor falling. Since there is no rising nor falling, thus everything was originally in

complete calmness. Its self-nature is nirvana." From the viewpoint of time and space, we can surmise that all existences are impermanent, all existences have no permanent self, and nirvana is the result of the cessation of all existences. (4)

Sunyata and cessation is the truth of all existences. Emptiness does not mean nothing in Buddhism. It implies the disentanglement or detachment from all worldly misunderstandings of the existence of self, identity and the realization of the absolute. In regard to Sunyata as emptiness of all existences and its eternal, ultimate and absolute nature Lim Yang and Rong in *Sunyata (Emptiness) in the Mahayana Context* writes:

Everything exists relatively. Thus, what is the ultimate truth? If we investigate existence further, we realise that all existences are empty or sunya. This is the fundamental characteristic and reality of all existence. It is ultimate and absolute. But we should not think that empty means nothing. It implies the disentanglement from the worldly misunderstanding of the existence of self, identity, and the realisation of the absolute. (5)

In Buddhism, the self is Sunya, empty. It is unstable, mutable and impermanent. The other aspect of Sunyata is nirvana which is eternal, absolute and infinite on the realization of the self as Sunyata. In regard to the liberating and permanent value of Sunyata, Nagasena (Nagarjuna) in *The Questions of King Milinda* book-4 chapter-8 writes:

As space, O king, neither is born nor grows old, neither dies nor passes away nor is reborn (has a future life to spring up into), as it is

incompressible, cannot be carried off by thieves, rests on nothing, is the sphere in which birds fly, is unobstructed, and is infinite; so, O king, Nirvana is not born, neither does it grow old, it dies not, it passes not away, it has no rebirth (no future life to spring up into), it is unconquerable, thieves carry it not off, it is not attached to anything, it is the sphere in which Arahats move, nothing can obstruct it, and it is infinite. These are the ten qualities of space inherent in Nirvana. (193)

The self does not exist in Buddhism. it is Sunya or empty of all essences. But nirvana exists. It is eternal, peaceful, blissful and delicate. And it is attained by the freedom from distress and other sorrow and sufferings. Regarding the liberating and eternal existence of nirvana, Nagarjuna in *The Questions of King Milinda* book-4 chapter-8 further states:

That principle of Nirvana, O king, so peaceful, so blissful, so delicate, exists. And it is that which he who orders his life aright, grasping the idea of all things (of the Confections, *Samkharas*) according to the teachings of the Conquerors, realises by his wisdom--even as a pupil, by his knowledge, makes himself, according to the instruction of his teacher, master of an art.'And if you ask: "How is Nirvana to be known?" it is by freedom from distress and danger, by confidence, by peace, by calm, by bliss, by happiness, by delicacy, by purity, by freshness. (196)

Nirvana is the cessation of all becomings. It is the cessation of the three-fold fire of lust, malice and dillusion. It is the cessation of all the transitory-ness in the self or the soul. In regard to the impermanence, and cessation of all these conditions for

attaining nirvana Nagarjuna in *The Questions of King Milinda* book-4 chapter-8

furthermore states:

And in the mind of him who thus perceives the insecurity of transitory life, (of starting a fresh and innumerable birth) the thought arises: "All on fire is this endless becoming, burning, and blazing! Full of pain is it, of despair! If only one could reach a state in which there were no becoming, there would there be calm, that would be sweet-the cessation of all these conditions, the getting rid of all these defects (of lusts, of evil, and of Karma), the end of cravings, the absence of passion, peace, Nirvana!" (200)

Cessation of all becoming, all lust and passions are the state of attaining nirvana. Regarding the idea of the cessation of all conditions of passions, of sorrow and sufferings and so on, Nagarjuna in *The Questions of King Milinda* book-3 chapter-4 depicts with a greater clarity and precision:

All foolish individuals, O king, take pleasure in the senses and in the objects of sense, find delight in them, continue to cleave to them. Hence are they carried down by that flood (of human passions), they are not set free from birth, old age, and death, from grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair, --they are not set free, I say, from suffering. But the wise, O king, the disciple of the noble ones, neither takes pleasure in those things, nor finds delight in them, nor continues cleaving to them. And in as much as he does not, in him craving ceases, and by the cessation of craving grasping ceases, and by the cessation of grasping becoming ceases, and when becoming has ceased

birth ceases, and with its cessation birth, old age, and death, grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair cease to exist. The cessation is brought about the end of all that aggregation of pain. Thus that cessation is Nirvana. (107)

Nirvana is generally thought of as being directly opposite of what Samsara *is*. The cessation of the Samsara- it's impermanent and transitory-ness through the realization of Sunyata is nirvana. Sunyata is the emptiness of self or non-self or Anatma and the very empty, devoid state of the self is the nirvana. All things being impermanent, nothing can be seen as having an independent, lasting form of existence. All existences are ignorance and illusory. The realization of this state is emptiness or Sunyata which, in turn, is the nirvana or the enlightenment. More precisely, Sunyata is nirvana on being disillusioned from the self as something- (own being). The self is really sunya and the realization of it is nirvana.

More elaborately, *Sunyata* is defined as "not *svabhava*". The concept *svabhava* means "own- being", and means something like "substance" or "essence". *Svabhava* has to do with the notion that there is a form of being which "is" and "exists" in the form that is not dependent on context, is not subject to variation, and has a form of permanent existence. As such, the "soul" is. Soulless-ness or material-less-ness or substance-less-ness is Sunyata to which Nagarjuna calls nirvana. Thus, Nagarjuna concludes that Sunyata is the fundamental characteristic of reality, and that *svabhava* (own- being) does not really exist anywhere.

Shunyata is Nirvana in which the enlightened being will not be reborn. He is free from all the circle of births and deaths, sorrow and sufferings and other dualisms in that supreme state of consciousness. And on the attainment of the Nirvana the time

does not exist for him as there comes an end of that present life. Regarding the end of time on the attainment of Nirvana Nagarjuna in *The Questions of King Melinda* book-two, chapter two states:

The king said: 'You speak, Nagasena, of time immemorial. What does this word "time" mean? Past time, O king, and present, and future. But what? Is there such a thing as time? There is time which exists, and time which does not. Which then exists, and which not? There are Confections (constituent potentialities of being) O king, which are past in the sense of having passed away, and ceased to be, or of having been dissolved, or altogether changed. To them time is not. But there are conditions of heart which are now producing their effect, or still have in them the inherent possibility of producing effect, or which will otherwise lead to reindividualisation. To them time is. Where there are beings who, when dead, will be reborn, there time is. Where there are beings who, when dead, will not be reborn, there time is not; and where there are beings who are altogether set free (who, having attained Nirvana in their present life, have come to the end of that life), there time is not--because of their having been quite set free. (57-58)

Life and teaching of Gautama Buddha is also based on the philosophy of zero. On attaining knowledge, Buddha himself told one of his followers that he was no more than what he was. He was in the void state of mind at that time which was without desire, without life of his own. He only was and nothing more at that time. His concept of nirvana is also based on the very concept of zero which is meant to attain the salvation by merging into void of eternity. His philosophy of zero was followed by several of Buddhists. Nagarjun and Shantidev were such Buddhist who

firmly believed in the notion of zero. According to Buddhist, God is zero, unmanifested, invisible, unthinkable and quality less. Zero is the cause of the all existences. There were some of the Buddhists who have discussed the idea of zero as the void or the absence of thoughts, ideas and desires of mind.

In the Madhyamika Karika-13, it is mentioned that zero is the absence of all thoughts a person must be absence by his thoughts and desires. Those who believe in zero do not like to see any other way than absence of thoughts. They like to be empty of all their ideologies or all kinds of thinking. In regard to the zero as empty by all thoughts or thinking, Radhakrinsnan in his book *Indian Philosophy* writes:

Sunyata Survadrishtinam prokta nihsansaram jinaih

Yesam tu sunyatadrishtis tan ashadhayan vabhashire. (701)

(Absolute reality does not fall with the domain of intellect. One must evacuate oneself from all thoughts and thinking.)

Zero in the Buddhist philosophy is the ideology of thoughtlessness. It is the void of all thinking, all desires. In the same pace, a mighty idea of the Buddhist philosophy is described. Zero is the concept of the void. It is the concept of the emptiness of all mind, knowledge and understanding. In other words, zero is empty of light (light Shunya), empty of mind (mind shunya), empty of knowledge (knowledge shunya), salubrious empty of everything, every understanding. The main aim of zero is to be lost in oneself that is to gain the state of personlessness or Samadhi.

Concerning the concept of zero as empty of light, mind and all knowledge

Radhakrinsnan in his book *Bhartiya Darshan* writes:

Prabhasunyam mansunyam buddhisunyam niramayam.

Sarbasunyam nirabhasa samadhiasthashyam lakshyam. (669)

(Emptying one-self by light, mind and all is the super-consciousness (Samadhi). Not to have the knowledge of anything (nirabhasa) is the very essence of Sunyata.)

Zero in the middle path Buddhist philosophy is the concept of emptiness (shunyata) of all movements. In other words, zero is shunyata (emptiness) of all the movements. One of the middle path Buddhists says that there is something more transcendent in zero. Zero is the cause of all things and they never change that cause. In regard to the concept of zero as move less and changeless, Radhakrishnan in *Indian Philosophy* states:

Sunyagatika hi subhute sarbadharma te no gati na tyatibartante. (699)

(Zero is Sunyata (emptiness) of all existences or of self (Anatman).

Zero is the cause of all things and they never change that changes.)

Zero is the absence of the appearance of things or person. According to the Madhyamic Briti-18, it is mentioned that the middle path Buddhists believe that nirvana is the absence of all things or all thoughts. In the state of the attainment of nirvana, the person only exists. He only 'is' and 'is' is the state of being that is beyond all claims, all thoughts. Regarding the nirvana as the absence of whole world or all thoughts, Radhakrinsnan in *Indian Philosophy* states:

Sunyatameva nirvanam kevalam tadam dahabhyam. (700)

(All that is said of Sunya is true of nirvana. In short, Sunyata is only nirvana.)

Extinction of self from all desires and all thoughts is the state of nirvana. In selfless or personless state time does not evolve. Zero is a state of being for the middle path Buddhists which only 'is' and that neither increases nor decreases. In

other words, zero is a move less state of mind for middle path Buddhists. According to the Madhyamic Karika-14, it has been said that zero is truth or absence which neither increases nor decreases. In regard to this move less state of mind,

Radhakrishnan in *Indian Philosophy* states:

Sunya satya hain athva tathaya hain, jo na badhati hain our na ghatati
hain. (700)

(Sunyata is truth or tathata which neither increases nor decreases.)

The Buddhists' belief of the fact that does not increase or decrease is the void state of being. Zero for the middle path Buddhist is the deeds or the Karmas which are filled with the ideology of zero. In other words, such deeds or the actions that are influenced from the ideology of nothing or absence are the embodiment of zero.

Shantidev, one of the Madhyamics of 7th AD, in his *Bodhi Charyartar* and *Sikcha-Smucchya* is of the view that man must be inspired from such deeds which are filled with the idea of zero. In regard to his view of deeds filled with ideology of void or zero, Radhakrishnan in *Bhartiya Darshan* states:

Apane punyoka nischita karo aise karmoki daura

Jo namrata aur sunyaki bhavana se oatprot ho. (591)

(Decide your deeds with such works/Karmas which are influenced by
Sunyata.)

The deeds filled with the ideology of zero are outside the space and time. When the deeds or the karmas become full of ideology of zero, then such karmas are devoid of personhood and time.

In the Buddhist philosophy zero is something that is wordless or without word (nisabda). In other words, zero is such state of a thing or of a person which is nothing. It is the void of the bodiless or personless or wordless state. To this wordless state of

zero, a Buddhist Yogeswrodaya calls Brahman. Brahman in his eyes is zero in spite of His ultimate reality of bliss, eternal and absolute. Regarding the zero, wordless and silent state Radhakrishnan in *Indian Philosophy* states:

Sunyam tu sacchidanandam nihsbadabrahamansabaditam. (664)

(God is not improperly called nothing. For thought, what is relative is nothing. Brahman whose nature is reality, wisdom and joy is Sunya.)

Zero in the Buddhist philosophy is the wordless and silent state of mind. It is full of infinite peace, enlightenment and timeless bliss (Sachchidananda). The Brahman is realized in this very idea of silence and in hearing the wordlessness or the soundlessness.

Zero for the middle path Buddhist is something that is unexpressed or unsaid. It is the state of silence that can neither be called zero nor non-zero nor both nor none of them. Nagarjuna, one of the greatest middle paths Buddhist believes in the doctrine of zero. He says that which cannot be expressed in words is neither called zero nor non-zero; it is neither both nor one of them. But to symbolize it is called zero. Regarding Nagarjun's concept of zero as silent and formless, Radhakrishnan in *Bhartiya Darsahan* states:

Sunyamiti na baktyasunyamiti va bhveta.

Ubhayam nabhyam cheti prajyaptayarte. (608)

(Nirvana and Sunyata are supreme reality. Nirvana is neither existent nor non-existent but beyond both. To symbolize it is Sunya)

Nagarjun's concept of zero that connotes void of wordless and silent is transcendental state of timelessness as it is void state of all substances.

Apart from being a number, zero is also a concept and fundamental one. The concept and symbol that connotes nullity represents a qualitative advancement of the

human capacity of abstraction. Zero as the concept is the concept of a void. The concept of void existed in the Hindu philosophy and the Buddhist concept of Nirvana that is: attaining salvation by merging into the void of eternity.

In other words, zero in the Buddhist philosophy is the non-existent state of mind that is desire-less and thoughtless. In such non-existent silent state of mind, time does not emanate. In other words, time means mobility of thought and in the non-existent state of mind, the time does not begin. It ceases to exist in the selfless or silent state of mind.

Most of the poems of Emily Dickinson are also filled with the Buddhists 'concept of zero. Zero for the Buddhists is the concept of consciousness. It is divine unconscious coming to consciousness. In her poem *Because I could not Stop for Death* (J-712) Dickinson shows a great change of her consciousness from the illusion to eternity. At first she had the sentimental view of death that was carrying her to eternity. For some time, the journey with the Death seemed to be very pleasurable but soon she gets disillusioned from everything. Really, the Death that was taking her to eternity was simply a deception to her. She suddenly felt quivering and chill that her gown was not able enough to protect her from the chillness. Thus she realized her death and eternity was gossamer (deception) only for her. (The Dews drew quivering and chill- For only Gossamer, my Gown, My Tippet—only Tulle- 9-11). This change from the past state of the illusion of eternity was a qualitative and creative change in her present consciousness. Dickinson seems to be conscious enough towards her view of eternity from her unconscious, sentimental self. Zero in the Buddhism is the divine unconsciousness coming into consciousness. Dickinson also is getting consciousness after being disillusioned from the false notion of the eternity.

In the poem *I Heard a Fly Buzz* (J-464) Dickinson is getting conscious after being disillusioned from her idea of eternity. She had the sentimental hope of eternity or after life. But from this illusion she soon becomes conscious that eternity is within her own self and not anywhere in the heaven. (And then the windows failed-And could not see to see – 9-10). The hope of her being led to eternity failed as she could not see the coming of God due to the interference of the fly that came between her and the window through which God was coming to her or through which she was about to see the God. This was her disillusionment of eternity and the consciousness that the God is in knowing the self.

Her poem *Just Lost, When I was Saved* (J-160) also shows Dickinson being disillusioned from her desire of attaining eternity or heaven. Eternity is impossibility. She was called back from her way to eternity for the first time. The next time to reach there was impossibility for the time appeared so slow due to her slow moving boat carrying her to eternity. It appeared to her that centuries would pass in such slow moving boat but she could not reach her destined place. From the false notion of eternity, she becomes intensely aware of her present consciousness. Her Self and all desires extinguish and she becomes self-aware and conscious of the true eternity on the earth. In short, eternity is in being self-aware and conscious. It is not found elsewhere.

Buddhist's idea of the void or *shunyata* is seen in Dickinson's poem *Pain has an Element of Blank* (J-650) also. Pain leaves the heart blank of all the only wishes (desires of life) and the life is rendered to eternal pain. (It has no future—but itself, Its infinite contain, Its past---5-7). The infinite pain of the past contracts in the present permeated state of consciousness resulting in self-enlightenment (Its past--enlightened

to perceive - 7). Despite the enlightenment, new periods of pain begin resulting in higher blanks only to deepen her enlightenments (New periods of pain - 8). In short, Buddhists *shunyata* is divine unconscious becoming conscious. Dickinson too is gaining consciousness from her divine unconscious by the blanks that result from eternal pain after pain in her frustration in love for several times.

In the same pace in *I measure my Grief I Meet* (J-561) also she has shown the similar consciousness from her eternal pain or grief – (It feels so old a pain - 8). Her so old, eternal pain is contracted by the permeation of her consciousness and she attains enlightenment. Yet she enlightens only to have a larger pain and deeper enlightenment (Enlightened to larger pain - 15). In short, Buddhist *shunyata* is the void that is filled by the enlightenment. Dickinson also has elements of blank or void in herself. She also fills the voids of her self by the high and higher enlightenments in her continuous frustrations and pains of long periods of past.

The poem *My Life Closed Twice before its Close* (J-1732) also reveals the void state of Dickinson's self. As the title itself indicates, her self extinguished for two times (My life closed twice before its close) and for the third time also it is about to be extinguished (a third event to me - 4). Each time parting (from her lovers) was a heaven in her present consciousness and each time it turned into hell on being again that turned into heaven in being fused or permeated in her conscious state of the present (Parting is all we know of heaven. And all we need of hell- 7-8). Like the *shunyata* of Buddhist that is coming into consciousness from their divine unconscious, Dickinson also seems to come into her self-consciousness of heavenly divine knowledge from her twice fallen unconsciousness of the hell of life that extinguished for respectively the two times in this poem.

2.6 Personless-ness, Agent-less-ness, Un-relatedness and Seerness in the Philosophy of Ashtavakra

Ashtavakra's Life: A Historical Background

Ashtavakra was an inborn scholar. He studied and attained ultimate knowledge in the very womb of his mother. His father, Kahore Rishi, was a great Vedantist. He used to recite the verses of Vedanta to his pregnant wife, Sujata, every night. And from the very womb of his mother he used to listen to his words with a great concentration. But after eight months of his growth in the womb of his mother, he felt a great disinterestedness in the recitation of the Vedanta from his father. The recitation of the Vedanta from his father seemed quite insignificant and useless to him. So, he rejected his father's devotion on the Vedanta as fallacious and Vedanta itself as incompetent. From the very womb of his mother, he uttered one night, Taat! (Father), the knowledge of the Vedas is false and trivial. It is only a useless heap of the meaningless words. The first night his father did not mind it thinking that his wife might have made some mistakes. The second night, he again suggested his father, that the recitation of the Vedas was insignificant and useless as it would not lead him to true redemption. He further suggested him to know the 'self' or 'soul' to know all. This utterance from his son made him angry. In anger he shouted to his son, "Foolish! You are giving me advice." He further shouted cursing him that he would be born crooked and disfigured by eight parts of his body. Two months later, he was born posthumously as Ashtavakra or crooked by eight parts of his body. His poor father who had gone to get some monetary help from the king Janaka for the birth ceremony of his accursed son to be born soon had died by taking Samadhi in water a day before his birth after being defeated in

the pedantry talk- religious dialogue with Bandi- a divinely appointed man and religious teacher of the king Janaka from the god, Barun.

As a child there was no childishness in his behaviors. He used to sit under a tree and be lost in some strange thought for quite a long time. By twelfth years of his life, he became all trained in the knowledge of the Vedas. One day, his maternal brother, Swetaketu, found him talking with his father and taunted him in jealousy to go and talk with his own father. On this he came to his mother and asked her where his father was. Then she revealed all the truth of how his father was compelled to take the water Samadhi after being defeated in the religious dialogue with Bandi- the son of the God, Barun and religious teacher of king Janaka.

On hearing this pathetic defeat of his father in the religious dialogue and his consequential tragic end in water Samadhi in the river, he doubted the knowledge of Bandi and other scholars in the assembly of the king Janaka. So he decided to go and compete with him (Bandi) in the religious dialogue. On his arrival to the Palace of the king Janaka, all the scholars laughed at him tauntingly for his crooked body and crooked manner of walking. Soon he also counter-laughed at them. There was a great humor and pity in his laughing at them. So the king became serious he remarked him that he knew why everybody laughed at him but he didn't understand one thing as why he laughed at them. Hearing this, he replied him that he laughed at them for their poor knowledge. He further remarked him that he had heard that his Palace was full of scholars but he saw only the cobblers there. They were trained in the skin and physical self only. So they were like shoe-makers. His assembly was not the assembly of vast scholars but of the

cobblers, shoe makers for they knew the skin only. They judge a person by his physical attraction and the judge of the physical self is no better than a cobbler.

The king was greatly impressed from his words and made him sit on his throne and he himself became his disciple. The rest of his scholars were ashamed of themselves for their ridiculous behavior at the boy. But proud Bandi became all the more aggressive and challenged him in a religious dialogue with him on the same fatal condition of taking water Samadhi on his defeat. Ashtavakra accepted his challenge with all his sincerity and tranquil mind. In the dialogue, Bandi emphasized that all knowledge is accumulated in the Vedas which reveals everything from the origin of creation of the universe to the high idealization of human life. He showed his pride asking what else is there that is not in the Vedas.

Transgressing the Vedas, Ashtavakra suggested that he did not conceive the knowledge of Vedas as ultimate knowledge. He further remarked that none of the ends is proved or final. Everything, every theory can be challenged in time. To conceive the knowledge in Vedas as final is to limit one's own view and idealization of life. The world of idea is limitless, infinite and the knowledge of time makes that world of idea all the more infinite.

With his wisdom Ashtavakra defeated Bandi in the dialogue but he was not so cruel as to compel him to take the water Samadhi in the river. Rather he asked the king what the cause behind the cruel water Samadhi to the vanquished Brahmins in the dialogue with Bandi was. Then the king replied that Bandi was not the other person than the son of the God, Barun. He was appointed to send some brilliant Brahmins from the earth to complete the Yagya in Bibhavaripuri,

heaven. So, it was to co-operate Bandi that he assisted him in the cruel act of defeating the Brahmins and sending them to perform the Yagya. He further clarified that they (Brahmins) were all alive in Bibhavaripuri and none of them was dead. By that time the yagya in Bibhavaripuri was also completed. Finally, he succeeded in taking his father back to his house being laden with honors and rewards of limitless gold and forty thousand cows from the Mithila King, Janaka. To his great pleasure, his father carried him into the river and freed him from the curse of crookedness by dipping him into the water.

The Ashtavakra's Philosophy

The Ashtavakra's dialogue with the king begins from the philosophy of zero. Man or soul is originated from the zero. He/she is a zero or nothing, non-existent being and he/she or zero has no relationship with anything. He is not related to anything. The one that is not cannot have any relationship. For the self of zero, nothing can bind. For him there is no hunger, no thirst, no love, no hatred, no world, no desire, no man, no good and no bad. Naturally he is not concerned to any of the events from birth to death, from hell to heaven and home to society.

Self is already free and redeemed. There is nothing for one to do to be free. No exertion, no attempt is needed for it. Only he should realize his present state of self that is empty like zero and separate his body from his self. Revealing the self Ashtavakra suggests Janaka to accept it and separate himself firstly from his body. And then what remains is his real self. There exists only zero in that condition of the reduction of the body from the self or soul. This self is in the state of rest. If mind comes in the state of rest or zero, he is already quiet, pleased and free. Regarding the self without any substance Ashtavakra in the fourth verse of the first chapter recites:

(Yadi dehaṁ pṛthak kṛtya citi viśrāmya tiṣṭhasi

adhunaiva sukhī śānto bandhamukto bhaviṣyasi). (1.8-9)

(If only you will remain resting in consciousness, seeing yourself as distinct from the body, then even now you will become happy, peaceful and free from bonds.)

Man is completely a transformed person. His corporeal body and mind have nothing to do with his transformed self. The body and soul are two different things. They have two different existences and they are two different parts of man. There are

two lives of the man-temporal and trans temporal. The life that is separate from body is the life of the void that is formless and personless.

Self is formless. It only 'is'. Its existence is ironically non-existent. The non-existent or what is not is not related from anything in the physical world. The formless zero is quite unrelated from everything. Home, society, pleasure, sorrow, life and death, are foreign, unconcerned to him/her. The walls of all these illusions fall down in this realization of non-existent self of zero. Regarding the unattached, unrelated self of the man Ashtavakra in the fifth and fifteenth verses of the first chapter recites:

(na tvaṁ viprādiko varṇo nāśramī nākṣagocaraḥ

asaṅgo'si nirākāro viśvasākṣī sukhī bhava). (1.10-11)

(niḥsaṅgo niṣkriyo'si tvaṁ svaprakāśo niraṁjanaḥ

ayameva hi te bandhaḥ samādhimanutiṣṭhati) (1.30-31)

(You do not belong to the brahmin or any other caste, you are not at any stage, nor are you anything that the eye can see. You are unattached and formless, the witness of everything - so be happy.)

(You are really unbound and action less, self-illuminating and spotless already. The cause of your bondage is that you are still resorting to stilling the mind.)

The real self is formless, unattached. The real self or man is not related from anything in the physical world. In other words, the real man is something different from the body. The separation of man from the body is the state of integrated consciousness of mind.

Ashtavakra emphasizes on the point that man is not any caste, any dweller. He is not even the man who is the agent to do or to be involved in any of the activities. He is really unrelated, formless, innocent and self-enlightened. Revealing the self as void or formless, Ashtavakra in the sixth verse of the first chapter recites:

(dharmādharmau sukhaṁ duḥkhaṁ mānasāni na te vibho

na kartāsi na bhoktāsi mukta evāsi sarvadā). (1.12-13)

(Righteousness and unrighteousness, pleasure and pain are purely of the mind and are no concern of yours. You are neither the doer nor the reaper of the consequences, so you are always free.)

The body and the mind are involved in the actions of various kinds. Hunger, thirst, sorrow, pleasure, birth and death are six waves of temporal life. Hunger and thirst are to body; sorrow and pleasure are to mind and birth and death belong to the breath. The hunger and thirst are to body; sorrow and pleasure are to mind and birth and death belong to the breath. The hunger and thirst lead the body to act. Because of the attachment the mind does the action. The thirsts or the un-fulfillment of desires lead the birth and the death to their revolving cycle. In short, the action or the karma of any kind is to body and mind. The six waves- Hunger, thirst, sorrow, pleasure, birth and death are merely the appearances. They are like the temporary waves or bubbles of water.

Sorrow, pleasure, piety, sin and even birth and death are the projections of mind. Body undergoes these changes in the influence of various qualities (gunas). Seeing beautiful or sweet, one becomes pleased and vice-versa. All these experiences

of sorrow, pleasure, and good, bad are of mind. The real man is quite unattached from all these waves or events.

His pure self is zero. The karmas of various kinds are to body and mind. Therefore, he is neither the agent of any his action nor consequently the consumer of those actions. If he is not the agent of any of his actions, he is also not the consumer of them. Really, he is already redeemed and always in the Free State. So there is no need to be redeemed. If he frees himself from the prison cell of body and action as being agentless, he is free in free or in himself. As he is really formless, he is beyond the agent and hence beyond the consumer. Without the agent and without the consumer, the self is purely conscious. He is only a conscious being, an awakened person. In respect to such integrated conscious self of man Ashtavakra in the ninth verse of the first chapter recites:

(eko viśuddhabodho'ham iti niścayavahninā

prajvālyājñānagahanam vītaśokaḥ sukhī bhava). (1.18-19)

(Burn down the forest of ignorance with the fire of the understanding that "I am the one pure awareness", and be happy and free from distress.)

Man is sense, light, conscious being or formless. The karmas done are done by some foreign agents eg. body. Body eats; the body enjoys; and the body suffers. Everything is done by the body and he himself is only the eye witness of all those karmas. The eye-witness sees only that something has happened. He reports only that he has seen someone doing something. And he is not involved in that happening. He is merely the onlooker- or the eye witness of those incidents. Like the scenes on the

screen of the television, many actions pass through his physical screen of brain and he sees them passing one after another. Regarding the idea of the seer being Ashtavakra in the seventh verse of the first chapter recites:

(eko draṣṭāsi sarvasya muktaprāyo'si sarvadā

ayameva hi te bandho draṣṭāraṁ paśyasītaram). (1.14-15)

(You are the one witness of everything, and are always completely free. The cause of your bondage is that you see the witness as something other than this.)

Man is formless and different from the body and other physical reality. On realizing himself as devoid, empty or nothing, he is free in his self of the eye-witness of all the karmas which he does.

Not to see himself as onlooker of all his actions or karmas is to be bound with them. It is to be attached with the Maya (illusions). It is more painful and poisonous than the sting of black cobra. In regard to the self as a seer being or eye-witness Ashtavakra in the eighth verse of the first chapter recites:

(aḥaṁ kartetyahaṁmānamahākṛṣṇāhidaṁśītaḥ

nāhaṁ karteti viśvāsāmṛtaṁ pītvā sukhī bhava) (1.16-17)

(Since you have been bitten by the black snake, the opinion about yourself that "I am the doer", drink the antidote of faith in the fact that "I am not the doer", and be happy.)

Man is not the agent or consumer of any of his actions. He is not the body. He is really a pure sensible being. Ashtavakra devotes different verses from the forth to

the ninth of this chapter in the revelation of the secrets of the freedom of life of man as an awakened and sensible being.

Hearing the agentless, seer and sensible self of man from Ashtavakra, the king Janaka is greatly mesmerized. He reacts expressing his sense of wonder of ever being free. In regard to his sense of wonder at his freedom he in the first verse of the second chapter recites:

(aho niraṁjanaḥ śānto bodho'haṁ prakṛteḥ paraḥ

etāvantamaham kālaṁ mohenaiva viḍāmbitaḥ) (2.1-2)

(Truly I am spotless and at peace, the awareness beyond natural causality. All this time I have been afflicted by delusion.)

Man's real self is empty or nothing in the coverage of the body. His real self is agentless and hence without consuming any karma. The action or event of any kind is done by the body through mind (mind body) in its movement. He himself is only lighted by zero. He is a conscious being. He simply 'is' only. Janaka also feels himself simply as a 'being' that just 'is' in his innocent, quiet and awakened self. For the first time he feels himself beyond nature and the body after being awakened from the deep slumber of ignorance. He further feels that it is strange that he has been attached to Maya (illusions) of many kinds for such a long time. Expressing his gratitude to Ashtavakra, he tells him that he has disillusioned him from the Maya of body and he is now a self-enlightened, quiet, awakened and sensible being that just 'is'.

Body is separate from the soul. It is originated from the so called fifth elements of earth, water, fire, wind and sky. On the other hand, the self that is

awakened, sensible or acknowledged being is not originated one. The body gets its force from the zero or the soul. If the soul escapes from the cell of body, it becomes decayed, dead and still. Hence, the soul is the very source that gives life and force to body and the world. In regard to the generating power of soul Janak in the second verse of the second chapter exposes:

(yathā prakāśayāmyeko dehamenaṁ tathā jagat

ato mama jagatsarvamathavā na ca kiṁcana). (2.3-4)

(As I alone give light to this body, so I do to the world, As a result the whole world is mine, or alternatively nothing is.)

The soul is unborn, motionless, action less and formless. Though it is formless, it gives force to the body. The breath of life and force in the body is only because of the presence of soul in it. It is still and lightless without the generating force of the soul. Zero is God. It is the cause of all existences. In regard to the enlightenment of the whole universe with his light of soul, Janak in the eighth verse of the second chapter reveals:

(prakāśo me nijaṁ rūpaṁ nātirikto'smyahaṁ tataḥ

yadā prakāśate viśvaṁ tadāhaṁ bhāsa eva hi). (2.16-17)

(Shining is my essential nature, and I am nothing over and beyond that.

When the world shines forth, it is simply me that is shining forth.)

The soul is enlightened. Though it is formless, unborn, zero or nothing, it gives force, light and life to the body and all in nature. It has no birth, no death. Hence it is indestructible. It is formless and lifeless. Hence it doesn't move and act at all.

And, in turn, it is in the perfect state of quietness. It gives force to all from body to nature. Hence it is everywhere and in every time-present past and future. In short, though it doesn't move but it is moved (traveled) everywhere and in every time. The in-destructively destructible Brahman has made the man and soul something indestructible too. Nothing is so great so peaceful and indestructible as the soul.

The soul or the zero that has generating power is Brahman. Like the Buddhists, Janaka also believes that the soul or the zero is Brahman. In other words, there is the presence of the Brahma in his soul. So he utters – “Aho! Aham Namō Namah (I greet myself)” (2/14).

The end of knowledge, knowledge or knowledgeable or known and knower (Jnana, Jney and Janata) is zero. All knowledge, knowledgeable things and knower are not real. They appear to be true only because of the person's own ignorance. The real man is formless and hence something non-existent. The non-existent one is not related to the knowledge of any kinds and nothing is knowledgeable also for him/her in such state. Knower (janata) himself is nobody, nothing. Hence, the triangle of knowledge, knowledgeable or known and knower is all unreal. They must vanish during the permeated states of consciousness. The action of any kind like dance, song, arts, writing appears best when one is vanished in course of his/her involvement in the action of dance, song arts etc. If he/she has the knowledge even of his/her presence during that moment, then it is his misery in those acts or arts. In regard to the extinguished self from Jnana, Jney and Janata that are not real Janaka in the fifteenth verse of the second chapter utters:

(jñānaṁ jñeyaṁ tathā jñātā tritayaṁ nāsti vāstavam

ajñānād bhāti yatredaṁ so'hamasmi niraṁjanaḥ). (2.30-31)

(Knowledge, what is to be known, and the knower - these three do not exist in reality. I am the spotless reality in which they appear because of ignorance.)

The self is the realization of the point of the void, empty primal force which is enlightenment and awakening of mind only. The rest is decay able, powerless and illusion. The king Janaka's happiness knows no bound to realize the incomparable, divine, quiet and indestructible realism of his self. He is from the beginning to the end in the universe. So he bows down to his own soul. He greets to himself. In regard to his idea that nothing is so powerful, so divine and indestructible as his own soul Janaka in the eleventh verse of the second chapter utters:

(aho ahaṁ namo mahyaṁ vināśo yasya nāsti me

brahmādistambaparyantaṁ jagannāśo'pi tiṣṭhataḥ). (2.22-23)

(How wonderful I am! Glory to me, for whom there is no destruction, remaining even beyond the destruction of the world from Brahman down to the last clump of grass.)

The Brahman, the Creator of the universe, Himself has been originated from the soul. Hence originated one (Brahman) is in- destructively destructible. The whole creation may be destroyed by the great flood or some other ways. From Brahman to small things may be destroyed in case the universe ends. But the soul or real man is beyond the destructions. He is from beginning to the end of the universe. He had no birth, no death. Disappearing he is always appearing. In the whole universe, he alone is existed one. Being non- existent he is paradoxically existed being-unique, divine and quiet. There is no one so great, so divine and peerless as him. Hence he bows

down and greets to himself. The king Janaka further greets to himself thinking that nothing belongs to him or everything is his own. He is formless, lifeless, zero (nothing). So he has nothing to claim for. On the other hand, everything is lighted and has got its force from him. So everything is his own. Hence he greets to himself. In regard to this universal nature of his self or soul he further utters:

(aho ahaṁ namo mahyaṁ yasya me nāsti kiṁcana

athavā yasya me sarvaṁ yad vānmanasagocaram). (2.28-29)

(How wonderful I am! Glory to me! I who possess nothing at all, or alternatively possess everything that speech and mind can refer to.)

God made man in his own form. Hence being nothing or being empty of all knowledge alone one can understand the divine self of Brahman within himself. Janaka too knew the true nature of his self or his soul and concludes that body, heaven, hell, bondages, salvation and fears all are the imaginations or the projections of mind only. In regard to the projections of mind he in the twentieth verse of the second chapter exposes:

(śarīraṁ svarganarakau bandhamokṣau bhayaṁ tathā

kalpanāmātramevaitat kiṁ me kāryaṁ cidātmanaḥ). (2.40-41)

(The body, heaven and hell, bondage and liberation, and fear too, all this is pure imagination. What is there left to do for me whose very nature is consciousness?)

He is neither the body nor the body is his. He is not even a living being. All these things are the projections of the mind only. In real sense, he is just an integrated

conscious being. He is a sensible, awakened and acknowledged being in the conscious realization of self that is beyond body. In this concern, he recites:

(nāham deho na me deho jīvo nāhamaham hi cit

ayameva hi me bandha āsīdyā jīvite sprhā). (2.44-45)

(I am not the body, nor is the body mine. I am not a living being. I am consciousness. It was my thirst for living that was my bondage.)

Zero is the generative force. The whole universe is manifested with the zero and finally it mingles in the same zero. King Janaka felt this reality of the manifestation of the universe in his self that is infinite like zero and in the twenty fifth verse of the second chapter utters:

(mayyanantamahāmbhodhāvāścaryam jīvavīcayaḥ

udyanti ghnanti khelanti praviśanti svabhāvataḥ). (2.50-51)

(How wonderful it is that in the limitless ocean of myself the waves of living beings arise, collide, play and disappear, according to their natures.)

The Self is like one of the drops of water in the ocean. As the waves are not different from Ocean, the same way self or the soul is also a wave that appears and then disappears there. The soul is like the juice of cane in the sweet; gold in the ornament and soil in the vessel. In short, zero is the fundamental force. Everything comes from the zero and mingles in it at last.

Zero is eternally zero. Body is zero or nothing without the zero. If the enlightened generative force of zero is reduced from the body, it becomes lifeless, still

and trivial. Hence, the soul being agentless itself is the agent of force to body and everything in the universe. It makes the body active. Zero is nothing except zero. It is the knowledge of life and lifelessness to soul and body or self as a whole. This knowledge of zero as zero of the self or the soul fills one with the idea of the agentless-ly unperturbed state of mind or personlessness of action. In regard to this unperturbed state of mind Ashtavakra in the second verse of the fourth chapter recites:

(yat padaṁ prepsavo dīnāḥ śakrādyāḥ sarvadevatāḥ

aho tatra sthito yogī na harṣamupagacchati). (4.3-4)

(Truly the yogi feels no excitement even at being established in that state which all the Devas from Indra down yearn for disconsolately.)

The one who has actualized himself with the formless, enlightened, unborn and indestructible soul is quite unperturbed from the pleasure and sorrow, sin and piety, birth and death. The sin or esteemed work of any kind can't influence him at all. Sorrow and suffering are the projections of mind and hence untouched from him. As being agentless, his nature is not to work or not to be involved in any of the activities and, in turn, not to undergo any emotion like sorrow and pleasure. Hence, evil or good, sinful or pious none of the activities can affect him. The self-actualized person doesn't feel happiness even in greatest pleasurable thing to which even the gods desire the most. So is with the sorrow to him. In the anguished cry of heart, he is in the unperturbed state. The only point that obstructs the redemption is the thirst of various kinds. In regard to the illusions of thirsts or desires Ashtavakra in the fourth verse of the tenth chapter recites:

(tṛṣṇāmātrātmako bandhastannāśo mokṣa ucyate

bhavāsaṃsaktimātreṇa prāptituṣṭirmuhurmuhuḥ). (10.8-9)

(The essential nature of bondage is nothing other than desire, and its elimination is known as liberation. It is simply by not being attached to changing things that the everlasting joy of attainment is reached.)

The only thing that binds the man with the karma is the thirst. Desire or thirst of any kind in life is the bondage and the destruction of it is the salvation. Like Buddha, Ashtavakra too believes that desires are the roots of sorrows and their extinction or the extinction of the triple fire (passion, hatred and delusion) is the nirvana or the Mukti. But his emphasis is not to be detached of them too.

Man can enjoy the liberty of acting unbounded or unperturbed by the mind that is empty of all desires or attachments and detachments. He who is nothing or who is desire less or unattached by temperament but involves in the pleasure is like the awakened person even by sleeping and disinterested from the world. In other words, he is not agent, and not the consumer of any karma. But the onlooker only, he is free from all of his karmas. Even by doing all he is doing none of them. In regard to the free state of unattached mind involved in karmas Ashtavakra in the first verse of the fourteenth chapter recites:

(prakṛtyā śūnyacitto yaḥ pramādād bhāvabhāvanaḥ
nidrito bodhita iva kṣīṇasaṃsaraṇo hi saḥ). (14.1-2)

(Janaka: He who by nature is empty minded, and who thinks of things only unintentionally, is freed from deliberate remembering like one awakened from a dream.)

Man is free in free if he is disinterested and unattached from everything in the world. The disinterested person or the unattached one does not keep any real interest

in the worldly affairs by his inner core of mind. Therefore, the action that he does is unattached with him. In a way, by doing all he is free from them all in his unattached ground to them.

Nothing remains for the frozen heart except the poor sensibility of numbness. The one whose only desire has melted or frozen without a place has lost everything. In other words, for the disinterested person whose only cherished desire has lost, even the palace looks desolate, barren, and heaven is hell for him. For him, there is no wealth, no friend, no devil of lust, no art, no science, nothing. Regarding the indifference to everything in disinterested moment of self Janak in the second verse of the fourteenth chapter reveals:

(kva dhanāni kva mitrāṇi kva me viṣayadasyavaḥ
kva śāstraṁ kva ca vijñānaṁ yadā me galitā sprhā). (14.3-4)
(When my desire has been eliminated, I have no wealth, friends, robber
senses, scriptures or knowledge?)

The disinterested person or who is unattached leads a neutral life. Neither the negative nor the positive view of life is applied for the disinterested or the non-existent self. In other words, there is neither bondages nor redemptions for him in his awakened state of mind. The disinterested one is the onlooker and seer while the interested one is lusty. But the one who has transcended even the redemption is neither disinterested nor interested. In other words, he is neither attached nor unattached with any of the karmas. If not attached to the karmas, then is also not detached from it. One is quite free to act in any way he likes because it is not he who is doing any of the karmas.:

(virakto viṣayadveṣṭā rāgī viṣayalolupa
grahamokṣavihīnastu na virakto na rāgavān. (16.12-13)

(One man is abstemious and averse to the senses, another is greedy and attached to them, but he who is free from both taking and rejecting is neither abstemious nor greedy.)

The disinterested or unattached person by any of the desires is ever free even in doing all of the karmas. In the Geeta Sri Krishna emphasizes on not being attached to any of the karmas but Ashtavakra emphasizes on not to be unattached too with the karmas.

The disinterested or the self-enlightened person does not get pleased with any kind of worldly things like the elephant that likes twigs of saal tree doesn't get pleased with the twigs of neem (bitter) tree. Concerning the disinterestedness of the self-enlightened person from the worldly pleasure Ashtavakra in the third verse of the seventeenth chapter recites:

(na jātu viṣayāḥ ke'pi svārāmaṁ harṣayantyamī
sallakīpallavaprītamivebhaṁ nimbapallavāḥ). (17.6-7)

(None of these senses please a man who has found satisfaction within,
just as Nimba leaves do not please the elephant that likes Sallaki
leaves.)

Disinterested or the self-enlightened person has a neutral life. To such person whose desires have extinguished; perception has become empty; efforts futile and senses disinterested, there is neither interest nor disinterest in the worldly affairs. Being neutral he is only the onlooker of all his actions imperturbed and unattached to them. The actions (karmas) go on passing from the screen of his mind and he sees them happening without care. Regarding the neutrality of self from any action or karmas Ashtavakra in the ninth verse of the seventeenth chapter reveals:

(śūnyā dr̥ṣṭirvṛthā ceṣṭā vikalānīndriyāṇi ca
na spr̥hā na viraktirvā kṣīṇasaṁsārasāgare) (17.18-19)

(In him for whom the ocean of samsara has dried up, there is neither attachment nor aversion. His gaze is vacant, his behavior purposeless, and his senses inactive.)

Man is free from any action or karma in neutrality. The attachment or interest in any karma can't bind him. But this doesn't mean that he is blindly free to do any karma he likes. Pleasure and peace can be attained unhindered. But the paradox is that one can't attain the ultimate peace and pleasure unless he doesn't leave all his desires of pleasure. There is a limitation on the karma. He should leave all his happiness at first and then enjoy them all paradoxically. Regarding the paradox of happiness Ashtavakra in the second verse of the eighteenth chapter reveals:

(arjayitvākhilān arthān bhogānāpnoti puṣkalān
na hi sarvaparit̥yājamantareṇa sukhī bhavet). (18.3-4)

(One may get all sorts of pleasure by the acquisition of various objects of enjoyment, but one cannot be happy except by the renunciation of everything.)

The person who has been enlightened, quite neutral has no self pride of higher wit, no dullness. He is neither in weal nor in woe. Being disinterested, neutral or self-enlightened, he is beyond the two extremes of the weal and the woe, life and death, heaven and hell. In all conditions, he is imperturbed, untouched, unrelated from them all and live in spontaneity as onlooker of his action. In respect to this neutral and on looking reality beyond sorrow and beyond pleasure Ashtavakra in the tenth verse of the eighteenth chapter reveals:

(na vikṣepo na caikāgryaṁ nātibodho na mūḍhatā
na sukhaṁ na ca vā duḥkhaṁ upaśāntasya yoginaḥ). (18.20-21)
(For the yogi who has found peace, there is no distraction or one-
pointedness, no higher knowledge or ignorance, no pleasure and no
pain.)

For the one who is enlightened, quiet and neutral, there is no difference between self state and begging, loss and gain, society and forest and so on. The enlightened and neutral being sees actions as onlooker. He lets everything pass from the screen of his mind and remains unaffected from them as if he is no one. Regarding this spontaneous living of the onlooker being Ashtavakra in the eleventh verse of the eighteenth chapter reveals:

(svārājye bhaikṣavṛttau ca lābhālābhe jāne vane
nirvikalpasvabhāvasya na viśeṣo'sti yoginaḥ). (18.22-23)
(The dominion of heaven or beggary, gain or loss, life among men or
in the forest, these make no difference to a yogi whose nature it is to be
free from distinctions.)

The disinterested person or the self-enlightened person has a spontaneous and neural life. At the same time the yogi who has been self-enlightened, free and quiet always lives a natural and spontaneous life. He has no personal desire and nothing to do in particular. He lives a neutral life like the blowing of dried leaves from trees in the direction of wind. In short, being self-enlightened, he is the onlooker of all his actions and let everything pass spontaneously, naturally from him or his mind. Regarding the neutral and spontaneous life of the disinterested and self-actualized person Ashtavakra in the thirteenth verse of this very chapter reveals:

(kr̥tyaṁ kimapi naivāsti na kāpi hṛdi raṁjanā
yathā jīvanameveha jīvanmuktasya yoginaḥ). (18.26-27)

(There is nothing needing to be done, or any attachment in his heart for
the yogi liberated while still alive. Things are just for life-time.)

The one who has attained quietness by transcending all the desires,
resolutions, and anguishes lives in the mercy of wind god. He goes where the divine
lord in his heart leads him. He has no personal desire but leaves himself in the mercy
of his inner sentiment. To such person, there is no Maya, no illusion, no desire, no
world, no meditation and no redemption. Everything extinguishes for him on the
extinction of his self. Regarding the transcendental reality of the self-enlightened
person Ashtavakra in the fourteenth, twenty and twenty-one verses of the eighteenth
chapter reveals:

(kva mohaḥ kva ca vā viśvaṁ kva tad dhyānaṁ kva muktatā
sarvasaṁkalpasīmāyāṁ viśrāntasya mahātmanah).
pravṛttau vā nivṛttau vā naiva dhīrasya durgrahaḥ

yadā yatkartumāyāti tatkr̥tvā tiṣṭhate sukham

nirvāsano nirālambaḥ svacchando muktabandhanaḥ

kṣiptaḥ saṁskāravātena ceṣṭate śuṣkaparṇavat). (18.28-29, 40-41, 42-
43)

(There is no delusion, world, meditation on that, or liberation for the
pacified great soul. All these things are just the realm of imagination.)

(The wise man who just goes on doing what presents itself for him to
do, encounters no difficulty in either activity or inactivity.)

(He who is desire-less, self-reliant, independent and free of bonds
functions like a dead leaf blown about by the wind of causality.)

The one who has been free from karmas or who has understood the karma-less-ness by his self-actualization does not do any of them even by doing several of them in the eyes of the people. Concerning the freedom of the karmas or the state of karma-less-ness Ashtavakra in the seventy-seven verse of the eighteenth chapter reveals:

(jñānād galitakarmā yo lokadr̥ṣṭyāpi karmakṛt

nāpnotyavasaram karmam vaktumeva na kimcana). (18.154-155)

(Though in the eyes of the world he is active, the man who has shed action through knowledge finds no means of doing or speaking anything.)

The one who is instinctually devoid of mind and acts spontaneously like the leaves in the wind is selfless, neutral in all his actions. Such self-enlightened person has neither the sense of honor nor dishonor. He is beyond all respects and insults. The self devoid of mind is beyond everything and every respect. Regarding the neutrality from honor and dishonor Ashtavakra in the twenty forth verse of the eighteenth chapter reveals:

(prakṛtyā śūnyacittasya kurvato'sya yadṛcchayā

prākṛtasyeva dhīrasya na māno nāvamānatā). (18. 48-49)

(For the man with a naturally empty mind, doing just as he pleases, there is no such thing as pride or false humility, as there is for the natural man.)

Karma or duty is essential. The formless and projection less self-actualized person does not think any of his karmas as karmas or duties. On the other hand, the worldly people being attached with too much karma undergo various weal and woes. Regarding the transcendental realism of karma-less-ness of the self-actualized person Ashtavakra in the fifty seventh and fifty eighth verses of the eighteenth chapter reveals:

(kartavyataiva saṁsāro na tām paśyanti sūrayaḥ
śūnyākārā nirākārā nirvikārā nirāmayāḥ
akurvannapi saṁkṣobhād vyagraḥ sarvatra mūḍhadhīḥ
kurvannapi tu kṛtyāni kuśalo hi nirākulaḥ). (18.114-117)

(It is the feeling that there is something that needs to be achieved which is Samsara. The wise who are of the form of emptiness, formless, unchanging and spotless see no such thing.)

(Even when doing nothing the fool is agitated by restlessness, while a skillful man remains undisturbed even when doing what there is to do.)

The wall of all forts of folly, illusion, fear and desires falls down in the self-enlightened moment. For him, there is no world, no perception, no appearance, no devotion, no meditation and no devotee, no meditator. Regarding the disillusioned

state of self-enlightened person Ashtavakra in the sixty sixth verse of the eighteenth chapter reveals:

(kva saṁsāraḥ kva cābhāsaḥ kva sādhyam kva ca sādhanam
ākāśasyeva dhīrasya nirvikalpasya sarvadā). (18.132-133)

(There is no man subject to Samsara, sense of individuality, goal or means to the goal for the wise man who is always free from imaginations, and unchanging as space?)

The self-enlightened, annihilated person is beyond the desires of luxuries and even redemptions. He is always free from attachments and detachments (raags and birags). He is disinterested, insipid and fickle to them all. In regard to the insipid and disinterested ness of the person who has no desire of any luxury and even redemption Ashtavakra in the sixty-eighth verse of the eighteenth chapter reveals:

(bahunātra kimuktena jñātataṭṭvo mahāśayaḥ
bhogamokṣanirākāṁkṣī sadā sarvatra nīrasaḥ). (18.136-137)

(In brief, the great-souled man who has come to know the Truth is without desire for either pleasure or liberation, and is always and everywhere free from attachment.)

The self-enlightened, quenched, and satisfied person lives a strange and paradoxical life. Sleeping he is not sleep; not sleeping he is sleeping or is in dream. The paradox is that sleeping he is not in sleep; living he is not lived. Regarding the reality as not sleeping by sleep and awakening by being not awake Ashtavakra in the ninety forth verse of the eighteenth chapter reveals:

(supto'pi na suṣuptau ca svapne'pi śayito na ca
jāgare'pi na jāgarti dhīrastr̥ptaḥ pade pade). (18.188-189)

(The wise man who is contented in all circumstances is not asleep even in deep sleep, not sleeping in a dream, nor waking when he is awake.)

The self-actualized person feels free from all the karmas even by doing them all. He is free from sorrow and suffering even in sorrowful and anxious state. He is out of knowledge even by having knowledge. He is proud less even by being proudly. He is sinless even by being sinful and so on. In short, there is no sorrow, no happiness, no attachments, no detachments, no freedom, and no salvation for him. He is neither sorrowful nor pleased, nor does he heavenly ascend nor hellishly descends. He is not happy in happiness and sorrowful in sorrowfulness. All these emotions or feelings remain contracted in the permeated state of self enlightenment. And the time ends in the contracted state of the various feelings. Being unperturbed he is in a state of being enlightened. In regard to the imperturbed and free state of the self-actualized being Ashtavakra in the ninety fifth and ninety sixth verses of eighteenth chapter reveals:

(jñāḥ sacinto'pi niścintaḥ sendriyo'pi nirindriyaḥ
subuddhirapi nirbuddhiḥ sāhaṁkāro'nahaṁkṛtiḥ
na sukhī na ca vā duḥkhī na virakto na saṁgavān
na mumukṣurna vā muktā na kiṁcinnna ca kiṁcana). (18.190-193)
(The seer is without thoughts even when thinking, without senses among the senses, without understanding even in understanding and without a sense of responsibility even in the ego.)

(Neither happy nor unhappy, neither detached nor attached neither seeking liberation nor liberated, he is neither something nor nothing.)

The fort of folly falls down sternly in the self-enlightened state of mind. One does not feel depressed in depression, meditated and lost in meditation and pandit (scholar) in pedantry (scholarship). In short, in self-enlightened state he lives in a free state where false prides vanish and pure spontaneous, natural self sprouts. Regarding the pride less nature of self Ashtavakra in the ninety seventh verse of the eighteenth chapter reveals:

(vikṣepe'pi na vikṣiptaḥ samādhau na samādhimān
jāḍye'pi na jaḍo dhanyaḥ pāṇḍitye'pi na paṇḍitaḥ). (18.194-195)
(Not distracted in distraction, in mental stillness not poised, in
stupidity not stupid, that blessed one is not even wise in his
wisdom.)

Time and space end in self-enlightened state of mind. Psychologically, he becomes forgetful of time. In other words, the pain, sorrows, meditation and yoga contract time as the self extinguishes there.

Time and space end in the self-enlightened state of mind. There is no religion, no dualism, no adwaita, no past, no present, no future, no good or no bad, no sorrow no happiness, no life no death, no world, no Samadhi, nothing is left. Everything becomes extinguished and indiscriminate for him. In regard to the indifference from everything Janak in the third and the seventh verses of the nineteenth chapter utters:

(kva bhūtaṁ kva bhaviṣyad vā vartamānamapi kva vā
kva deśaḥ kva ca vā nityaṁ svamahimni sthitasya me
kva mṛtyurjīvitaṁ vā kva lokāḥ kvāśya kva laukikam
kva layaḥ kva samādhirvā svamahimni sthitasya). (19.6-7,14-15)
(For me established in my own glory, there is no past, future or
present. There is no space or even eternity.)

(For me established in my own glory, there is no life or death, no worlds or things of this world, no distraction and no stillness of mind.)

In self-enlightened state, the wall of all follies falls down. Even zero as the concept does not exist at all. There is no zero, no mind, no sorrow and no frustration, nothing at all in the disillusioned and self-enlightened state of consciousness.

In his unrelated, imperturbed and self-enlightened state of mind, there is no body, no sense organs, no mind, no zero, no despair, no thirst, no knowledge, no salvation, no karma, nothing. He realizes himself even beyond the zero, beyond claims, beyond honor and dishonor. There is no question of his being or not being. There is no sense of one or two-dualism or Adwaita for him. Nothing arises in him, nothing vibrates in him, nothing enlightens him because he is either non-existent one or he is self-enlightened. In regard to the voids of all in self-enlightened state of mind Ashtavakra in the first, second, third and fourteenth verses of twentieth chapter reveals:

(kva bhūtāni kva deho vā kvendriyāṇi kva vā manaḥ
kva śūnyaṁ kva ca nairāśyaṁ matsvarūpe niraṁjane
kva śāstraṁ kvātmavijñānaṁ kva vā nirviṣayaṁ manaḥ
kva tṛptiḥ kva vitṛṣṇātvam gatadvandvasya me sadā
kva vidyā kva ca vāvidyā kvāhaṁ kvedaṁ mama kva vā
kva bandha kva ca vā mokṣaḥ svarūpasya kva rūpit
kva cāsti kva ca vā nāsti kvāsti caikaṁ kva ca dvayam
kimcinno ttiṣṭhate mam). (20.1-6,28-29)

(Janaka: In my unblemished nature there are no elements, no body, no faculties no mind. There is no void and no despair.)

(For me, free from the sense of dualism, there are no scriptures, no self-knowledge, no mind free from an object, no satisfaction and no freedom from desire.)

(There is no knowledge or ignorance, no "me", "this" or "mine", no bondage, no liberation, and no property of self-nature.)

(There is no being or non-being, no unity or dualism. What more is there to say? Nothing proceeds out of me.)

On being disillusioned from all the false appearing things or knowledge, one becomes self-conscious. In the self-enlightened state of consciousness there is the existence of only one thing that is 'nothing' or the void state of self.

The Critical Analysis of the Philosophy of Ashtavakra

The Concept of Zero

The philosophy of Ashtavakra is based on the concept of zero. The term zero has been used as 'Sunya' also which means blank or void in the philosophy of Ashtavakra. It is the state of complete emptiness of all substances. In other words, it is the idea of nothing; it is the non-existent state of self.

Zero is the blessed moment of the extreme consciousness. In extreme flow of consciousness, the person, his action and acted all are lost and nothing remains which is called the zero. In other words, zero is the moment when the action of any kind like dance, dancer and dancing all disappears. In that moment or state, the person has even no knowledge of his own existence to which one can call zero.

Zero is used in his philosophy as the supreme power of man and God too. It is the concept of zero that makes man immensely powerful, enlightened, quiet and free. Within the framework of this very zero, Ashtavakra clarifies some of the vital and main terms of zero that have dominated his whole philosophy. For example, separation of body from the soul, unrelatedness (Nissango), agentlessness, consumerless, eye witness (seer), Aham Namah (greeting of himself), Bodha (knowledge, consciousness), spontaneity of action etc are some of the key words related with zero that have frequently been used in his philosophy

Within these vital terms like the separation of body, Nissango (unrelatedness), agentlessness, eye-witness (onlooker, seer), he further clarifies the other terms of mingling (Laya), no sorrow, no pleasure, neither sin nor piety, interestedness/ disinterestedness (Nirakancha), good evil, sleeping/ awake, man/god, Jeeva (creature)/ Brahman, finally neither one nor two but zero.

Going deeper into them, he establishes his final idea of the disappearance of the entire contrary, opposite forces as where mingling is, where immingling is, where sorrow, where pleasure is, where good, where bad is, where sleeping, where awake, where life, where death, where knowledge, where ignorance is. In the end, he goes beyond the zero too which signifies the void or the non-existence of all lives, all things. In short, he tries to conclude that there is the existence of only one thing that is, 'nothing' or the self-devoid of all claims.

By clarifying these main terms of zero, he justifies his main goal of zero as "Sarvada Mukta" (ever free, already free, 1/6). In other words, zero is inside the body or physical self. And the realization (knowledge) of the self or the soul as the emptiness from all substances in the prison cell of the body is the final goal of freedom in his concept of zero.

Soul: Unrelated and Agentless

The philosophy of Ashtavakra is mainly based on the concept of zero. It is achieved through the distinction (separation) of body from the soul. Ashtavakra begins his dialogue to Janak with the assumption that if he separates his body from the soul, his mind is endless, and then he is immediately quiet and free. He further clarifies the zero as the basic nature of man. What remains after the separation of the body from the soul is zero. It is naturally formless. The self as formless is fundamentally unrelated to anything (Nissango). As the self is nothing/ devoid of all essences, it cannot belong to anyone/anything. In deeper level, a living being becomes neutral from everything on his realization of this state of un-relatedness. The distinction of society, world, home, love, death, life, heaven, hell etc. everything becomes meaningless, indifferent and choice less for him.

Ashtavakra tries to establish his idea gradually after creating the formless self of man. He further moves forward with the idea of the agent-less-ness. The real man is formless. And the self that is formless cannot be the agent or doer of any of his actions. If there is no agent, no person, to do something or to be involved in the actions, then there is also no consumer of any of the acts of pleasure, sorrow, heaven, hell. In these two conditions of the agent-less-ness and the consumer-less-ness, one is never bound by any of the karmas (objects, deeds) done in his/her life. The real man is quite beyond the karmas of all kinds. Karma of any kind is not in his nature at all. At the same time, he/she is naturally free also since eternity. He is already free, ever free. For the enlightened person like him there is nothing to be free from. Freedom is not an act to gain the higher to highest status. It already 'is'. Only one needs to have the knowledge of zero as unrelated, formless, agentless and consumer less.

The real man is beyond karmas of all kinds. Karma is not his nature at all. Not to know this or not to think oneself as 'agent' of his actions is his utter ignorance and illusion which is more painful and more poisonous than the sting of the black cobra. And there is no bondage for the real man except his/her own aforesaid ignorance.

Ashtavakra moves forward establishing his idea of karma or action by his strange adoption of action beyond self or soul. The real man is unrelated, formless and action less. Hence the self or the soul is not involved in any of his karmas. Someone other than him/ her is involved in the actions of all kinds. It is the corporeal body that is involved in the actions. Hunger and thirst are to the corporeal body; sorrow and pleasure are to the mind body; and birth and death to breathe. It is the hunger and the thirst which lead body to act. Being influenced from the various gunas and attachments, the mind body does or becomes involved in the actions. And it is the

thirsts of various kinds or some unfulfilled desires that lead the birth and death to their various revolving cycle.

To sum up, the karma belongs to body and mind, and therefore, these six waves naming hunger/thirst, sorrow/pleasure and birth/death are merely the appearances because the real man has nothing to do with these karmas in six waves. In short, Ashtavakra's philosophy tries to expose the way to final freedom (Mukti) from the cycles of the endless sorrows, sufferings, births and deaths through the unrelated and agentless concept of self or soul of man.

The Eye-witness to all Karmas

Soul is something non-existent, formless, unborn, agentless and unrelated. The karmas of various kinds in six waves are done by the corporeal body and the mind body. The real man or soul is the onlooker of those actions only. He as the onlooker is only the supporter of the events or the actions. Ashtavakra seems to present his logic that he (the eye-witness or the onlooker) has seen someone doing something but he himself is not involved in it. The one to whom he saw doing something is other than him. Thus, the eye-witness (the onlooker) is only the supporter and not the agent of the so called events or actions. The person who has realized his self as void, formless, agentless, onlooker or seer being that the certain actions have passed through his mind, brain to which he is the onlooker only is enlightened one and hence beyond space and time.

In assuming the real man as separated from the soul or self only one can have the knowledge of infinite eternal formless and timeless thing. And in being the onlooker of his actions or karmas alone, one can be free from the bondages of all that binds him/her. Thirdly, one becomes seer and powerful enough in the assumption of

onlooker of his/her action. He is not only the onlooker of his own self and action but to the whole universe also. He can visualize himself as the onlooker of everyone in the universe. There is the presence of something divine (Brahman) in his self or soul as the enlightened onlooker.

The True Knowledge: Disappearance of the Triangle

Ashtavakra further tries to establish his powerful idea of the disappearance of triangle from the enlightened onlooker. There are two selves, two aspects of man- body and soul. Body is, undoubtedly, something born/originated from the various five elements of earth, air, water, fire and sky. It has its time. It will fade away by the nature's changing course. On the other hand, soul is the hypothesis of the Primal void. It is the mighty and invincible assumption of being nothing. Hence it is formless, unborn, eternal (existence since eternity) and timeless. It has no destruction by the nature's changing course. On our mighty support of reason, we conceive that it (soul) is formless- nothing but it 'is' (so). The nothing of nothing is not nothing or zero. It is something divine. In the deeper level, (it) 'is' also disappears. Dancer disappears and even the dance and his dancing disappears in the extreme flow of emotion during his dancing/singing. There remains only the knowledge of it. The true knowledge is the state of the disappearance of the triangles- knowledge, knowledgeable or known and knower, or learn, learner and learned. In short, seeing- seeing one is lost in himself. The idea of nothing or of the void provides one an opportunity to confront the divine knowledge and power in himself after the extinction of all dance, dancer and dancing, song singer and sung, learn, learner and learnt in him.

The disappearance of the dance, dancer and dancing; learn, learner and learnt is really the void state of self. The end of the triangle is zero which is timeless the

time ends in the extreme flow of dance, danced and his/her dancing. The time is relative to the speed of observer or dancer. Higher the emotion or speed of dancing, slower the time is. In the extreme flow of emotion or speed of light, the time of dancing ends. As the time of falling star becomes zero-point in black hole, the same way the time of dance, dancer and dancing too becomes devoid in its extreme flow of dancing. Ashtavakra tries to understand that the body or physical self is illusion, fallacious and fad able. And soul is essence less or nothing. The knowledge of nothingness of soul is real man that is neither body nor soul but the knowledge of them.

The time disappears at the extinction of self and one meets/weds/actualizes his self within him. In other words, when the self extinguishes then the acts of dance, dancer and danced, song, sung and singer, comes out in its best form. Though the dancer, singer, artist has the extinguished self, the realization of his/her performance or deed fills him with the divine bliss. The person like singer, dancer, painter, writer, artists become quite forgetful of him and his deed of singing, dancing, painting, writing in the extreme flow of doing them. In other words, for short time, he she becomes quite forgetful of himself during his act of singing or dancing. In this forgetful moment of himself, he is meeting with himself. His person falls or extinguishes and then he meets or actualizes with his self. It is meeting with someone divine within himself.

In the moment of sex, the man and the woman also feel the same bliss of the devoid state of self. While in extreme flow of emotional drive of sex they (man and woman) forget themselves for a while. Their persons (selves) and their act fall (extinguish) in the climax with the fall or discharge of semen of male. Just at this moment of orgasm the void or zeroing is created for a while.

It is the moment of zero. In the fall and in the orgasm, the man meets with himself and the woman with herself. In the copulation with each other, the man and the woman separately meet with himself and herself after the fall of their persons. This personlessness is timelessness. The time ends and zero is realized with divine peace after the mad storm of it relatively. As much the storm is in it, so much the peace of meeting with one's own 'self' is realized to him/her.

For Ashtavakra Samadhi, meditation, religious devotion, writing, arts, dancing, singing, all is the event of this great personlessness for respectively different period of time. All meets the same end of man and woman together. In art, literature, meditation the self-actualization is for a longer period of time and the self meeting in physical love is temporary. Osho has also clarified it in his work *From Sex to Super-Consciousness*.

Soul: The power of Man and God

Soul: The Self

Everything that exists in the universe is in a constant state of flux and is, in fact, only the name of series of changeful phenomena. But the soul is the state of being in which it is not influenced by any of the appealing qualities of nature. It is not any particle but a self-realized state of mind.

Self is at the state of zero. It is to the very self that one madly wishes to meet unbridled. He meets the 'self' in him when his person extinguishes. The person extinguishes during the extreme flow of emotion too male in female, dancer in dancing, singer in singing and writer, poet in writing or in expressing to the suppressed desires of unconscious in extreme consciousness.

The rest and peace after the extreme storm of passion in singing, dancing, writing, copulation is peerlessly uncommon and soothing. The person is meeting his/her own self with the unsaid pleasure and peace there.

In arts, literature, religion, singing, dancing, the self meeting is sublimated into divine meeting where as the meeting with self by man and woman during their copulation is physical and mental decay. It is weakening oneself. The energy, strength of body is greatly decayed in it. Hence, the self meeting of worldly man and woman is weakening and slow death. But it is divine for the literary writers, poets, and artists for there is no decay but sublimation of self into something rare and divine. Many literary writers often realize this release of the pure emotions of self during the fused or permeated states of their stormy passions of love that finds expression in most of their literary works. If art is sense gratification, Dickinson must have felt the afore-said orgasm of arts and literature for a longer and longer period of time by which her troubled and disquiet heart might surely have got the soothing relief and peace of mind. Thus, meeting with oneself through art and literature is the real power of man and woman.

Soul: The only way to consider life

In non-existent or zero like self, one becomes spontaneously free from being the agent and, in turn, from the karmas of various kinds. The only way to consider life as meaningful is the unrelated, formless and agentless soul.

Gunatita, unmanifested, unthinkable and imperturbed self or soul is beyond everything. It is beyond life, beyond death, beyond karmas. It is formless lifeless, zero like and nothing at all. As it has no life, no movement, Ashtavakra emphasizes on taking it as granted that the soul is something non-existent, unborn and lifeless to be

happy. Man has no other way than to accept himself as the non-existent to be all pleased and free. If he considers himself as the non-existent, he easily becomes free from all the bondages of the karmas. In non-existent self he becomes spontaneously free from the agent or the doer. If he thinks himself as non-existent, then the karmas done by him or through the screen of his body are not done by him. As he is in the state of absence or as he is not existed one, he is not the agent of any of the karmas. If he is not supposed to be the agent, then he is not involved in any of his karmas too. In short, neither he is nor is he the agent of the karmas done by him. Hence, in effect he is not bound by any of his karmas. Thus the karmas done through the screen of the body are done by body and mind. The body and mind form karmas in mind in effect of the tri-gunas.

Thus, it is body and mind that are involved in the karmas. Ashtavakra tries to understand that the real man is unrelated, unperturbed from any of his actions and is not involved in any of them. It is only the Maya or nature of gunas, which leads one in the karma. This Maya keeps one in veils or illusions and forces him to do the various karmas but the soul itself is free from them.

Soul: Indestructible Force

Soul is the breath of being. What remains after the separation of being from the body or physical self is the void or the soul. It is nameless, formless and hence agentless too. It has no time to see decay and destruction. Everything that 'is' has time and death. But the soul is in the way as if it is not. Hence it has no time. In other words, soul is the supposed name of what there is not. Hence, it is beyond destruction as what is not cannot see its time and death. Thus, the real man is beyond destruction; he is from the beginning to the end of the universe. He has no birth no death. Thus,

something that has no existence cannot be destroyed at all. It is really indestructible. The king Janak feels the presence of his indestructible force within him and greets it (Aho! Aham Namoh Namah).

Soul: A Mysterious Force

Soul is the power of man. One cannot imagine life without the soul. It is an unmoved zero (center) or center of zero that governs everything. Body is perishable and it has its time. Hence it cannot be the eternal life force. On the other hand, soul is the self in one's pre-assumptive ground of separation of body from it. It is formless, agentless and eternal. Hence it is zero or nothing. This being nothing is everything in our further assumption of the zero in the state of extinction of self, of knowledge, knowledgeable and knower, or dance, danced/dancing. So the soul must be the generative force of body or of life. Therefore, though it is formless and agentless, it must be giving mystically the force to life, to the perishable body because without the soul's force the body is lifeless and still. In short, one's mind of reason involves him in supposing his formless self as the life giving force to his body and everything.

If one goes further he must conceive a center for everything without which the life is quite impossible. The wheel of a bus or chariot cannot move without the center. Even the wind cannot move in a swirl without the center. Nothing can stay long without its center. A chariot moves with wheels. The wheels move on a center of pegs. With the help of the pegs the wheels move forward. But the pegs themselves remain unmoved. The pegs or the center of the wheels of life is the soul. This unmoved peg of soul can be realized only by being unmoved or action less too during the extinction of self in extreme flow of dancing, singing, writing, meditating and

copulating. In short, though soul is static, still and in move less state, it gives force to one's body, life and everything.

Ashtavakra's ideology of the agent-less-ness, action-less-ness and unrelated gives one a good chance to feel psychologically unmoved from the karmas and be unmoved with the unmoved (God or some divine power). In other words, the unmoved soul can be approached only by being unmoved of action.

To such unmoved, indestructible and pure soul that gives life and force to body Janaka greets elatedly in the fourteenth verse of the second chapter telling aho, aham namo namaha. Brahman down all may die in certain case of destruction but his destruction is impossible. Thus, man appears to be greater than Brahman. Brahman, the God, may, for certain reason, die but his self is eternal and outside time. In short, the self, though unmoved, is a mystical life force.

Ashtavakra's Advaita Vision

When the wall of all the dualities, all follies falls down before the stern reality of the self that is devoid of all substances then the real man appears. The real man is not even the living being but conscience (bodha) or consciousness only. For him there is neither salvation nor bondages of any kind. There is no attachment, no detachment, no desire, no indifference to anything, no heaven, no hell, no society, no forest, no sorrow, no happiness, no good, no bad, no one, no two and even no zero.

The loss of everything including the zero is the advaita's vision of Ashtavakra. The self alone exists as consciousness. The realization of self in the form of consciousness is the only way to escape from all the bondages and be free. The rest is illusion or appearance only which is in the constant state of flux.

The Different Emotions: The Projections of Mind

The consideration of soul as formless leads one directly to the realization of agent-less-ness. The one who has no existence, no birth can never become the agent of any karma. If he just supposes himself as formless or nothing, he becomes free from all sorrows and sufferings and other worldly pleasures. The sorrow, suffering and the emotions of happiness are to the mind. These sorrows and sufferings have nothing to do with those who are non-existent. The one who has no form can never undergo any suffering. In short, the non-existent or formless has no way to suffer any pang of pain or feel the happiness of any kind.

The sorrow and the happiness both are the projections of one's own mind. A projection is one's own interpretation of thing. It is the one's own conception and way of seeing the thing. He supposes the thing according to his own state of mind. For example: if he is in a happy state of mind, he imposes his happiness to different things. The flowers appear him as very beautiful. But if he is in sorrowful state of mind the morning rose will seem to be the most sorrowful and charm less to him. Thus the different emotions like hunger, greed, lust sorrow, suffering, happiness, etc. are his projections of mind. Realizing the sorrow, suffering, hunger, greed, lust all as projections of mind, he should stand as nobody unborn, zero and remain unperturbed from his emotions or karmas. In short, one does not live in influence of these projective emotions of sorrow or pleasure, but only lives indifferently from them all.

Soul: Flourishing in Self

The self-enlightened person lives in his self. He meets there with himself all the time. In self-actualization, living with the self becomes prolonged. Thus, the self-enlightened person lives and flourishes in himself. He flourishes in his/her own made

up world and style of living. Sleeping he awakes and awaking he sleeps. He is neither in sorrow nor in pleasure. He has neither the expectation of honors nor agitates in dishonor. For him, there is neither society nor forest or any space. He lives in himself quite spontaneous to his self. Being free from all the raags (attachments) and birags (detachments) or honor-dishonor, he leads a quite un-projected and spontaneous life like the blowing of grey, dried up leaves with the wind. He moves where his pure spontaneous and innocent self leads him. He is, thus, totally on the control of the self within him. In short, he lives a free and spontaneous life in his self-enlightened state of consciousness. This free living is the essence of his final freedom or redemption.

The Last Freedom

The real man has no existence in essence. He is a formless and unborn one. Hence he is never the agent and related to any of the karmas. His nature is not to act or be involved in any of the karmas. Hence no karma can bind him in his essence less formless state of consciousness. He is quite free from all the karmas. Even the birth and death which are seen as only the projections or Maya cannot bind him. Being unrelated, agent less and unperturbed he is free from the bondages of the birth and death also. This is the last freedom. There is no life, no birth, no death, no sorrow, no happiness, and no manifested things at all for him. He is only the onlooker of everything on one hand and at the same time, he is even not the determiner of what he is or what he is not. He must stop all the claims to be in his such enlightened state of formlessness or personlessness. As a great un-manifested, formless and unborn, he is not the agent even to determine what he is or what he is not. There is no salvation, no freedom as there is no person to interpret anything. But to be nothing is to be everything. In other words, by being nothing only, he can have his approach to be enlightened and free.

The End of Time

The formless and agentless self of man is the most analyzed revelation of Ashtavakra. As there is no body, no self, nothing, there is no agent too to be involved in any of the karmas. The real man is quite imperturbed and unrelated from the karmas passing through his body. Hence there is no karma, no action for him. Nothing moves; nothing vibrates in him. The unmoved, unvibrated and enlightened self is always in perfect state of peace and quietness.

Time ends when there is no karma, no self in essence. Ashtavakra's action (karma) or self is agentless. In other words, the agentless doesn't know the karma at all. Karma is not his nature. Hence for him there is no karma. The time emanates (originates) when there is mind in the process of thinking and acting. But when the karma or the self in essence is in the state of move-less-ness or in non-existent state, then the time naturally ceases to exist for him. In other words, time ends in the qualitative multiplicity of the change of the permeated state of consciousness in present from the long enduring sorrowful or happy states of past. More elaborately, in enlightened state of consciousness one simply exists and he simply 'is'. In such state of being as 'is' there is no question of the existence of time.

Sorrows, sufferings contract the time in the permeated state of consciousness. In other words, when a person attains the state of extinction of his self, then those sorrows and sufferings or pains do not appear in their actual painful forms; they also extinguish with the extinction of the person's self and then time too is contracted along with the contraction of the self and his painful states.

Emily Dickinson's life and poetry resembles with Ashtavakra's philosophy in several contexts. Ashtavakra believes in the separation of body from the soul to be

conscious enough. Emily Dickinson also believes in the separation of body from her soul in many of her poems. In her poem *Those Not Live Yet* (J-1454) she has shown the notion of the separation of the body from the soul to be conscious in life. Those who believe in eternity or in heaven or in after life have not lived yet. The truth is that there is one life. It is a part of a single continuity. In other words, there is no other life like eternity or immortality. Only one needs to be free from the bondages of body and he/she is free. Behind the consciousness, without the costume of body lies the eternity or the deepest mystery of human life (Costume less consciousness – That is he -10, 11). The costume less consciousness is the consciousness without the concept of body. Costume stands here for the body. Thus consciousness must be without costume – body.

In her poem *Me from Myself - to Banish* (J-642) also Dickinson separates herself or her body from her self. Peace can be attained only by consciousness subjugated or permeated (How have I peace except by consciousness! – 6-8). She later realizes that this can be possible only by abdication of her own from herself (How can this be except by Abdication – Me – Of me? – 10-12). Thus like Ashtavakra Dickinson also believes in separating the body from her self for being enlightened.

In her poem *I Took One Draught of Life* (J-1725) too Dickinson separates her body from her self (I'll tell you what I paid precisely an existence, The market price – they said - 1-3). Then she got her true reward of heaven (then they handed me my Being's worth – a single Dram of heaven – 7-8). In short, at the cost of extinction of her self, she got enlightenment like the king Janaka in Ashtavakra.

In her poem *I m Nobody* (J-260) also Dickinson seems to separate herself from body. She is nobody to a discerning eye. Her nobody ness indicates her extinction of self as she is separate from somebody who likes his/her material progress and other fame.

For Ashtavakra the triangle of knowledge (Jnana, Jnata, Jney) is unreal only. So they must vanish. In her love poem *My Life Stood – a Loaded Gun* (J-754) Dickinson's love (Jnana), her self (Jnata) and her loved one (Jney) all extinguish. She comes to an inactive gun state without her love being possessed her in usual manner. When he leaves her she reverts to an inactive gun state which is experienced as spiritual death (Though I than he – May longer live, He longer must than I. For I have the power to kill, without the power to die - 7-10). Thus without him she is lifeless. Without love she has power to die. In such realization, her repressed thoughts of love dissolves and makes her fully aware of her new creative, peaceful, enlightened self.

In the same pace, in the poem *I Felt Funeral, in My Brain* (J-280) also Dickinson shows the extinction of her self, her knowledge and everything in the last line (And Finished Knowing – Then-20). It clearly shows the extinction of her self and she is far beyond the knowledge of anything. She seems to have fallen into the zero point – finished knowing everything. It is her self enlightened state of consciousness.

The extinction of her self is seen in her poem *After a Great Pain, A Formal Feeling Comes* (J-341) too. Her extinction of self is indicated by the terms – freezing, snow, chill, then stupor, then the letting go (As freezing persons recollect the snow, first chill, then stupor, the the letting go - 12, 13).

Ashtavakra himself and through the mouth of Janak says that the person who has separated himself from body and is unrelated has become silent, calm, egoless, neutral and devoid of all substances (17/9). For such person there is no sorrow, no pleasure in pleased state, no depression in depressed state, no pandit in pedantry (18/10, 18/96-97).

Most of Dickinson's poem also reveal her permeated state of consciousness. She is egoless, unattached and free. She does not feel sorrow in sorrowful state. She is depressed in depression and she does not boast of her pedantry anytime. In her poem *Pain Expands the Time* (J-967) she does not feel sad or sorrowful even in the extreme pain of her life. Pain expands the time in her normal wake of life or for the worldly people. A minute of time looks like ages (Ages coil within, The minute Circumference – 2-3) in the painful state of life. But in her conscious state of mind pain contracts the time. In the permeated state of consciousness time does not exist at all. Sorrow – pleasure, attachment-detachment and world and heaven- hell all these things are the projections of mind only. They are mental imaginations and unreal. Those who have such knowledge of the illusions of life remain quite neutral of them. Then the pain or pleasure, attachment – detachment do not appear as pain or pleasure for him/her. Dickinson takes them all as unreal and becomes disillusioned from them. So pain does not appear as pain. In other words, she does not take pain for the illusive and false appearing things. Thus, pain contracts the time and it, in turn, reverse the source of pleasure or into the gamut of eternity (pain contracts – the time, Gamut's of Eternity – 5, 7). In the permeated state of consciousness, pain does not appear as pain. But it is realized as the pleasure of eternities. In short, Dickinson is self-enlightened. Sorrow, pleasure, world, attachments detachments (raags, birags) do not appear crudely or as they are. She is imperturbed from them all as they are the projections of

her own mind. So they, being the imaginations of her mind only, cannot affect her or impress her in any way.

In her poem *Pain has an Element of Blank* (J-650) she shows her devoid, egoless and permeated state of her consciousness in infinite pain (It has no future--but itself, its infinite contain, Its past-5-7) of past. She has perceived it as her enlightenment. (Its past--enlightened to perceive-8). In short, the present poem shows her devoid state that has permeated into enlightenment after enlightenments by the pain that she suffers in several times.

In her poem *I measure my Grief I Meet* (J-561) also she has shown the same calm and enlightened state of permeation in her infinite pain (It feels so old a pain-8). The age old piercing pain is felt as enlightenment after enlightenment by another larger pain (enlightened to a larger pain-15).

Similarly, the various poems like *Hope is the Thing with Feathers, For each Ecstatic Instant, I Like a Look Agony, Wild Nights and Wild Nights, Heart asks Pleasure First, If You were Coming in Fall, I cannot Live with You* and so on show that she is not hopeless in hopeless state and depressed in depressed states. She is not attached with any of the desires lust or pleasure either. She is beyond attachment, detachment of every kind. She is neutral in everything. By the permeation of her past pains and sufferings she is calm and enlightened. In short, pain, sorrow, sufferings, pleasures, world, attachment, detachments all disappear with the disappearance (*shunyata*) of her self. Thus her poetry reveals the devoid state of her self in which she is enlightened beyond space and time.

Sorrow does not intensify her sorrow but enlighten and enlighten her all the more. In her poem *I can Wade Grief* (J-252) pleasure does not intensify her pleasure.

Sorrow contracts her time (I can wade grief, Whole pool of it - 1-2) and so does pleasure. In short, she does not feel joy in joy (But the least Push of joy, Breaks up my feet – 4-5). The poem clearly shows that she is not pleased in pleasurable state and sorrowful in sorrowful state. The pain contracts her time and she does not have the pain at all for she is not in time to suffer any pain.

She contracts time (to the zero point) and then her grief or pain is contracted too along with it. So she does not have to suffer the pain. It is her enlightened state of consciousness in which she does not have the pain which is outside the time and space. In other words, by contracting the time, she contracts her grief to the zero degree. So, the grief or the pain does not appear as pain as there is no time in it to feel any pain. In short, if there is no time, then there is no pain or pleasure of any kind too. There is the state of being enlightened.

Like Ashtavakra Dickinson also believes in neutrality or *shunyata* (zero) or the zero philosophy of silence after the separation of the body from self in which there is no sorrow, no sufferings, no world, no zero itself, no attachments, no detachments, no present, no past, no future time, nothing. In regard to her concept of *shunyata* or of silence Dickinson states:

Great Streets of silence led away
To Neighborhoods of Pause --
Here was no Notice -- no Dissent
No Universe -- no laws --

By Clocks, 'twas Morning, and for Night
The Bells at Distance called --

But Epoch had no basis here

For Period exhaled. (J-1159)

In the neutral state of consciousness, the silence of mind (God) is achieved. Then there remains no notice of anything, no dissent, no ascent, no universe, no law, nothing at all. Everything pauses there. (To Neighborhoods of Pause- Here was no Notice – no Dissent- No Universe- no laws, But Epoch had no basis here, For Periods exhaled – 2-4, 7-8).

Time ends in silence. All periods are exhaled and all neighborhoods (objects and subjects) pause. In other words, in the contraction of mind by its permeation sorrow, suffering, attachments, detachments, world, present, past, future, God, zero itself, life, death, bondages all extinguish that results in silence. The significance of the title of my present dissertation Zero: The End of Time in Emily Dickinson's Poetry which is the end of time can be seen from this realization of Dickinson in the poem. Like the silence in Ashtavakra (18.132-133,190-193), Emily Dickinson's poetry is also a great street of silence.

Emily Dickinson's Life in the Light of Ashtavakra

The concept of zero is seen in Emily Dickinson's life and works from the beginning to the end. Zero is the void or nothing in essence or in reality but everything in sentiment. Nothing is so truthful and pure than the zero in its culmination. Emily Dickinson and her works are also the embodiment of the nothing and everything of zero.

The philosophy of Ashtavakra is mainly based on the separation of body from the self or the soul. He ardently believes that man is formless and nobody. He is even not a living being. Emily Dickinson also knew this reality of self that is empty of all

substances. Thus she seems to have captured the unique spirits of Ashtavakra in her self and her woes.

The real man/woman is neither a caste nor a dweller of any place. He/she is quite unrelated from everything like society, house, forest and the different desires. Emily Dickinson also holds the true spirit of real self as being unrelated from everything. She is innocent and unaware of her space like a child. Having awakened to her real self of un-relatedness, of nothing, of nobody, she becomes neutral to everything. She thinks of her 'self' only as formless and unrelated.

Dickinson is not disinterested being in recluse or seclusion. Her living is a strange one. She is not interested in the world also. She is neither interested in the world nor disinterested from it. She is beyond the interest and disinterest of the world, society, home, desires etc. She lives in her 'self'. She is with her 'being' meeting with it all the time., she is a being, pure being and quiet, unprejudiced even from social and spatial distinction. She even does not make distinction between society and home in the world where we make numerous distinctions of race, color, caste, creed, nationality. In short, she lives with her pure being. Living in home, society is our ignorance and spatial distinction only. Dickinson believes in living only, in being only for her

The philosophy of Ashtavakra is mainly based on the concept of agentless, un-relatedness and consumer-less-ness. One is something other than the body. On separating the body from one's self he is free and enlightened. Hence the one who has actualized as different from body is ever free. There is no question of his/her freedom. Only one needs to have the conscience of his/her separated self from body. Freedom is in the separation of self from the prison cell of body.

Emily Dickinson is also the conscience only. She knows herself as devoid of all essences, all egos. Hence, she knows herself as not being the agent of any of her karmas. She is not the consumer of desire or luxury either. From the early stage of her adolescence, she suffered uncertain future life. She fell in such matchless and strange love that was quite unattainable for her. As a result, she went on losing her self, her desires, and her world from everything in the world. Her person, her self seems to have extinguished. In extreme pain of the loss and extinction of the only desire of ever possessing her loved one, her self extinguished. It was the great moment of ego lessness in her life in which her self, her desire, her love all extinguished. In other words, her self, her desires, her love, beloved (herself) and lover and loved all extinguished in in her egoless and the devoid state of her self. Thus, the loss of self- love, lover, loved (Jnana, Jnata, and Jney) made her feel agentless, unrelated and consecutively consumer-less. Like Ashtavakra she also knew that the triangle of knowledge, knowledgeable or knowledged and knower is all unreal which have vanished from her self. Her poetry is the revelation of such permeated states of consciousness in which her self, her desires, her love, lover and loved all are completely extinguished that are represented by chill, still, frozen, snowy, numb, degreeless, unmoved and other states of her mind in most of her major poems.

After being aware of the lost or the extinguished self, Dickinson occupied minimum space, minimum work and minimum social activities to be with herself. Social activities, material pursuit, and other modern luxuries were quite unrelated and undesirable to her. Rather, she limited herself to her sister- in- law and her child (nephew). This was her pure world of pure being. Limiting herself further to some of the children, dropping cakes and fruits with rope to them through the window of her second floor room and walking in the garden, observing flower were superb nature of

being. She would not have such superb, spontaneous and pure life had she chosen the mad world of society. Ironically, she had found her lovers or loved one after losing herself in them. She did not like to meet any stranger even at her home only because she had already been transformed and was self- elated and pleased within herself. So she did not like to appear in society or among people in crowd. She was elated in her personal living with her self. Living alone was sufficient for her; it was joy enough for her. So instead of being timid, agoraphobia, homophobia recluse, blasphemy, idiosyncratic, away from society or home, nun of home, unsociable and so on as she is often interpreted, she is actually devoid of everything, every claims and is, thus self-enlightened.

Ashtavakra emphasizes through Janak that Brahma down all may be decayed in the case of the destruction of universe. But his destruction is impossible as he is unborn one. Dickinson also seems to be overwhelmed with the idea of eternity or deathlessness. She also found no death, no destruction to herself. In her poem *Because I could not Stop for Death* she did not feel the pain of death.

During her journey with the Death, her gentle chariot driver to eternity, she felt all assurance of being safe, thrilled and elated. Her poem ‘Because I could not Stop for Death’, is not a feigned fanciful story of departure to eternity. And death is not just the hypothetical gentle driver to carry her to eternity. Rather, death is her sublimed, transformed lover, her own being. She treats the Death as a courtly lover. In short, she knew well that death finally destroys one, but she had no fear of him at all as she had been self- enlightened.

Being aware of eternal self of peace, deathlessness she always took death lightly. Death was not a terror to her like most of us. Seeing herself deathless and quiet like tombs she always treated death as friendly and amiable.

Body, heaven, hell, bondages, redemption, and fear etc. are imaginations and hypothesizes only. In the Ashtavakra's philosophy pure self or soul has nothing to do with them (2/20). Ashtavakra says in twenty second verse of the second chapter that he is even not a living being (jive). His desire of living is his bondage. Emily Dickinson also knew these bondages of living. So she lived like nobody, no one. After being disillusioned from every bondage, she even did not like the eternity, heaven, God and so on. In her poems *Behind Me- Dips Eternity* the idea of eternity was only a horror for her. She preferred the earthly existence to eternity. In her poem *I cannot Live with You* she has shown her complete disinterestedness for God and heavenly life. She preferred her devoid earthly life to living in heaven. In short, even heaven, God and eternity were bondages for her. Like Ashtavakra, she also knew that even desiring for God, eternity, zero was bondage.

So she lived as a conscientious being only. She was a being only beyond body, beyond world and beyond living. Body, heaven, hell, bondages, redemptions all was insignificant to her. She 'is'. This was enough for her living. Living as just being was enough for her.

A self- actualized person is like mingling of gold in ornament, drop in the ocean, sugar in sweet. Dickinson is also one of the same mingled gold in love. She has no corporeal identity. She thinks herself always as a mingled one to the divine One through the pining in love and in its extinction.

She is a self-integrated conscious being. Hence, she is neither attached to worldly desires nor detached from it. Nothing can make her pleased like the elephant fond of twigs of saal tree does not get pleased with the twigs of neem (bitter) tree. At the same time, nothing can make her sad, sorrowful either. Sorrow, pleasure, hatred, and love death everything is far behind her transformed self.

Even in the negative situation, she is capable of being. Sadness cannot make her sadder anymore and in happy situation she is not happier. Sorrow, pleasure, love, hatred, envy, anger and so on are the projections of mind only. They are the interpretation of their own individual life. They are one's own interpretation of mind in the influence of various qualities of nature. Dickinson was imperturbed and free from those projections of mind. She had understood them as folly of her true self.

Worldly pleasures, luxuries and lust are the most powerful drives of mind. Man and woman do not go back and transcend their limitation with energy, wealth and honor to gain these worldly pleasures. Ashtavakra explains in his fifth verse of the seventeenth chapter that one who is disinterested, unwilling in redemption and lust is a rare person (17/5). Emily Dickinson is rare in her self-control over lust (Brahmacharya). She led a single life throughout and maintained purity, virginity and piety throughout her life.

She is victorious over her lust. This is an outstanding, rare feature of her personality. Vivekananda of India was the other such man who also maintained celibacy throughout his life but his brain was turn into two pieces when he died. Dickinson had also to pay the same coin of maintaining celibacy in the last phase of her life. Her physical death is seen somewhat painful. It was the result of maintaining her purity and virginity.

Eternity is a mysterious term in itself. Ashtavakra in the nineteenth verse of eighteenth chapter reveals that the one whose desires have extinguished (frozen), inner mind has ruined after the loss of the three- love, lover and loved, is nothing except formless self. He she is imperturbed even by being active to do something (18/19).

Dickinson is rare also in her unwillingness of eternity. She seems to make a long journey of eternity. Many of her poems express her journey to eternity. But even by being desirous to eternity she is un-desirous to it. She has no desire of heaven or hell, life/death, this/that. She is not desirous for eternity even by desiring for it. Many of her poems like *Behind Me –Dips Eternity* and *I cannot Live with You* show that eternity was deceptive and impossibility only. She only liked living; it was enough for her.

Zero only 'is'. It has no qualities. Dickinson has attained the void state of her self. She 'is' only. For her, living alone is joy enough. Only she is a 'being'. We can even not call her 'a' being but 'being' only. In short, she only is. And the "is" is not nothing.

She is beyond attachments and detachments to everything. She acts spontaneously and naturally. She has no choice of her own. As her conscience, her unconscious or conscious mind directs her so she behaves. She is neither alive nor dead. She has neither sorrow nor pleasure of any kind. She has neither to lose, nor to gain. Hence, being neutral from everything, she lives spontaneously. She acts on the direction of her conscience, like the blowing of grey leaves in the direction of the wind; she sleeps where she finds; she eats what she gets; she lives in the place and in the way as her conscience leads her.

Soul is a point. It is unborn. It is infinite like sky or ocean. It only 'is'. Hence, it has no birth. It also doesn't perceive or consume anything. It is in all times- present, past and future. Hence, it doesn't mingle into anything. Only the thing that has form mingles. But what is formless, unborn cannot mingle into anything (6/1, 2, 3, 4).

Emily Dickinson is a 'being'. She, her being, is also limitless, infinite like the sky or the ocean. She also has no mingling, no consuming, and no agency. She has no sense of honor, no dishonor. Being content, she is discontent. In discontent, she is content. In other words, she lost her loved one. In such dissatisfied state, she has made her life content but her whole life is serious, pining for some loved ones. In this discontent, she feels content. So it seems that, in content, she is discontent and in discontent, she is content.

The formless, infinite, timeless soul or self is found in every body. Everyone, every creature, everything has the same single soul. The same soul is prevailed in every body. Dickinson realizes this unique oneness of the soul in everybody well and lives like one integrated conscious soul being nothing but vast, infinitely infinite.

Her ideas are unique, vast and infinite. But she lives as being nothing or in simple way. On actualizing her basic form of formlessness, nothing there was; no chance of living in high pompous way for her like the common people with much madness of crowd. So she lived in accordance to her simple and innocent nature.

As the corporeal body of man and woman is an appearance like the silver in scallop shell (sipi), the Soul alone is truthful which is devoid of everything. She also limits herself to the devoid state of a being which is nobody ness only. In accordance with her nobody ness she never thinks herself even a living being (2.44-45, 20.1-2). Therefore, she is free from being the agent or consumer of all her actions. Whatever

simple activities she showed in her small limitation of her small house and garden and among children during her life time, she did them by being the onlooker of those actions only. She never felt that she was doing such and such thing. She simply and innocently was the eye-witness of her activities of small surrounding. In short, she was nobody and she had not done or seen anything at all. Whatever has happened from her was the deed of a seer being only. She was nobody, she had done nothing. Her work is zero.

This makes her a seer being. She was one of the persons who exactly knew and followed the true nature of the universe. Her sense was divinest; her attempt was miraculous in attaining eternity, the divine soul prevailing in all from Brahman down all the living and non-living creatures. Her message is unique to mankind that pain and sufferings appear in life but one is all free from them all in realization of those pains permeated in the present conscious state of mind which is reducibly the adwaita's oneness.

Emily Dickinson has actualized her self well as a non- existent being. She finds her self all the time as if she has no existence at all. The extinction of her self in the lost love for her strange lovers has made her realize that she has really no existence at all. There was no life. She vainly searched it in love. Later on, she came out of her deep slumber of worldly love. In other words, she is a mere appearance only and hence nobody. She thinks herself only as a 'conscientious' being, knowledge far from the body and physical self. Living is enough for her. For her it (living) means 'being' only. In other words, she 'is' only. Society, home, world and so on are not her sphere, her world. She flourishes in her 'self' meeting all the time. This is her living alone. It is her ecstasy. She is all well, all blessed, all quiet and flourishing in her

‘self’. She sees herself as a seer being, an onlooker of all her actions and herself as enlightened. In short, she is in her complete state of silence.

To conclude, Emily Dickinson's poems dealing with time, love and life resemble with Henri Bergson's concepts of time. Like Bergson Emily Dickinson too views the time as the evolution of the conscious state of mind in the permeated moment. Her poetry is also the qualitative multiplicity of the change of her long and enduring past states of mind that fuse or permeate with the present state of her consciousness giving the sense of one single moment of time. Her poetry also shows the time as continuous and indivisible which is reducible into evolution, maturation and creation and so on. Time is change. To change is to mature and to mature is to go on creating endlessly in her poetry too. But Dickinson is somewhat different too from Bergson's concept of time in many of her poems. For Bergson time is infinitely, the continuation of one single moment. On the other hand, Dickinson diverts from this concept of time as infinitely the one single moment. She views the time not only as continuous but as a stopped or extinguished phenomenon too. The time ends in her poetry with the extinction of her self. In other words, the time does not exist in the extinguished state of her self. In the self-enlightened state of consciousness, the time does not exist at all. Thus Dickinson's poetry is timeless in her permeated state of consciousness.

Emily Dickinson's poetry resemble greatly with the concept of zero that Charles Seife, Robert Kaplan, Buddhists and Ashtavakra have discussed in their works. Seife has shown the infinity and the void of Zero in the thermodynamics, quantum mechanics, general relativity, special relativity, black hole, string theory and in other movements in physics. Some of the poems of Dickinson are also like the infinity of the thermodynamics, Quantum Mechanics, GR, SR and of the string theory

and so on. Robert Kaplan has discussed the ideas of the infinity and the void of zero in the terms of philosophy and in the very nature of human thoughts or feelings. The Buddhists' Philosophy of Shunyata and the Philosophy of Ashtavakra have discussed the ideas of the infinity and the void of zero in the terms of religion. They have shown the concept of infinity in the very nature of the self or the soul of man. Like Kaplan, Buddhists and Ashtavakra, Dickinson has also shown the concept of infinity in her self or in her soul. The devoid state of her self or her soul results in the infinity. The time does not exist in such devoid state of the self in the permeated state of consciousness. In Dickinson's poetry the pain contracts the time. In other words, the pain or the suffering do not appear as the painful and suffer some. Along with the extinction of her self, the time too is extinguished. In short; the time is relatively contracted by the pains of Dickinson in her non-existent or in her devoid state of self. In her self-enlightened state of consciousness, the time does not exist. It has no room or no appearance in the self of the enlightened state of consciousness of hers. Thus she is in her complete state of timeless silence.

CHAPTER 3

The Notions of Time and Timelessness in Emily Dickinson's Poetry

Emily Dickinson delves into the inner most recesses of human psyche. Since her early youth she is found to have fallen into some estranged intrigues of her life from which she never eluded that led her only to the maelstrom and deep anguish of her mind. This study attempts to capture the anguish and the maelstroms of her self that ultimately dissolves into nothingness. Moreover, the paper analyzes her poetry as the void and the infinity of zero. It also focuses on her poetry as the multiplication of the change of her long and enduring sufferings of the past states permeated in the present conscious state of mind. In short, it reducibly focuses on the blessed Silence that she realizes within her inner heart and on its consequential enlightenment in her permeated state of consciousness.

Among her poems written on the themes of love, life, nature, death, time and eternity and Silence, she uses her poems on the theme of death and eternity to know herself. The notion of death and eternity appear to be the Infinity her from which she reverses to the earthly circumference. The idea of eternity as the Infinity has been depicted in her poem *Because I Could not Stop for Death*. Dickinson experiences the eternity as the Infinity in course of her journey to the eternity in the company of the Death. While writing on eternity she does not stop for death. Death himself stops for her and carries her towards eternity like a gentle lover. The idea of being led towards the eternity makes her feel divine ecstasy for a short time. But the feeling of ecstasy falls into the mire just after some time. Regarding her elated mood in the company of the Death to eternity Dickinson recites in the first stanza of the poem:

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

But the feeling of ecstasy falls into the mire just after sometime. As the journey progresses in the company of the friendly death and they pass the playing children, the field of gazing grain, she suddenly feels chill of her mind as if something venomous has stung her. She faces the setting sun. The setting sun makes her feel gloomy as it reminds her of her own setting life, her own death and no progress to eternity at all. She gets all the more embarrassed when she has the vision of heavy weight of daily life which seemed to her psychologically infinite and centuries like. She had led a life of seclusion throughout in her own house. Now, every moment of present life seems to be illusive and deceptive. Had the setting sun not passed them, she would be moving to eternity. But here is uncertainty certainty only because the setting sun passed them and left them behind. So, she may not be moving to eternity. She feels herself as being cheated by the Death, the gentle carriage driver. She gets all the more disillusioned when her gown, her tippet or shawl is not capable or thick enough to protect her from the chillness that has entered into her whole being. Now everything seemed to be gossamer or a cobweb only to her. In regard to the deception she writes:

We passed the Setting Sun --
Or rather -- He passed Us --
The Dews drew quivering and chill --

For only Gossamer, my Gown --

My Tippet -- only Tulle --

She is disillusioned when she envisions the uncertainty of eternity by the image of the dews quivering and chill. This chill atmosphere is the chillness that is coming in her own path of eternity too. The line – ‘The Dews drew quivering and chill’ ominously reminds her of her failure to the journey of eternity.

In impatience, dullness and in waiting period for someone, even a short period of time seems psychologically as a century. The time feels vast and infinite to pass for her. The images of the children, the setting sun, he passed us and shawl, gossamer, tippet are the reminders of her sad fate of death. These images lead her to the final loss of eternity. She has realized the grimness, uncertainty and chillness of her death. Yet, she hopes for eternity. She feels the centuries of time shorter than the day. In other words, despite the grim, ominous, presence of evil images and the uncertainty of her eternal life, she is certain that she would get the eternity. Therefore, she concludes that horses’ heads are moving towards eternity. But the evil images of ‘he passes us’, ‘quivering and chillness’, ‘gossamer’, ‘gown’ all simply remind one that she is bound to fail in reaching her destined place of eternity or heaven. In other words, these ominous images remind that instead of the horses’ heads facing towards eternity, they were facing the path to her death only. This ugly realization of the uncertainty of her eternal life makes her feel impatient and then a minute of time feels like centuries. Regarding her feeling of the Infinity of the time in the frustrated mood she writes in the last stanza:

Since then -- 'tis Centuries -- and yet

Feels shorter than the Daye

I first surmised the Horses' Heads

Were toward Eternity – (J- 712)

At first the poem sets up motion of life by the galloping of the horses. But later on the motion is interrupted by the line “He passes us”. Concerning the motion vs. motionless state of the poem Claudia Schwarz in her *Emily Dickinson's Journey beyond time* states:

At first, the poem sets up the motion of life, where the galloping of the horses is convincingly made audible in the iambic meter. However, right in the middle of the poem the motion is interrupted by the line “Or rather – He passed – Us”, where this verbal flow from the two stanzas beforehand is unexpectedly stopped through the inverted syntactical arrangement of the line. The rhythmical pattern of motion versus motionless is also reflected on a semantic level. The poem moves from the active ‘passing’ of the carriage to the passive ‘being passed’ by its surroundings.

She has experienced the death and motionless state from the core of her heart. Eternity is infinity only for her. In other words, infinity is a timeless void to her only. She seems to leave the death’s carriage and stands among some part of her life watching the carriage go by. Thus, the death takes ironical turning in the end. At first, she did not stop for death. But he stopped her path of the eternity at last. In the end, Dickinson is sure that human life is limited and eternity is Infinity for her. In short, the eternity is beyond the limited fate of man.

Eternity is beyond the limited and finite lot of human beings. The notion of eternity as the Infinity has further been described in her poem *I Heard A Fly Buzz*.

This poem also deals with her experience of the death. She is sure that death will lead her to eternity but ultimately her belief of the eternity or afterlife is marred by the image of the fly buzz in her meeting with the king or the God. The fly comes between her and God that interrupts her attainment of eternity and makes it uncertain for her.

Dickinson is at her death bed. There are several persons round her as eye-witnesses of her death. The room is still like the stillness after the several upheavals of storms. The dying poet hears the sound of 'buzz' of the 'fly' against the stillness of room and the stillness between heavens of storms.

The next stanzas turn toward a crucial point where her desire of being received by God (king) is darkened (blocked) by the interposing of the fly. She sees the exhaustion of people round her in lamentation. Their eyes are dried up and they are sure of her death instantly. She also accepts her death to occur soon. At her last onset (departure) to death, she believes that she will witness the God. In regard to her belief of God to be witnessed she writes:

I heard a Fly buzz - when I died -
The Stillness in the Room
Was like the Stillness in the Air -
Between the Heaves 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

Just at the moment when she is willing to die and gain eternity, she hears the buzz of the fly that has come between her and the window blocking the light coming through it for her. This coming of the fly with the buzz between the light and her darkened her vision of everything. She gets frustrated as the light coming from the windows is blocked by the interposition of the stumbling fly between her and the light. As a result, her vision fails and she is not able to see the great event of witnessing the God. Regarding the evil omen of the fly buzz in her misfortune to witness to God she writes in the last five lines of the poem:

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 – (J- 465)

Like the uncertainty of eternity as the Infinity, in *Because I could not Stop for Death* this poem is also a remainder of the same uncertainty of eternal life for her. Just after the imposition of the fly buzz she was about to die. And then the window failed. (I could not see to see) Then there was stillness in the air and in her consciousness. From within her self she was feeling the Silence of the death at that last Onset. But her belief of afterlife was just impossibility or the Infinity. The pure duration is the consciousness in which a person becomes fully aware of the illusions of life after being fused with all the past confusions, troubles and other states of mind. Dickinson has also been aware of this change of her life through the fly buzz. In short, she is fully aware of the time and the change or the motion and the motionless state of life.

The notion of eternity or is the Infinity. She experiences the eternity as the awe-stricken only. It is beyond the limited and finite lot of the man.

The similar awe-stricken idea of eternity as infinity has been expressed in her poem – *Just Lost, when I was Saved* too. Dickinson's poems often deal with proleptic view of death experience. Such poems anticipate death yet present a living narrator who narrates his experience of the death. She imagines that she is going to have a vision of immortality by which she will stay in heaven forever. But suddenly she gets awe- stricken. She terribly feels as the world moving around her like a swirl. She becomes greatly disappointed when she finds her boat returning safely by wind blow to other side rather than to heavenward. Thus, she loses the heaven, though she is saved by being returned (called back) safely from there with some terrible experience to tell the secrets. Regarding her disappointment of the return from the heavenward and the lost state Dickinson expresses in the first stanza of the poem:

Just lost, when I was saved!
Just felt the world go by!
Just girt me for the onset with Eternity,
When breath blew back,
And on the other side
I heard recede the disappointed tide!

After having received her revelation and returning, she has some old and odd secrets to tell. Her condition is like a sailor who has glimpsed exotic land but could not reach there. Her condition is further like a pale hopeless reporter who has seen the door (of heaven) as seal (closed door). In regard to her awe-stricken condition of being called back she further expresses in the second stanza:

Therefore, as One returned, I feel
Odd secrets of the line to tell!
Some Sailor, skirting foreign shores --
Some pale Reporter, from the awful doors
Before the Seal!

The idea of eternity is a matter of great curiosity for her. So she still wants to meet her death and have the life of immortality the next time. But the next and the next glimpse of immortality seems infinite and impossible to her. To tarry (stay) seems to her as ages. In other words, the tramp or boat is so slow that it will take centuries of time in reaching there. The time appears so slow that centuries and centuries of time will simply go on passing like a cycle of wheel. But it will never end. In regard to the idea of much slowness of the boat for the journey of afterlife or the eternity she in the third stanza writes:

Next time, to stay!
Next time, the things to see
By Ear unheard,
Un-scrutinized by Eye --(J- 160)

The centuries of time seem to wheel again and again but she has no hope of ever being able to see the eternity – the things unheard by ears and un-scrutinized by eyes. Regarding the unheard and unseen things like the eternity she writes in the last stanza:

Next time, to tarry,
While the Ages steal --

Slow tramp the Centuries,
And the Cycles wheel! (J- 160)

Dickinson gets frustrated by the idea that she will not get eternity for centuries and centuries. Only there will be the repetition of the past events. Every time she will be called back like the present time. Those centuries will wheel and wheel again. To tarry for the eternity for the next time will be infinite for her. The glimpse of eternity and its lost state becomes so vast and boundless for her.

Dickinson's present close experience of the Eastern concept of heaven or immortal life shows her maturity of evolution in which loss is considered as gain. Sadness always sweetens her. Hence, she is successful in being permeated with the past state and grasping the pure duration of the consciousness. Perhaps, this is her eternity. The term of the title "just lost" is reminder of her being fully aware of her consciousness to the one single time of the pure duration- 'is'. The time for Dickinson is fluctuating here apparently by the idea of tarry again and again. This is her ever evolving continuous sense of time. She is aware of the matter also that she would never have the vision of immortality for the infinite time. So she has already stopped to have the glimpse of the eternity that looks so infinite to her. In this condition, she would not be moving forward to eternity but be still and quiet. Thus being disillusioned from death as the journey of the next life, she is self-aware and conscious of the unheard and un-scrutinized thing like the eternity. In short, the eternity that is expressed in the revelation is the false notion only. It is Infinity only.

The eternity is Infinity that is beyond the limitation of the finite human lot. The idea of the exploration of eternity has furthermore been depicted in her poems *Behind Me – Dips Eternity* too. She finds her condition contrasted or in- between the

eternity behind and the immortality before. The eternity is already the Infinity in her experience. Her life lies between the eternity behind that preceded and the immortality that will follow. Being trapped between the immeasurable, infinite past and immeasurable future, death seems to be drifting. Death is commonly envisioned as night fall. But she sees dawn itself as death. In other words, death dissolves in dawn of the east or before the west begins. In regard to the awe-stricken dissolution of life in Easter Gray that proceeds in dawn and death as the rising of the sun she paints in the first stanza:

Behind Me—dips Eternity—
Before Me—Immortality—
Myself—the Term between—
Death but the Drift of Eastern Gray,
Dissolving into Dawn away,
Before the West begin—

The next stanza follows the common Christian or Eastern belief of heaven or the kingdom of ‘perfect pause less monarchy’. The Prince or Christ (God) is the son of none. He is self-born and dateless having no beginning or the end. At the same time, He is pause less – not interrupted by any events. Yet, He is diverse – changeable. Regarding his duplication of dateless (changeless) and diverse – change (changeless change) she writes in the second stanza:

'Tis Kingdoms—afterward—they say—
In perfect—pauseless Monarchy—
Whose Prince—is Son of None—
Himself—His Dateless Dynasty—

Himself—Himself diversify—

In Duplicate divine—

Dickinson continues showing the gloomy picture of the miracle of eternity behind her and the miracle of immortality before her. In between the two miracles, she envisions her life as a crescent of light of the moon reflected in the sea in mid night and the midnight darkness of the sky which looks simply like a maelstrom or whirlpool (chaos). In respect to her in-between chaos of the two miracles she writes in the last stanza:

'Tis Miracle before Me—then—

'Tis Miracle behind—between—

A Crescent in the Sea—

With Midnight to the North of Her—

And Midnight to the South of Her—

And Maelstrom—in the Sky—(J-721)

Death drifting in the sun rise or in the dawn is omnipresent and all powerful. The restless surging of the sea and the perpetuity of the moon (crescent) simply represent a return to the flux and change. In other words, immortality is something continuous and eternal darkness or a maelstrom only. So, instead of East-West axis of the eternity she likes to head towards her own worldly existence. All she can see now is the midnight to the north of her and the midnight to the south of her. In short, instead of the miracles of the light that lie beyond, she likes to live in the center of the muted darkness. After life is impossibility. Eternity is infinity. She likes to drift onward forever and death is omnipresent inevitable. So there is nothing to be afraid of death. Death is just a physical process and not any journey of the next life.

Drifting of Dickinson in between reminds us clearly of her diversified nature of being ever evolving on one hand and being changeless, pause less on the other hand. Eternity dips behind her. It is infinity, so she seems to be more evolving and creative sensible in her circumference of consciousness.

Obviously, the pure permeated moment of pure time has been grasped by Dickinson in the poem. She grasps the idea of immortality and eternity by her present concept of time that does go on. But they do not annihilate it. In respect to the continuity of the pure moment of the time Claudia Schwarz in his article *Emily Dickinson: The journey beyond Time* points out: “The poet once more shows how- led by the power of her imagination – she moves beyond time. Kher called “Behind me” the “culmination of her aesthetics of continuity” (96). Dickinson shows how immortality and eternity absorb time. They do not annihilate it. Therefore, she assures that the pure time does go on.

Eternity for Dickinson is her transcendental understanding of self by means of art. She understands life as a flow of the purely permeated state of consciousness. The phrase “the Term – between” suggests also the end of time as well as the evanescent existence of human being or the point to the endless eternity lying ahead which is in here and in nows and not there or in any other center. Regarding this evanescence of life as time and timelessness Gudrun Graver in her essay *Forever is Composed of Now: Emily Dickinson’s Concept of Time* points out:

As the past tense of the first two stanzas (A Clock Stopped) refer back to the last moment of this existence, the future in the third stanza (‘will not stir’) may point out to the endless eternity lying ahead, while the continuous with the present tense clearly makes the state of death, the

present moment forever 'frozen' in the nows, denying past and future with it "concern less no". Again the last three lines, just like the first three in "Behind Me –dips Eternity" are left without a verb for they describe once more the "Term-between". (265)

Eternity is the term in-between for Dickinson. It is finite- infinite for the limited human lot. The idea of the Infinity of eternity has furthermore been depicted in her poem *Those Not Live Yet* too. Dickinson throws some more distinct light on the issue of eternity which is infinitely beyond the reach of human fate. Dickinson views life as a single continuation of the conscious self. The idea of the two – life and after life is a false notion. Weaving her idea artistically, she tells that those who doubt (disbelieve) in to live again or in after life have not lived yet. Then she soon unmask her idea forcefully that living again is meant to lead a double life. The truth is that this life is one. It is a part of a single continuity. In regard to the idea of the continuity of life Dickinson in the first four lines of the poem reveals:

Those not live yet
Who doubt to live again --
"Again" is of a twice
But this -- is one –

She further presents the analogy of the sea as the continuation of its journey in the sea. The sea strikes against the sea bottom when passing through the draw-bridge and makes its way over the brief ground. Thus, it enters a continuation of same sea. In other words, the sea is the consciousness and death is a painful hesitation as we move from one part (draw) of the sea to the other. In regard to the false notion of the journey of death for the next life she writes:

The Ship beneath the Draw
Aground -- is he?
Death -- so -- the Hyphen of the Sea –

The last remaining lines focus on the pure consciousness which is free from the bondage of body. Behind the consciousness, without the costume of body lies the deepest mystery of human life:

Deep is the Schedule
Of the Disk to be --
Costumeless Consciousness --
That is he – (J- 1454)

The consciousness without the costume of body is the timeless Infinity. Dickinson's consciousness permeates uniquely and evolves within her as a continuation of single life. In other words, there is greater evolution and maturity in her conscious self as she is within herself and without the false notion of eternity. She is in the Infinity of the zero point of her costume less consciousness where time ceases to exist. Like Ashtavakra's idea of the separation of the body from the soul, Dickinson too seems to have believed in to free her self or soul from the costume of body and be self-enlightened one.

The eternity is the Infinity of awe that haunts back to the finite self of the human lot. Dickinson's awe-stricken idea of eternity has still been depicted in her poems *Embarrassment of One Another*. She unfolds eternity as embarrassing for her. It is Infinity and beyond the reach of human limitation. It does not lie in the idea of gaining immortal life after death. One is sure to lose it. Rather, it is conscious states to whose permeation (fusion) one can actualize the eternity. Thus, divinity lies not in

eternity but in one's own self. In revelation of the seal or the soul of one's own, one can have the sublime experience of eternity. Regarding the idea of the divine (God's) revelation as limited for man and self-revelation as divine Dickinson writes:

Embarrassment of one another
And God
Is Revelation's limit,
Aloud
Is nothing that is chief,
But still,
Divinity dwells under a seal.(J- 612)

The eternity is the Infinity for Dickinson. She sees the real divinity (eternity) in her own consciousness. The true revelation of self alone is eternity for her. In the costume less consciousness, one is free and enlightened. Dickinson too is in her self enlightened state of her consciousness. The deep anguish of her bereft heart permeates in her present conscious state of mind and she becomes quiet and self enlightened. In this permeated state of consciousness, the time ceases to exist. For Dickinson too time ceases to exist in her permeated state of consciousness.

Eternity is the continuous Infinity for Dickinson. It is both the blessed Infinity and the worst Infinity in their nature. One of the worst Infinities has been discussed in her poem *Safe in their Alabaster Chambers*. Dickinson depicts her idea of immortality or afterlife in a great pathetic way. She finds that there is no assurance of the immortality to the meek members of the Resurrection. Though they are lying safe in their eternal sleep in the fine wrought graves and are unaware of the worldly reality, their souls have disappeared like a soundless dots disappearing in the disc of snow.

She feels a shock only in realizing this false hope of immortality of the meek members of Resurrection. (Ah, what sagacity perished here!) Regarding her view of the immortality she writes:

Safe in their Alabaster Chambers -
Untouched by Morning
And untouched by Noon -
Sleep the meek members of the Resurrection -
Rafter of satin,
And Roof of stone.

Light laughs the breeze
In her Castle above them -
Babbles the Bee in a stolid Ear,
Pipe the Sweet Birds in ignorant cadence -
Ah, what sagacity perished here!

The Emersonian transcendental concept of the death as the individual merging with the Over-Soul too seems to be too chill and cheerless to her. The religious (Biblical) conviction of Resurrection or the soul's serene awaiting the last judgment and reunion with the glorified bodies is superficial only to her. In short, the idea of immortality and eternity is only a timeless Infinity to her.

Beauty is Infinity of the self in its extinction. The idea of beauty as Infinity that equates eternity has been depicted in her poem *The Definition of Beauty* also. The divinity for her is the revelation of the permeated state of the consciousness. Beauty

equates divinity and they are above analysis and beyond definition. Regarding the idea of beauty and divinity Dickinson writes:

The Definition of Beauty is
That Definition is none
Of Heaven, easing Analysis,
Since Heaven and He are one.(J- 988)

Beauty is truth and the truth is reducibly beauty in the permeated state of the consciousness. By the sublimation of such truth and beauty the pure duration is felt that gives solace and relief to one's tortured heart.

Although the divinity or beauty is undefined, it can be best expressed by those who have suffered the intense pain and tears in her life. Her notion of beauty as undefined has still been portrayed in her poem *To Try to Speak and Miss the Way* too. The divinity wears the poor rags of tears. And in the expression of such intense pain of tears, the poor sweet feeling is experienced as the sense gratification. Regarding the art of divinity as the sense gratification by tears and pain she writes:

To try to speak, and miss the way
And ask it of the Tears,
Is Gratitude's sweet poverty,
The Tatters that he wears –

Divinity lies in the tears and sufferings. Her idea of the divinity of soul has further been expressed through the rags of tears or the pain in this same poem. The rags of pain befit the soul better than a good coat. The soul inside can never be subjugated as it is divine. In this respect she writes:

A better Coat if he possessed
Would help him to conceal,
Not subjugate, the Mutineer
Whose title is "the Soul."(J- 1617)

Divinity is not elsewhere, but within oneself. Being un-subdued it frees one too only in the very unfolding of it through the painful heart. The revelation of self leads him to the blessed Infinity in the permeated moment of consciousness in which the tears and pain melts that results in quietness and peace. Thus, the artistic freedom is peace relatively. Freedom is reducibly the pure duration for many people. But for Dickinson, the freedom is timeless as the pain contracts the time to the zero-degree in the permeated state of consciousness.

Beauty is the Infinity of the self. The endurance of the pain of the long past states of consciousness results in the extinction of the self that, in turn, leads to the Infinity of the self. The Infinity of her self through its extinction has been depicted in her poem *My Life Closed Twice Before Its Close*. The poem is written on her experience of death. Death provides an opportunity to know the life. She has a sad tragic life throughout due to her frustration in love for several times. She comes to overcome her sadness through the expression of her experience to death. In the present poem she experiences the extreme pain in her love for her unattainable and strange lovers. She pines long for them and finally her love, her self and her loved one all extinguishes in the extreme pang of love for a very long time. She had suffered emotional death by her two previous lovers perhaps Newton and Wadsworth due to moral barriers. Now she wonders if immortality (God) has still another such event in store for her. Regarding her bereft heart, she writes:

My life closed twice before its close --

It yet remains to see

If Immortality unveil

A third event to me

Parting from her loved one is both a heaven and a hell for her. One after another, she suffered the tragic experience of love for two times. The pang of separation (parting) and its consequential pain is poignant to her. She tolerates her pangs of separation stoically each time. In toleration the pain disappears permeably. In other words, the pain contracts the time in its stoic tolerance. The time ends in the tolerance of the pain and with it the pain too ends. This stoic tolerance of the pain is the Infinity of the self. The parting from her loved ones is the blessed Infinity of her self. It is the boon of heaven for her. She transforms the sad, tragic and other negative forces into a source of inspiration, of power. By right intuition and stoic tolerance, it is transformation of her hell into heaven and heaven-hell. But the parting from her lovers was a great hell for each time. Regarding the Infinity of her self from the parting from her lovers each time she writes:

She experiences the hell and the heaven both in the parting from her loved ones each time. The separation from the beloveds was the worst Infinity than the hell for her. At the same time, she knew the blessed Infinity of her self in its extinction. This was her heaven where she felt quietness of her tortured soul. Regarding her experience of the Infinity of hell and heaven within her self from the parting from her lovers each time she writes:

So huge, so hopeless to conceive

As these that twice befell.

Parting is all we know of heaven,
And all we need of hell.(J- 1732)

Parting from her loved ones is naturally a great tragic experience for her. But this figure-ground reverses too for her. And the parting is not experienced as tragic any more. Rather it is transformed into a great source of inspiration. The tolerance of those pain and sufferings enlightenes her and makes her aware of the Infinity of eternity and peace within her self.

More elaborately, Dickinson seems to use her negative capability. The loss of love leads her to the transformation of self into a higher love of heavenly divinity. From all sorrow, suffering, pleasure, peace, life and death and so on, she seems to evolve to a true creative being. Henri Bergson calls this permeated state of consciousness as the pure duration. Change is time and the time is mobility, evolution to the divine creative being.

The extinction of self results in the Infinity of the self. The idea of the Infinity of self through its extinction has furthermore been depicted in her poem– *My Life Had Stood – A Loaded Gun* too. Her anguished state of frustrated and lost love finds the expression in this poem too. Her dream of ever being with her loved one seems to be sliding on the funeral pier of her heart. She ever craves for her love and pines for it. Her deep anguish and the extinction of self is reflected from the thought of her physical death before her lover(s) who is/are far older than her. The extinction of her hope and her cherished desire of love is further described by her fate of uncertainty of union in usual manner with her lover. At first, she expresses her early condition of love. She is filled with the ecstasy of love as being possessed or identified by her lover. Like a lady in the courtly love, she imagines as being swept away by her lover

in some romantic ride to hunt in the forest. In regard to her romantic and courtly love that results in Infinity she writes:

My Life had stood—a Loaded Gun
In Corners—till a Day
The Owner passed—identified—
And carried Me away—
And now We roam in Sovereign Woods—
And now We hunt the Doe—

She appears as the devotee of love, serving and guarding her lover only rather than to enjoy in his arms. But her extreme emotion of love loaded in her soul which is like a loaded gun becomes fragile, inert and strength less. The very idea of uncertainty of union with her lover in usual manner makes her feel powerless and incomplete. She comes to an inactive gun state without her love being possessed her in usual manner. In short, when he leaves her she reverts to inactive gun state which is experienced as spiritual death. Her love, lover and loved one all extinguish. The real condition of her life as a gun or as a load, without force becomes quite apparent in the last stanza of the poem. Regarding her life as a loaded gun she writes:

Though I than He—may longer live
He longer must—than I—
For I have but the power to kill,
Without—the power to die—(J-754)

She may have longer life than her lover. But without him or without her love being fulfilled, she is lifeless. Without love, she has the power to die. In service of her

lover, her gun can kill her master's foes or she has only the power to kill herself. She experiences extreme pain in which her love, loved one and she herself extinguish without a place. The self that extinguishes reverses from its figure-ground reality and turns into the Infinity. At the same time, the pain contracts the time too and the blessed Infinity of the self is realized within the self.

More elaborately, she always seeks pleasure in the antithetical plight of her life. In her view, the best way to find one is to lose him /her in love. Her repressed thought of love and ecstasy in the unconscious like a loaded gun, permeates or dissolves and makes her fully aware of the new creative being. In her such fused or transformed state, her pain and sufferings all melts and she becomes quiet and neutral. It is the state of the ecstasy, of peace or of being or 'is' that is neither sorrow nor pleasure, nor heaven nor hell.

Love is a timeless ecstasy. When a lover unifies with his beloved during copulation, he is dissolved and he meets his 'self' – his/her inner God inside him/her. In this dissolution of self, one is outside time and he/she has the experience of the timeless pleasure. In short, the dissolution of self leads one to the super consciousness for a short time. Dickinson's dissolution through pain gives her deep ecstasy of being united with her own self without her lover for all time(J-136/J-325). In this permeated state of consciousness, time ceases to exist. For the worldly people, time ends for a short time and he has the pleasure for equally short, transitory moment. But for some great meditators, artists like Dickinson, the time ceases to exist for a longer time relatively and her satisfaction is relative to her depth of the permeated state in suffering.

The Infinity of self is realized with the extinction of the very self. Many of her poems on the theme of death find the expression of the infinity of the self. The concept of the Infinity of self has furthermore been depicted in her poem— *I Felt a Funeral, in My Brain*.

For Dickinson death is a concept to know life. So she has written a number of poems on the theme of death. The poem allegorically deals with the theme of the extinction of self. She has passed through several deep despairs by which she has empirically understood the reality of her 'self'. Zero is the result of this extinction of self – love, loved and lover or beloved. She presents the extinction of self allegorically in this poem by the formal portrayal of funeral procession. Her nerves feel throbbing emotion of love early in her immature youth but her emotion of love flowed in the uncertain direction and uncertain future assurance of him. She feels certain barrier in winning her love. Yet she goes on developing her love desperately in her mind for her unmatched, unattainable lovers. With the passing of time, she feels that it is quite impossible to attain her unusual and anomalous love. Thus, she is bound to withdraw from her love that is so strange, and within herself. Consequently, she anguishes, pines and finally feels the death of her love and, in turn, of her own self in her brain or heart. The tragic shock of her lost love is like feeling of funeral in her brain. The shock of the lost love is as tragic for her brain as the feeling of funeral.

The poem begins with the mourners walking past the exposed body before the funeral service starts. Their feet tread to and fro incessantly that seems physically to torment the brain. Then, the whole space begins to toll and she feels the numbness in her mind. The bells are sounding high in the background which carries her, (being) and silence into a strange race wrecked and solitary. After a while, the high sounding of space makes her uncontrolled. She loses all her reasons – her emotional control

over her. As a result, her consciousness stops knowing everything. Regarding her frozen and numb state of mind she writes:

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 – (J-280

She loses all her sense of reason and along with this loss of the reason for living, she ceases to exist. The poem ends with the strong intriguing term – ‘Then’ which indicates that she knows something that she no longer knows, that is, fleeting nature of the world or the human life. In other words, the very loss of reason resulting in the numbness of her self is the Infinity on her self too. Her loss of reason and sensibility is the zero- point of the blackhole. When a star loses its all hydrogen- fusion, electron, neutron, quark and other fuels, it goes on shrinking smaller, smaller to a zero point. The similar fate of the losing sensibility and other control upon herself is seen in the extinction of her self too. In regard to the extinction of her self she writes in the last stanza:

And then a Plank in Reason, broke,
And dropped down, and down—
And hit a world, at every plunge,
And Finished knowing – then— (J-280)

Like the star’s shrinking smaller and smaller to the zero point, Dickinson also sees her tremendous extinction of her self. She gets numb by her mind and finally her reason drops down and down till she finishes knowing everything. This extinction of her self is similar to the ending of stars into the zero point of blackhole.

In such condition of the numbness of mind and the zero point of blackhole, time does not exist at all. Dickinson’s fall into the zero point or finishing of knowing everything and the numb state of mind (extinction of her self) is also the cessation of time. In the state of the extinction of her ‘self’, she is far beyond the time. In complete numb state or dissolution of self, time flows no more. In short, the numb state of consciousness is the Infinity of her self and the time ceases to exist in such Infinity of

the self. The Infinity of her numb state of mind and sense is also the state of the Silence within her self.

Despite the cessation of the poem, there can also be the expression of the continuous flow of time or duration in this poem. The term-‘then’ in the last line indicates the fleeting nature of human life. Perhaps, she has still the knowledge to know something. In short, she knows what she has never known. This is the very fleeting nature of the world which is the certain limitation to human fate. In this context, the time is seen as fluctuating in the poetry of Emily Dickinson. In short, there is the evanescence of life in it too.

The extinction of self is the Infinity of the self in the conscious state of mind. The notion of the Infinity of self has still been depicted in her poem -*After Great Pain, A Formal Feeling Comes* too. In the formal feeling the nerves sit ceremonious like a tomb. This state of formalness is seen in the life of a despairing poet also. After her great pain she becomes quiet and silent like the ceremonious sitting for the dead one.

Great sorrow or mental pain leaves her mind numb. In deep pain, she passes from the ceremonious process of death. The despair from some irrecoverable loss deadens the mind and consequently the spiritual life extinguishes. Then her condition becomes like a frozen person who experiences extreme chill and his/her whole body becomes numb, insensitive and then he/she stupors and then at last stage gives up fight against the chillness. Regarding her numb and chill condition Dickinson writes:

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 -

A Wooden way

Of Ground, or Air, or Ought -

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 - then Stupor - then the letting go (J-341)

The collapse of the poet here is not a simple tragedy. But it is something like the collapse of a dying star. After losing all its hydrogen, nuclear fusion, helium, electron, proton creating neutron and the squeezing of neutron into quark, the dying star gets smaller, smaller and smaller. Then -- zero. The star cramps into zero space to which is called a black hole. The same tragic process of extinction of her self in love is also seen in the poem. Regarding her cramping into the zero-point she in the last stanza writes:

This is the hour of lead

Remembered if outlived,

As freezing persons recollect the snow--

First chill, then stupor, then the letting go. (J- 341)

Dickinson seems to have the tragic fate of the dying star- a blackhole. The deadly loss of self or the cherished desire of life also is nothing but the extinction of her self. Like the squeezing of the dying star into zero point or zero space, she also suffers the similar squeezing of self into the zero point. (First chill, then stupor, then the letting go)

In zero space of the blackhole, the gravity is so strong that the time slows down more and more and more there. For an object like the space ship, time stops. The flow of time is multiplied by zero. In reality, it is not possible for any object to take the speed of light. No speed of any object is ultimate due to the mass inflation. But this limitation is not applied in human consciousness too. Human consciousness can travel no less than the light. Human has different sensibility in the consciousness. So the human conscious mind can squeeze into zero point like the zero space of the black hole. This numb state reverses into Infinity self after the fusion of the great pain in the permeated moment of his consciousness. When the anguished pain of the long past states of mind melts or fuses into the present conscious state of mind, then the formal feeling of quietness comes in the life. In other words, in the Infinity of the self the nerves of a man sit ceremonious like the tomb in which he feels the formal feeling of quietness. At the same time, the time too ceases to exist in the Infinity of the self. More elaborately, after some great pain and the formal feeling of death like numbness can occur in his/her life. As a result, the time stops. The flow of time will multiply by zero only. Dickinson has proved this zero of life and time through her great pain and formal feeling of death in this poem. In other words, time is not continuous, at least in the case of Emily Dickinson because her life does not continue psychologically and mentally after the suffering of these tragic feelings.

In short, when a person like Dickinson suffers from the frozen or the numbed state of consciousness, the time completely ceases to exist for her. It is not a continuous flow any further. If the person dies out, then the time too ceases to exist for her.

The mental state of the poet as chillness is the state of death in snow in this poem. In regard to the spiritual death in the chill state L. Edwin Folsom in *The Souls that Snow: Winter in the Poetry of Emily Dickinson* writes: “The images of death in snow are powerful and poignant capturing the cold’s grip on life, the portraying life slipping helplessly away, as in the simile for the Hour of Lead, Remembered if outlived, As Freezing persons, recollect the snow – First – Chill – Then Stopper – then letting go” (J-369).

In this hour of lead or numbness, the dying person almost loses all his/her senses or his/her physical consciousness. So the time ceases to exist here. Ram Ji Lall in *Emily Dickinson: An Evaluation of her Poetry* also of the view that such formal feelings exist outside time and space. Regarding the end of time, he in his work *Emily Dickinson: An Evaluation of her Poetry* states: “Such is the formal feeling that comes after great pain. It is ironically no feeling at all, only the numb rigidity existing outside time and space” (120).

Like the Infinity of the self in her poems on the theme of death, the idea of the Infinity of self has been depicted in many of her poems on love, life and nature too which also depict the anguished pain and sufferings of her life.

In her early poems of love, life and nature, she expresses her sad tragic feelings of life most touchingly which produces the soothing effect of quietness and peace of mind in the fused or in the permeated moment of her consciousness. The

Infinity of self has been depicted with a great clarity and precision in her poem *Success is Counted Sweetest* too. The tragic vision of life has been shown in the reversed manner in the poem. The one who fails in love terribly knows the value of love and life with the core of his/her heart. Similarly, a vanquished soldier in war knows the value of victory the more than the victors. In other words, the lack or the absence of the only desires leads one to the Infinity agonizing his/her heart forever. And in such agonized state the absence too is felt as the sweetest, somber and soothing. Regarding the reversed state of sweetness by the unsuccessful or the failed or the frustrated person Dickinson writes:

Success is counted sweetest
By those who ne'er succeed.
To comprehend a nectar
Requires sorest need.

Not one of all the purple Host
Who took the Flag today
Can tell the definition
So clear of Victory

As he defeated -- dying --
On whose forbidden ear
The distant strains of triumph
Burst agonized and clear! (J - 67)

Victory is, of course, sweet for the victor. But he cannot clearly define or enjoy it fully. His material success is counted as his spiritual loss. On the other hand, the defeated or the dying person in war knows the value of success in the war more

than the victors. His defeat and his pain or frustration is reversibly counted as his spiritual gain.

Her past state of sad lost love is permeably felt as sweetest and soothing to her tortured heart. The very first line and the second line (Success is counted sweetest, By those who never succeed) are the result of the permeated state of consciousness because the reversal of sweetness by the defeated is possible only in the permeated state of consciousness. She is conscious enough of her evolution, creativeness and the change from the bitter agonized state to the sweetest soothing fusion of the pure duration or time. In short, the sweetness of life is realized only in the Infinity of the self where the lack of the dear one is felt the most touchingly.

The extinction of the self is the Infinity of the self in the permeated moment of consciousness. This idea of the Infinity of the self has furthermore been depicted in her poem *Hope is the Thing with Feathers* too. Dickinson presents a similar fusion of her consciousness from the sad and frustrated state of the past to the Infinity of Silence and neutrality. Hope metaphorically is like a bird that perches on the soul. It sings incessantly or without a stop in the chilliest land and the strangest sea and makes one warm with its sweetness. Regarding the hope as the bird singing in the soul she writes:

Hope" is the thing with feathers --

That perches in the soul --

And sings the tune without the words --

And never stops -- at all --

And sweetest -- in the Gale -- is heard --

And sore must be the storm --

That could abash the little Bird

That kept so many warm

Her frustration and loneliness is felt infinitely when her hope as the bird giving sweetness to many in all conditions remains silent and never asks for any pieces of crumbs. In other words, even in the chilliest land the bird that perches on the soul and keeps one warm is itself without any hope. In the dangerous chilliest land, it is bound to die painfully. Thus there is a great void and silence in her (the poet's) soul where the bird of her hope perches. This void or silence of the poet or her hope is very poignant in the last two lines of the poem. In regard to the painful state of the bird in her soul she writes:

I've heard it in the chilliest land --

And on the strangest Sea --

Yet, never, in Extremity,

It asked a crumb -- of Me. (J- 254)

Dickinson's poetry often expresses deep anguish and pain of her life to which she reverses into something sublime and divine in the permeated moment of her consciousness. Moreover, her extreme pain contracts the time permeated-ly in her consciousness. The last two lines of the poem are the result of the reversal and the contraction of the style of Dickinson herself. In short, by the void or the space of the total silence in her life, Dickinson, seems to be fully aware of her consciousness. She is outside of time on being fused and in silence. In other words, zero is the state of Silence in which a person is independent of time.

The Infinity of the self leads to the Infinity of Silence of the mind in its permeation. The idea of the infinity of self has still more been depicted in her poem

The Soul Selects her own Society. She seems to be quite mystic in her concept of her soul that selects the one chosen and excludes the rest in the world. Eternity, as we know, is beyond her reach. It dips far behind her. Hence, she is not fully dependent upon the idea of eternity or the god either. On the other hand, the one to whom she loved with the core of her heart is quite unforgettable to her. Her soul's cherished selection is the one chosen. After the selection to the chosen one, her mind's door is shut for the others. She or her soul is quite unmoved to everything, everyone (chariots, emperors). In short, nothing can move or persuade her to choose anyone except the one to whom she loved with the depth of her heart. In regard to her whole-being excited for the love of the only one to whom she loved the most she writes:

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 -- (j-303)

The mystic vision of love of Dickinson is vivid in the poem. She is too conscious of her permeated state of mind. After the selection of the one only, her mind's door is closed for everyone, everything. She is quite unmoved to all from

chariots to emperors. Finally, her valves of attentions too are quite closed to everything. She is ultimately like a stone – unfelt, numb, still, lifeless. The term “like stone” in the last line indicates her unmoved, numb and extinguished state of her self. She is devoid of everything, every essence of life.

These afore said images of shut of the door, unmoved to chariots, emperors, close of the valves of attentions and stone like clearly focus that her consciousness has stopped and become move-less or stony (still). So there is highly evolved or changed state or maturity of her consciousness. In such unmoved condition, time does not evolve furthermore, though a higher maturity, creation and freedom are reducibly felt there. The pure duration is the state of the fused up consciousness. Dickinson’s consciousness does not seem to evolve any further as it is unmoved in all ways. So time also does not evolve continuously in her art. In deep meditation too time ceases to exist. In short, the time has double face: timelessness and an evanescence of life. She is independent of time as her consciousness is unmoved, shut up (closed), and stony. There is a kind of great void, absence in her self to which she is so impatient and consequently trying to fill by means of art. By unmoved manner, she is trying her soul to move that is itself unmoved. It is her mystical love of God who is unmoved. It’s a love without loving. Without loving, she likes mystically to love Him (divine majority) and thus fill the void of her life.

The Infinity of the self is the result of the extinction of the self and the peace and pleasure reversely obtained from such state of the Infinity of the self is relative. The Infinity of peace and pleasure has still been depicted in her poem *For each Ecstatic Instant* too. The value of pain paid determines the ratio of pleasure. In other words, the pleasure is relative to the pain or anguish paid for it. Similarly, for each moment (hour) of love one must pay a heap of tears of years. The tears of per second

(pittance of years) determines relatively the moments of love felt. Concerning the reversed state of the Infinity of ecstasy Dickinson writes:

For each ecstatic instant
We must an anguish pay
In keen and quivering ratio
To the ecstasy.

For each beloved hour
Sharp pittance of years,
Bitter contested farthings
And coffers heaped with tears. (J-125)

Time and mobility are not two different things in the permeated moment. Mobility is meant to be time and time is mobility in its effect. Time is the effect of mobility. If no mobility, then no time is there too. In the permeated moment, pain and pleasure or pleasure and pain both dissolve. The pleasure is not an independent entity. It is the effect of pain for Dickinson. When pain annihilates (dissolves), pleasure (ecstasy) to which one calls peace, pleasure, divinity, God, eternity, redemption too dissolves. Mobility (evolution) is time, and time mobility. They are inseparable like the ecstatic instant and the anguish (pain). Pain and pleasure both are our own projections and hence illusive. To have pleasure means not to have pain. Normally, for pleasure, one must suffer pain in life. And for a short hour of love, one must equally pay tears of years or years of time. But in the permeated moment, ecstasy and pain are not seen in ratio or in relation to each other. They are intermingled and are seen as a superseded object like time and evolution or mobility. Time is a stopped matter if mobility stops. A stopping of complete attention as in meditation and the stopping of pain and pleasure both creates mindlessness or

timelessness. In short, to be personless (egoless) is to be mindlessness and this mindlessness is the timelessness. One is the only out of sorrow (pain) and out of ecstasy. To be neutral of pain and pleasure is the state of zero. Thus, ecstasy and pain are relatively the subsided/intermingled things. They result in mindlessness. The zero where a person has no pain and no joy at all is the state of mindlessness. The pain and the joy keep one in an illusion. No pain, no joy but 'is' is there only. To be 'is' or just to exist is ecstasy or somber feeling of pain interwoven like the mobility and time. In short, to be free from pain, one must be free from pleasure (ecstasy) too. Just to be poised oneself neutrally is the state of the zero. Thus, Dickinson intends to say that suffering must deaden (Anodyne that deaden suffering -3-4) as she expresses in her poem "Heart asks Pleasure First" -(J536). The relief/end of pain, suffering and pleasure both lead one to the real ecstasy that is, the 'is' state of the permeated states of consciousness.

The pain contracts the time only in the reversed state. When the self extinguishes, the pain too is extinguished (melt) along with it (the self). As the person spiritually does not exist in the extinct state, so the pain too does not exist there. It melts in that moment in the present consciousness. This spiritual death in pain is the contraction of time. In short, the person is physically alive but spiritually he is in the state of death. In such spiritual deadness, the pain does not exist at all. Thus in the permeated state of consciousness, the pain melts and disappears and with it it contracts the time too in the same ratio – (3). Pain, person and the time all are thus non-existent beings outside the space in the fused or permeated moment of consciousness.

Along with the extinction of the self, the extreme pain and sufferings of life ends and then the eternal life of ecstasy, bliss and peace begins. But for each ecstatic

instant he/she must pay anguish; He/she must give his/ her existence as the right price for the eternal life of bliss. Dickinson lived in love throughout her life. She was lost in her love like the soil in the vessel or the drop in the sea. The life without him is empty or nothing for her. The empty state or the extinction of self has been depicted in her poem *Empty my Heart, of Thee*. Regarding the emptiness or the extinction of her self being lost in the love for her loved one like the billow (wave) in the sea she writes:

Empty my Heart, of Thee -

It's single Artery -

Begin, and leave Thee out -

Simply Extinction's Date -

Much Billow hath the Sea -

One Baltic - They -

Subtract Thyself, in play,

And not enough of me

Is left - to put away -

"Myself" meanth Thee -

Erase the Root - no Tree -

Thee - then - no me -

The Heavens stripped -

Eternity's vast pocket, picked – (J-587)

The love is life for her. And the life without her loved one is the total extinction of her self. (Begin and leave thee out – Simply Extinction's Date -) The renewal of him from her life even in play would be tragic for her. She is meant to be

in life only by his life. (Subtract Thyself, in play, And not enough of me, Is left - to put away - "Myself" meanth Thee -) Her life without him is like the tree without roots. Her survival, her pleasure and her idea of eternity all extinguish and rob off in his absence. In short, she finds her life blurred in him and without him she is left into the vast and infinite state of life that wrestles for the eternity outside time and space.

The similar idea of the extinction of her self has further been depicted in her poem *The Drop, that Wrestles in the Sea* too. Having fallen in love miserably, she finds her individual self as displaced like the drop that forgets its locality and struggles to be merged in the sea. In regard to the idea of having lost her individual self in the hope of being merged in the larger body she writes:

The Drop, that wrestles in the Sea -

Forgets her own locality

As I, in Thee -

She knows herself an Offering small -

Yet small, she sighs, if all, is all,

How larger - be?

The Ocean, smiles at her conceit -

But she, forgetting Amphitrite -

Pleads "Me"? (J-284)

Having fallen in the love for him, she finds her individual self as lost and extinguished. (The Drop that wrestles in the Sea -Forgets her own locality-As I, in Thee -) Like the small drop that wrestles to be merged into the sea, she too wishes to be merged in her loved one to be the whole. (She knows herself an Offering small -

Yet small, she sighs, if all, is all, How larger - be?) But her such wish of being merged or united with her loved one remains quite unfulfilled. She as a drop is not quite sure whether she will be accepted or not. So, despite her knowledge of his real (nuptial) status (Poseidon, the guilty god of sea to Amphitrite), she pleads him sarcastically if he still likes to take her. (But she, forgetting Amphitrite - Pleads "Me?") In short, the poem reveals a great state of the void and emptiness of her self which is infinite in her attempt (wrestling) of transcending the life from the small to the larger or the diviner one like the drop wresting into the sea.

The self is seen to have extinguished in many of her poems. The idea of the extinction of her self has furthermore been depicted in her poem *Me from Myself – to Banish* too. Dickinson separates her self, her body or her ego from herself. Regarding the separation of her body, her self or her ego she writes:

Me from Myself - to Banish -

Had I Art -

Invincible My Fortress

Unto All Heart -

But since Myself - assault Me -

How have I peace

Except by subjugating

Consciousness?

And since We're Mutual Monarch

How this be

Except by Abdication -

Me - of Me -? (J-642)

The separation of body from the self or the soul is the necessary condition for the attainment of peace. (How this be, Except by Abdication -Me - of Me -?) In other words, one must assault over oneself to be egoless, desire less and personless for the attainment of peace and other eternal life that is outside the time. (But since Myself - assault Me -, How have I peace, Except by subjugating, Consciousness?) In short, Dickinson believes that only by the extinction of self (Me from Myself – to Banish) the infinity of self and its peace outside the time and space is possible.

In the same pace, the idea of the extinction of self has still been depicted with a greater clarity and precision in her poem *I Took One Draught of Life* too. The separation of her body or the desire from her soul has been exposed relatively in the term of the market price. Regarding the cost that she paid for the eternal life she writes:

I took one Draught of Life -

I'll tell you what I paid -

Precisely an existence -

The market price, they said.

They weighed me, Dust by Dust -

They balanced Film with Film,

Then handed me my Being's worth -

A single Dram of Heaven! (J-1725)

She paid her existence, her life and her desires (I'll tell you what I paid - Precisely an existence - The market price, they said) and took one draught of eternal life as her true worth. (Then handed me my Being's worth - A Single Dram of Heaven!) In short, when the self (love, lover and loved or jnana, jnata and jney) extinguishes, he she becomes infinite and enlightened that exists outside the time and the space.

The notion of the extinction of her self has too painfully been depicted in her poem *Is it too Late to Touch you, Dear?* too. After the extinction of her self or after it has become too late to touch him she realizes her love in the triangle as marine, terrene and celestial. Regarding her love as too late, she writes:

Is it too Late to Touch you, Dear?

We this moment knew -

Love Marine and Love Terrene -

Love celestial too – (J-1637)

It is really too late for her to win her love. Like the drop she desperately tries to wrestle to be mingled in her vaster or larger sea. Terrestrially, she has no life in love for life is over there. (I cannot live with you. It would be life. And Life is over there – 1-3/J-640) And celestially, she is in between – finite – infinite – back – towards time and forward – towards the God of Him (J-906). In short, she made too late in winning her love for him. But in this very too late hour, she knew the infinity of her love as marine, terrene and as celestial in the extinct state of her self. The too lateness in love made her realize the love in eternity beyond the time and the space.

The great spiritual nullity of her self has still been depicted with a great precision and brevity in her poem *To Fill a Gap*. The gap in her self has been depicted by her notion of the insertion of what caused the gap. In other words, the gap is filled by the insertion of what caused it. To fill the gap with other thing will simply enlarge the gap of the problem. In respect to fill the gap she writes:

To fill a Gap
Insert the Thing that caused it -
Block it up
With Other - and 'twill yawn the more -
You cannot solder an Abyss
With Air. (J-546)

The gap is filled by the thing that caused it. To fill it with the other thing will not be its real solution. The gap in the life of the poet is caused by some loss in love. It is irrecoverable to her. Therefore, the gap in her life is immense like an abyss for it cannot be filled with other airy things at all. In short, the poem reveals that there is the state of an infinite gap or void (nullity) in her self which goes beyond time and the space in the permeated moment of consciousness.

There is certain thing that caused a great gap or emptiness in her self. The idea of the gap with its real cause has been still depicted with a greater clarity and precision in her poem *It was Love – not me* too. She tells her lover that it was love for him that is guilty or responsible for what has happened. She had long ago died in his love. So he cannot blame and punish her for loving him. Regarding the love and her (she herself) that are the two but looked alike Dickinson writes:

'T was Love - not me -
 Oh punish - pray -
 The Real one died for Thee -
 Just Him - not me -

 Such Guilt - to love Thee - most!
 Doom it beyond the Rest -
 Forgive it - last -
 'T was base as Jesus - most!

 Let Justice not mistake -
 We Two - looked so alike -
 Which was the Guilty Sake -
 'T was Love's - Now strike!(J-394)

Her only guilt that she made was that she loved him the most and doomed beyond the rest. Her suffering and doom was like the dying of Jesus for people on the Cross. The poem is the revelation of the extinction of her self. (The Real one died for Thee -) Like the agent-less-ness in Ashtavakra she too is of the view that it was done by someone else rather than her. It was love that did it and not she herself and the real one is left far behind her. In the consciousness the self is realized as the infinity only.

The extinction of the self leads to the world of the Infinity. the idea of the extinction of the zero-degree has furthermore been depicted in her other poem *A Narrow Fellow in the Grass* also. Dickinson presents a similar sense of consciousness to a zero degree or degreeless noon. With a mixed feeling of terror and fascination (cordiality), she has a sudden notice of a snake appearing and disappearing. He

occasionally rides. When she as a child goes to catch him, he wrinkles and vanishes. In regard to her sense of terror and awe that the snake's presence causes she writes in the fourth stanza:

A narrow Fellow in the Grass
Occasionally rides --
You may have met Him -- did you not
His notice sudden is --

The Grass divides as with a Comb --
A spotted shaft is seen --
And then it closes at your feet
And opens further on --

He likes a Boggy Acre
A Floor too cool for Corn --
Yet when a Boy, and Barefoot --
I more than once at Noon

Have passed, I thought, a Whip lash
Unbraiding in the Sun
When stooping to secure it
It wrinkled, and was gone -- (J - 986)

Remarkably, the snake is not seen as one of the Nature's mysteries. Rather, he is presented as a courtly lover: 'fellow', 'rides', 'combs', 'floor (suggesting a house)'. On seeing the snake as a rider, a courtly lover of Dickinson herself, one gets the vision of her sad ending in his presence. She says that she has never met and attended

any company of him. But his presence led her to the frozen state of the zero-point. In regard to her squeezing into the zero-point by the presence of the narrow fellow she writes:

Several of Nature's People
I know, and they know me --
I feel for them a transport
Of cordiality --
But never met this Fellow
Attended, or alone
Without a tighter breathing
And Zero at the Bone – (J-986)

The term “zero at the bone” reflects the shrinking of the poet into the zero-point. The presence of the narrow fellow had caused the extinction of her self. Sharon Leiter, in his “A Critical Companion to Emily Dickinson”, describes Dickinson’s reaction to her vision of the snake or the man (zero at the bone) in term of chilling, a complete frozen state (death) or as a degreeless noon which lies beyond the dial of life of the everyday. In regard to her reaction to the presence of the narrow fellow he writes:

Whatever the significance of the snake to the speaker, its impact is fearsome and chilling. The entire poem’s attempts to view it in civilized, domestic terms break down at the end. Visual images give way to “Zero at the Bone.” For Dickinson “Zero” is an image of death, associated with frost and belonging to the same semantic context as “Degreeless Noon,” which lies beyond the “Dial life” of the Ever day.

The long o sound of alone and Bone at the conclusion produces a mournful mood that reinforces the sense of this “Zero”. (39)

The consciousness when frozen into zero- degree does not evolve any further. Like the stopping or the stillness of pendulum of the clock, the consciousness too stops or becomes still. In short, zero is the fused state of consciousness that does not evolve any further and hence time also does not seem to evolve or continue in such state. Thus, zero is state of consciousness in which time ceases to exist in one hand but this secession of time is the very state of a higher maturity and creation of the consciousness too.

The self is realized as the Infinity in its extinction. The Infinity of the self is unmoved, still. Like the Infinity of the stony condition of the human soul in *Soul Selects Her Own Society* and in *The Narrow fellow in the Grass*, the infinity of the self and the time has still been depicted in her poem *A Clock Stopped* too. Dickinson expresses the similar image of chillness, snowy, still, un-stirring (not stir), cool, concern-less and quivering out of decimals into degreeless noon to show the human condition in this poem too. The clock has stopped. It was not a mantel’s clock. But even not the best Geneva’s skilled watch maker can set it right and make it move again. In other words, it has become (dangled) still. At the last time of dangling, it quivered with pain as if in awe and then went on shrinking out of decimal into degreeless noon. Now, it will not stir anymore for anyone (doctor or shop-man). This has become the pendulum of snow that has frozen to the zero degree. It is cool and concern-less (numb). Its pointer’s will not chime any second or hour of time. Regarding the cool, numb and other devoid state of the time and the self she writes:

A Clock stopped --
Not the Mantel's --
Geneva's farthest skill
Can't put the puppet bowing --
That just now dangled still --

An awe came on the Trinket!
The Figures hunched, with pain --
Then quivered out of Decimals --
Into Degreeless Noon --

It will not stir for Doctors --
This Pendulum of snow --
This Shopman importunes it --
While cool -- concernless No --

Nods from the Gilded pointers --
Nods from the Seconds slim --
Decades of Arrogance between
The Dial life --
And Him – (J-287)

The still and degreeless noon is indicative of the death or the stoppage of the clock. The stationary pendulum of snow is the very state of void of the self of the poet. Regarding the clock that shows the void state of the poet Christopher Nield in his article *A reading of A Clock Stopped* by Emily Dickinson he writes: “Degreeless also carries the meaning of being deadly cold which leads us to the image of

stationary ‘pendulum of snow’. Snow, in term, conjures up a vista of where all shapes and forms are slowly lapsing, into a stark white void” (1).

Metaphorically, the chill (snowy), still, degreeless (timeless) condition of the clock is the very chill, still and numb condition of human soul. The people, who suffer from some deep loss, undergo the chill, still and irreparable clock’s condition. As a result, he/she feels zero in the bone – a degree less noon which is beyond the dial life of everyday (clock time). The stopping of the clock is the very stopping of the conscious state of mind too.

Dickinson’s poem *A Clock Stopped* is a perfect illustration of this double faced image of time (Gudrun Grabher). The clock provides an objective description of the standstill of a human life. She transforms a common place object, a mantel clock, into a metaphysical conceit for depicting the end of life (Paul J. Ferlazzo; Gudrun Grabher). At the same time, Gudrun Grabher in her essay “Forever is Composed of Nows: Emily Dickinson’s Concept of Time” describes the clock as the double faced image of time. The clock in her view is both timeless and evanescence of life. Regarding the double aspect of the time she writes: “For the human being who has overstepped the boundaries of his/her earthly existence, there is no sense of motion because motion by definition takes place only in time” (261).

Like Gudrun Grabher, Indra Nath Kher in his work *The Landscape of Absence: Emily Dickinson’s Poetry* also believes in the same double images of time in the poem *A Clock Stopped* by Emily Dickinson. The image of ‘Degreeless Noon’ suggests the end of the clock time in one hand and the evanescence of life on the other hand. Regarding the double images of the poem he writes:

With the pendulum thus standing for the heart as the vital organ, the organ of vitality and life as such, the pendulum of snow also suggests the evanescence of life, since snow may not only freeze but also melt. This melting substance then also conjures up the notion of nothingness, which is even underlined by its “color”, white.

Just like “behind Me – dibs Eternity –“, this poem strikes a peculiar use of tenses. The past tense in the first two stanzas clearly marks the end of this particular human existence. However, the action that is described by the verbs used in the past tense – “stopped,” “dangled” “came”, “hunched”, “quivered” - still refers to the human being alive, to her very last moments. Thus the first two stanzas describe the transition from measured time to timelessness: “The anguish of death is presented through the figures hunching with pain. As the trinket refers to man’s temporal clock – existence, the figure refers to the numerical symbols of hours in man’s transient show on earth. But then, dying means quivering ‘out of Decimal,’ out of narrow arithmetic of life, into’ Degreeless Noon,’ the noon in which clock-time does not exist” (Kher 206).

In the same vein, Claudia Schwarz also considers the stopping of clock as the perfect conceit for the moment of death. And in death or in the motionless state, time ceases to exist. Regarding the death of the clock he in his essay *Emily Dickinson’s Journey beyond Time* writes: “The image of a clock that has stopped is the perfect conceit for the moment of death” (93). The zero-degree noon, according to Claudia Schwarz is like the shine for eternity. 00, thus, are boundless and nothingness fused in the single syllable. The word ‘no’ of noon also indicates that there is no way back

to life. In regard the noon associated with death and eternity he in his essay Emily Dickinson' Journey beyond Time he further writes:

The first stanza of the poem basically depicts the moment of death: "That just now dangled still. The dying of the clock is irrevocable, since not even the most crafted clockmaker ("Geneva's farthest skill") can "put the puppet bowing". The "awe" on the Trinket's face is reminiscent of the face of the dead and calls on the belief that they get a glimpse of heaven at the moment of passing. As the clock stopped, it "quivered out of Decimals - / Into degreeless Noon. The quivering out of decimals refers to the superimposed fingers with zero degrees between them pointing towards noon. The decimal is frequently used as a synonym for eternity by Dickinson. Noon is a palindrome with no beginning and no end, that reads the same way forward and backwards implying circularity and infinity. Moreover, it contains two "oo" s in the center, twice zero which, combined, looks like the sign for eternity. As the Wolff remarks, "thus are boundlessness and nothingness fused in this single syllable". However, in regard to the dying of the clock, noon also mirrors the word 'no', which means that there is no way back to life. How deeply noon is associated with death and eternity becomes obvious in the lines from another poem: "And the Everlasting Clocks - / Chime-Noon!" (93-94).

The absence of time or the degreeless noon is the Infinity of time. The linear idea of the Infinity of time has further been exposed in her poem *Forever Is Composed of Nows* too. Dickinson extends her concept of time as an absence of the time in which it turns into the Infinity in this poem. The duration of time from the

second to ever extending time is one single time- now(s) only. In a way, the time from zero point (Anno-Domines) is ever extending (exhaling) into second, minute, month, year...pause-less-ly. This extension of time into many 'nows' is infinity not only of the time but to the human consciousness too. It is one's only home where he can have the permeated conscious time, no past, and no before but only one single time- now. In short, from Anno-Domines to present time, there is no different time, but one eternal time – "nows". Regarding the Infinity of one ever extending time Dickinson writes:

Forever -- it composed of Nows --
'Tis not a different time --
Except for Infiniteness --
And Latitude of Home --
From this -- experienced Here --
Remove the Dates -- to These --
Let Months dissolve in further Months --
And Years -- exhale in Years --
Without Debate -- or Pause --
Or Celebrated Days --
No different Our Years would be
From Anno Domini's – (J-624)

The human consciousness at the permeated state also feels this forever-ness or the presence of self at every moment of life. The self annihilates by this time of grasping the pure moment of the forever and one simply remains as 'is'. The being as 'is' is the very essence of Infinity. Thus, for Dickinson eternity is the realization of

this very essence of the Infinity of the time. In other words, nows mean the idea that one 'is' and the (one) 'is' is timeless one. Claudia Schwartz thinks Dickinson's present grasping of the pure moment of nows as timeless. In his view, nows constitute the experience of eternal time-dateless realm of consciousness in which the linear time month, years, present, past and future evaporates like fumes. Concerning the Infinity of time in this poem C. Schwarz in his essay *Emily Dickinson's Journey beyond Time* states:

Dickinson "transcends all time by experiencing it in the dynamism of the present moment (Kher 1974:148). Thus, the celebration of the moment enables the poet to step outside the timely restriction by means of the imagination (language). The imaginative experience of "nows" constitutes the experience of eternal time, the mythic moment, the dateless realm of consciousness in which linear months and years evaporate like fumes in the atmosphere of perpetual sunshine." (91)

Time looks linearly just a simple thing like passing of second, minute, hour, and week and so on. But it feels so vast and tensed. If there were no idea of eternity in the conscious mind, life would have been burdensome. One would have been engrossed in the circumference of finite (worldly) life. God would have been excluded. The notion of the Infinity of time and eternity or the vastness has been depicted in her poem *Time feels so Vast*. It is the language and consciousness by which the finitude of man slowly extends to larger and larger dimensions and becomes stupendous vision. In other words, under the heavy weight of time, one is bound to be crushed with deep anguish. After the loss of the most loved one, the time feels so vast to bear but as the finite consciousness merges with the infinite by the language and the permeated consciousness the time disappears. Thus, time that feels

so finite and vast is finally felt as infinite and timeless on being fused with eternity. The time and self look finite, limit, tense and vast at first and then infinite extension, external, timeless in the permeated consciousness. Regarding the transformation of time, the finite and vast to the infinite and timeless Dickinson writes:

Time feels so vast that were it not
For an Eternity --
I fear me this Circumference
Engross my Finitude --
To His exclusion, who prepare
By Processes of Size
For the Stupendous Vision
Of his diameters – (J-802)

Time feels unbearably vast for the people in this earthly circumference whose lot is finite. But the figure ground of the vastness and fear reverses too in the permeated moment of consciousness. The pain contracts the time reversibly with the extinction of self in the permeated moment of consciousness. Thus, the infinitely vast and awesome looking time turns into the infinite energy by its contraction in the permeated state of consciousness. This finite energy is the very idea of eternity (for an eternity- 2). In short, the idea of eternity helps contracting the vastness of time through the extinction of self in the permeated state of consciousness.

A.J Gelpi also is of the same view that an individual expends himself, herself by the idea of infinity and eternity. In regard to the infinity into which an individual expands eternally he in his *Emily Dickinson: The Mind of the Poet* states:

In Emily Dickinson eternity and infinity and God himself can best be taken as the encircling infinity into which the individual may expand in accordance with his inner capacity. Circumference comes to serve as a complex symbol for those disrupted moments. When in some sense, time transcends time. Circumference signifies ecstasy in its expensiveness, in its self-contained wholeness. (122-123)

In the disrupted moment the time turns reversely into the timelessness or the Infinity of it. The metaphorical idea of the circumference that suggests the finite limit and the infinite extension has still been exposed in her poem *Pain – Extends the Time* too. The moment of suffering from some irrecoverable loss or from the lost love is felt as infinitely long and endless. A short time like a minute appears to be ages in the mind. But as the finite mind within uncountable pain gains the capacity to tolerate those pains with the acceptance of the whole gamut loss and lost (death), the time starts contracting in the same ratio. The utmost bearing of pain results in the zero degree of time. The whole gamut of suffering, pain and despair transform metaphorically into the gamut of the Infinity or the eternity. Regarding the idea of the infinite extension of pain and the contraction of time to the zero degree she writes:

Pain -- expands the Time --

Ages coil within

The minute Circumference

Of a single Brain --

Pain contracts -- the Time --

Occupied with Shot

Gamuts of Eternities

Are as they were not – (J-967).

Apparently, the expansion of time is really the contraction of time in the permeated state of consciousness. It is the end of time. The time and pain are relative. One can feel the degree of time in relation to the extension/expansion of the pain. If the pain comes from the deadly or numb state, the time too will be the zero degree - the complete end of time. In short, the spiritual death ends the time and the pain both. The pain contracts the time in the state of the spiritual death and, in turn, the pain itself loses its ground of intensification. In other words, by the reversal of the figure-ground of the time into the timelessness or into the Infinity of it, Dickinson kills two birds with the one stone. Her spiritual death ends the time and the anguished pain too that she suffered in her life in the permeated moment of her consciousness.

In the permeated moment of consciousness, the time reverses into the timelessness or into the Infinity of it. The reversed idea of the end of time by the extension of pain into the Infinity into of it has still been presented in her poem *Pain-has an Element of Blank* too. A case of complete uncertainty of a normal and pleasurable life is graphically presented in the poem. Due to some irrecoverable loss, the pain takes the possession of an infinite realm throughout her life. This leaves the heart blank of all the only wishes of life. Thus, life knows the eternal and endless pain and pain only. The sufferer of the pain has no future, no life but the store of pain only of past. Even if the pain ends and one tries to regain life, he/she has the same fate of frustration again and again. Another new period of pain begins only to deaden the soul all the more. In short, the one who suffers from such infinite pain has an empty, blank life – (pain has an element of blank). And the one who has no life but enlightened to perceive new periods of pain is out of time too. Because his/her

consciousness is succumbed in pain and does not move forward for other reasons of life at all. Ironically, if one has no life, then no pain also. Pain and pleasure are for those who are interested in life. For the disinterested one everything is fickle and imperturbed like the zero. In regard to her neutral sense of being imperturbed from everything and the paradox of the extension of the infinite pain that simply extends the pleasure relatively Dickinson writes:

Pain -- has an Element of Blank --

It cannot recollect

When it begun -- or if there were

A time when it was not --

It has no Future -- but itself --

Its Infinite contain

Its Past -- enlightened to perceive

New Periods -- of Pain. (J-650)

The pain of Emily Dickinson is infinite as she has only the pain and nothing more in her life. She conquers the pain for one time and attains enlightenment. Yet she gets the new pain for the second time to which she conquers again and enlightens herself. But her pain never ends; it recurs and fills the blank state in her self infinitely. She pays a high cost to destroy the pain. It is her spiritual death that she pays for ending it in her life. In short, by destroying her self she destroys the pain of her life. The very destruction of pain is the contraction of time and her enlightenment in the permeated moment of her consciousness in which she is beyond sorrow and sufferings, and hence beyond time and space too.

Pain generally expands the time without a place. But it contracts the time too. The infinitely expanded time is reversely contracted relatively in the permeated moment with the extinction of the self. In the reversed and the permeated state of consciousness the time turns into the timelessness or to the Infinity of it. This idea of the infinity of the time or the timelessness has further still been depicted in her poem *I Measure Every Grief I Meet* too. Dickinson develops her idea of the extension of pain that contracts (shortens) the time by measuring the pain of others against her own severe pain of her life. She measures the pain of others against her own pain to the extent of the Infinity of the time. She wonders if their pain is like the pain of her own life or is it easier or less painful to them. She further wonders if they bear their pain or if it were just the pain of the short period of time. Then she shows that her own pain is dateless, infinite and so old in love and loss. Measuring their pain against her own infinite and endless or dateless pain she writes:

I measure every Grief I meet
With narrow, probing, Eyes --
I wonder if It weighs like Mine --
Or has an Easier size.
I wonder if They bore it long --
Or did it just begin --
I could not tell the Date of Mine --
It feels so old a pain -- (J-561)

On measuring their pain like the pain of her own life she reveals the idea that her pain is so old, so prolong and so infinite. She further measures the extension and the intensity of their pain as well as of her own pain. She tries to find if their pain is prolonged and if they die by it. She measures also if they renew or recover their pain

in the lapse of time. And she finds that the time cannot heal their pain for it will be just a pretending relief and short lived smile (that has so little oil). Their pain is so prolonged that the time cannot heal (could give them any balm). Their pain is so infinite and irrecoverable that it will not to be healed or come to a pause even in the laps of the thousands of years. Their pain including her own will go on aching eternally (for/through centuries). By contrast, after their death if they get the love of some divine power or God, their pain cannot be relieved in any way. Any love gained in such way will simply enlarge and intensify the pain only. In other words, even if they overcome their infinite pain by enlightenment with love for God, their pain cannot end. Their pain will simply emerge in longer way in some form or the other again. Regarding such enlargement of pain, she writes:

I wonder if it hurts to live --
And if They have to try --
And whether -- could They choose between --
It would not be -- to die –

I note that Some -- gone patient long --
At length, renew their smile --
An imitation of a Light
That has so little Oil –

I wonder if when Years have piled --
Some Thousands -- on the Harm --
That hurt them early -- such a lapse
Could give them any Balm –

Or would they go on aching still

Through Centuries of Nerve --

Enlightened to a larger Pain -

In Contrast with the Love --

By measuring the pain of others she indirectly reveals the intensity and the extensity of her own pain. Her pain is so long, ending and infinite that the time cannot heal it in any way. By its contrast, even after her death, the God's love for her cannot relieve her pain.

She furthermore measures the cause of their grief. Some people are grieved due to the death of their loved ones. While others grieve for material lack. Yet some people suffer despair of depression, loneliness or exile from their native homes (native air). Whatever the cause of their pain is, she only consoles herself by the idea that some people are agonized like her own who are bound to suffer the severe pang of some unattainable loss of the loved one. They have Jesus like pain of Cross or Crucifixion. Regarding her intense and piercing pain in the guise of others like Christ's Pain of the Crucifixion and the soothing pleasure of the fused state of consciousness she writes in the last fourth stanzas:

The Grieved - are many - I am told -

There is the various Cause -

Death - is but one - and comes but once -

And only nails the Eyes -

There's Grief of Want - and Grief of Cold -

A sort they call "Despair" -

There's Banishment from native Eyes -

In sight of Native Air -

And though I may not guess the kind -

Correctly - yet to me

A piercing Comfort it affords

In passing Calvary -

To note the fashions - of the Cross -

And how they're mostly worn -

Still fascinated to presume

That Some - are like my own - (J-561)

By measuring the pain of others, Dickinson reveals the degree of the pain that she has suffered in her own life. her pain is infinite that is relieved for the time being by the enlightenment of her own but it is intensified again and again that cannot be relieved even after her death in heaven. In short, her pain is irrecoverable and infinite beyond any healing in any time or in any space.

Perhaps Dickinson is trying to measure her pain against the pain of other people only to show the degree of her pain. Her infinite and irrecoverable pain beyond the healing by the time will also determine or measure the degree of the contraction of time by her pain. Her pain contracts the time in the ratio of her pain. From the severe and intense pain and its dateless and infinite extension, we can infer the degree of contraction of time too. Time ends relatively with the infinite extension of pain because pain has an element of blank - void, absence of all worldly desires. Where self annihilates, the time ends there. In short, some piercing comforts of hybrid nature are felt in zero or in the void and permeated state of consciousness.

The extinction of the self is the Infinity of it in the permeated moment of the consciousness. The pain and sufferings in love and loss equates death. In such pain that equates death the self extinguishes and becomes infinite. The Infinity of the self in the pain has still been depicted in her poem *I Like a Look of Agony* too. The pain is fundamentally a true thing in the life of a person because he feels and experiences it in his/her life. Dickinson also considers the pain as the true experience and the fundamental thing in her life. In the poem she experiences the pang of pain in her heart to the extent of her spiritual death. She believes that the agony is a convulsive pain which one cannot feign at all. The true agony of the pain reflects itself in the eyes of the sufferer. His eyes glaze in agony and look lifeless. In other words, the agonized eyes of the sufferer are the state of his spiritual death. It is more painful than the death itself. Such convulsive pain and throe that is more painful than the death cannot be feigned at all. It cannot be fanciful in the condition of experiencing it in real life. No one can feign it at all as it reflects itself the true condition of one's life. Even the beads (sweat) upon the forehead are equally impossible to be feigned. Regarding the unfeigned tears or the death like convulsive agony she writes:

I like a look of Agony,
Because I know it's true --
Men do not sham Convulsion,
Nor simulate, a Throe --

The Eyes glaze once -- and that is Death --
Impossible to feign
The Beads upon the Forehead
By homely Anguish strung. (J-241)

The words and phrases – convulsion, the throe, and that is death, the beads upon the forehead all are the images of the intense pain and agony that Dickinson suffered in her life. The pain and agony of her heart is quiet true suffering and the experience of her life. In such extension of agony, the self naturally extinguishes without a place. In other words, when the God of hope weathers/dies without a crumb of bread in the chilliest land, the self naturally extinguishes. In short, when the cherished desires remain unfulfilled, the self (the God of hope) naturally extinguishes. The pain has an element of blank in such condition of helplessness. At the same time, the time too is contracted in its equal degree of the convulsion of pain. Her pain contracts the time in relation to the degree of her pain in the permeated state of her consciousness. Thus, the time ceases to exist in the extreme extension of pain which leads the self to extinction without a place and in the state of spiritual death. (The Eyes glaze once -- and that is Death --) the time does not exist in the state of the extinction of the self.

Dickinson points out the Infinity of her pain only to contract the time in relation to the pain. The time does not exist in her poetry because her self is at the complete state of extinction or spiritual death. Her long and enduring pain of the past states of mind changes qualitatively into the evolution, creation, maturation and freedom in the permeated moment of her consciousness.

The self extinguishes in the extreme pain that equates the death. This leads to the Infinity of self in the permeated moment of consciousness. This idea of the Infinity of self in the love and loss has further still been depicted in her poem *Wild Nights! Wild Nights!* too.

Her poem *Wild Nights! Wild Nights!* equally deals with the recurring theme of the pain of the unfulfilled love. She would have unbounded, wild, passionate pleasure of love if her lover were with her. In such condition of the presence of her lover, her heart would be in port (sea travel) with the wind (futile wind) and she would not need any compass or chart. Her union with her lover would itself direct her in rowing to her Eden- her heaven. But in reality she has been utterly directionless as she has lost the compass of her love or lover. Regarding her unfeigned tears and deep sighs of pain (Ah! the sea!) She writes:

Wild Nights -- Wild Nights!

Were I with thee

Wild Nights should be

Our luxury!

Futile -- the Winds --

To a Heart in port --

Done with the Compass --

Done with the Chart!

Rowing in Eden --

Ah, the Sea!

Might I but moor -- Tonight --

In Thee! (J-249)

From worldly love, the poem seems to move to the eternal heavenly love (rowing in Eden). She finds herself in the vast sea to the Eden where she is helpless without compass or without lover or any other support to reach there. There is a deep gap of absence of her loved ones in her life.

The image of being fallen in the infinitely vast sea of pain reveals the Infinity or the void state of her self. In the presence of the Infinity of self the extreme convulsive pain contracts the time in its fusion into the present conscious state of mind. At the same time, the figure-ground of pain reverses and it contracts the time into the timelessness or relatively into the degreeless noon that is, the end of time by the extinction of the self or by the permeated state of consciousness of the present time. In short, like the vastness of the sea of pain, the time too is reduced to the zero degree. Because the self annihilates in such condition and timelessness is felt in its consequence.

The absence of some cherished desire leaves a deep gap in the life of a person with its infinite pain in his/her heart. The Infinity of self in the love and loss has further still been depicted in her poem *Heart Asks Pleasure- First* too. Dickinson shows the gap with its infinite pain of the unfulfilled love of her life in this poem. The heart's utmost desire is the pleasure first. Then it desires relief from the pain and suffering. Then it wishes the liberty to die if the inquisitor (God) allows (wills) her. If the God does not allow such liberty of even to die, then God inflicts upon her with uncountable pain. Regarding her bereft heart that seeks anodynes to get relief from such infinite and unbearable suffering that the inquisitor or the God extends it only but never rid her from it. Regarding her such infinite and unbearable pain she writes:

The Heart asks Pleasure -- first --

And then -- Excuse from Pain --

And then -- those little Anodynes

That deaden suffering --

And then -- to go to sleep --

And then -- if it should be
The will of its Inquisitor
The privilege to die – (J-536)

The pleasure that she wishes the most is denied to her. The images of ‘excuse from pain’, those little anodynes that deadens suffering and the ‘liberty to die’ are the examples of her extreme pain. After the denial of her pleasure, the only way left for her is to choose death to be free from the infinite convulsive pain of her life. Thus the Infinity of her self is so poignantly felt here. The extension of pain to the degree of death is the contraction of time to the zero-degree. When the self dies, the time ends for him/her. And the end of time is felt in the fused or the permeated state of consciousness in the present time. More elaborately, in the permeated state of consciousness the self does not exist. One is simply ‘consciousness’ only as the eye-witness of every of his karmas or actions. Therefore, the time does not exist in the permeated state of consciousness.

The self that passes from the extreme pain and convulsion does not exist in the permeated state of consciousness. In such state of the consciousness the self is realized as the Infinity which is often very poignant and piercing to many people. The Infinity of the self realized as very poignant and intense or piercing has still been depicted in her poem *If You were Coming in the Fall* too. Her pain, her anguished cry of heart transcends human limitation in the poem. This poem also deals with the theme of the unfulfilled love and its pain. If her cherished lover were coming in the fall and to unite with her, she would pass the whole summer swiftly as brushing of the fly by housewives. The years of time would appear to be some months only for her. And centuries of time would be nothing to her in waiting for him for the great union. Regarding her anguished cry and the deep emotion of love and loss in which the pain

of waiting endlessly or for centuries for her only desire of union with her lover she writes:

If you were coming in the Fall,
I'd brush the summer by
With half a smile, and half a spurn,
As House wives do, a Fly.

If I could see you in a year,
I'd wind the months in balls --
And put them each in separate Drawers,
For fear the numbers fuse --

If only Centuries, delayed,
I'd count them on my Hand,
Subtracting, till my fingers dropped
Into Van Dieman's Land. (J- 511)

Her lamentation for the union becomes too unbearable in the fourth stanza. She tells that she is willing to die and meet him even after her death and fulfill her unquenched heart that will be like a taste of eternity. But she is not certain even in this strange meeting to him at the cost of her death. Regarding the Infinity of uncertainty of meeting with her lover even at the cost of her death in heaven she further writes:

If certain, when this life was out --
That yours and mine should be
I'd toss it yonder, like a Rind,
And taste Eternity -- (J- 511)

In the concluding stanza, she comes to realize well that there is no hope of ever meeting her lover in this life and in eternity or in the centuries of time to come. The uncertainty of time to meet him distresses her infinitely like the sting of bee or like that of Dr. Faustus in the last night of his life. The pain of her unattainable love or lover is expressed by the following lines of the last stanza:

But, now, uncertain of the length
Of this, that is between,
It goads me, like the Goblin Bee --
That will not state -- its sting. (J- 511)

Her pain in waiting for her union extends infinitely from the summer to a year to centuries to eternity. Her waiting for the lover is the Infinity of time. More elaborately, the time too is contracted to the same level. When a person is disillusioned from time's ignorance (deception), he/she becomes fully permeated to his/her consciousness. He/she finally transcends sorrows, pleasures that are beyond the reach of time. In other words, the pain contracts the self and, in turn, the time is contracted by the contraction of self. Thus, the pain contracts the self which in turn, contracts the time and with it the pain itself is contracted in the long run. The figure ground reversal of pain is the end of time and the enlightenment of Dickinson herself in the permeated moment of her consciousness. Hence, she believes- "being is enough".

The extinction of self in the love and loss is often very poignant. This creates the Infinity of the self. The Infinity of the self in the love and loss has more intensely and more poignantly been depicted in *I Cannot Live with You* too. She presents the piercing condition of her convulsive pain and sufferings of the separation from her

lover which becomes apparent in the very first stanza of the poem. She states that she has no life that she can love and no time with her. To love one needs to be in life. But she has no life because the time is over for her. It has become too late to love for her. Now she is preparing only for eternity.

In such choice of the eternal life, she chooses not to live with him but the reality is that she cannot live in rest without him. A life without him is a hell for her and, on the other hand, heaven is a sordid, disinterested thing for her because he (lover) saturated her eyes fully with his sight. Actually a frustrated lover/beloved cannot live without the other. But after being frustrated in love she does not find any life in being united with the lover. Life is elsewhere. It is in the art of pain and frustration, in separation, in eternity or in God. So, she cannot live with him. Regarding the paradox of the transformed love from the earthly to the eternal one that is only for a return to the same end of the earthly level in the end she writes:

I cannot live with you --
It would be Life --
And Life is over there --
Behind the Shelf

Her pain and frustration becomes more intense when she says that she cannot die with him and her plain reason is that she is in love with him and she must wait to perform the ritual of shutting his eyes with deep sigh of love after his death. But he cannot do the same thing for her not because he is much older (crack) and will die before her but because she finds him so indifferent or unfortunate to her and the main source of her infinite pain. Regarding her bereavement of love, she further writes:

I could not die -- with You --
For One must wait
To shut the Other's Gaze down --
You -- could not –

Her pain deepens all the more when she expresses her feeling of home sickness here without him there in heaven. About her gloomy and sad feeling of love without him she writes:

Glow plain -- and foreign
On my homesick Eye --
Except that You than He
Shone closer by –

In the same pace, she had the mad love for her beloved one who has completely arrested her mind in the love for him and, thus, distracted her even from desiring the blissful, excellent life of heaven. About her infinite and mad love for him she writes in the last stanza:

Because You saturated Sight --
And I had no more Eyes
For sordid excellence
As Paradise

Heaven is a sordid thing for her before her love and lover. Her passion of love for him is so intense that she values him more than God. God or paradise is a sordid (insipid) thing for her. In other words, her eyes never felt so saturated as this earthly lover. She further develops her frustrated love's condition in the context of life in

heaven and her lover on earth. If he had lost the heaven, she would surely gain it. Though she would gain heavenly name and fame but such heaven without him would be a hell only for her and she writes:

And were You lost, I would be --
Though My Name
Rang loudest
On the Heavenly fame –

Her belief of heaven as a hell without him is expressed more vividly in the following (next) stanza. The lover served heaven. So he was saved. On the other hand, the beloved did not have any stronger love for God. Hence, she would surely be condemned. She would be here on the earth and he would be there in heaven. The place would be a hell for her where she would be and he would not be. In short, the life without him is only a hell for her. Regarding her bitter agony and the unfeigned tears of the lost love she writes in the eleventh stanza:

And were You -- saved --
And I -- condemned to be
Where You were not --
That self -- were Hell to Me –

Her frustration without the lover in her life becomes very deep and infinite in the last concluding stanza. In this stanza she reverses from the lover that becomes so poignant and wants to live without him. She shows the deepest pain of the separation from her lover here in this stanza. In both of these conditions, they are bound to live apart. The lover in heaven (there) and she herself as condemned (here) will exist separately. In both of these conditions of the loss and the gain of heaven, the beloved

is bound to live or sustain in despair. It would be a deep infinity (ocean) of despair paradoxically for her with him and without him. Regarding their love from the earthly to the eternal one and then keeping the door ajar for their mad, strange union either here or there (in earth or in heaven) she writes:

So We must meet apart --
You there -- I -- here --
With just the Door ajar
That Oceans are -- and Prayer --
And that White Sustenance --
Despair – (J-640)

This love poem reveals her infinite frustration of love and loss in it. She could not live with him and without him too. In other words, it seems that the life without him is not a life at all for she is lifeless without him. Her frustration and anguish will go on increasing endlessly or until she unites with him. Even the paradise is sordid for her before her love for him. The figure ground of her frustrated love reverses in this poem too. The life without him is the death for her. Even the paradise is sordid for her without him. In short, she cannot live without him.

But the reversal of this state is that she cannot live with him. In other words, she contracts life within him. The contraction of her life with him is a blessed moment for her. She is not ready to live with him because her such life of union with him would have deprived her from the fundamental thing of infinite pain that she had experienced without him and, in turn, she would not have been able to contract the time by the edge of her infinite pain. As a result, she would suffer the imprisonment of her mind in time. On the contrary, by not living with him, she has succeeded in

contracting the time to the zero degree or infinitely by her infinite pain in the fused or permeated moment of her consciousness. By contracting the time, she has become free from the imprisonment of her mind in time. Life is not a journey through time for Dickinson. Rather her life is a journey beyond the time.

This love poem of Dickinson is superb. She could not live with and without him throughout her life. She is single, alone and bereft. In such a lost or the dissolved state, she seems to be uniquely permeated with her past state of consciousness where she envisions infinity by pain. And in the infinity or the void, there is no time but silence and timelessness.

The self is realized as the Infinity in the pain of the unfulfilled love. The idea of the Infinity of the pain and of the self in the love and loss has still more poignantly been depicted in her poem *You Left Me, Sweet, Two Legacies* too. The persona of the poem sees the sea of pain of her unfulfilled love in this poem. She seems to be silent on the two legacies that were left to her by her lover (Charles Wadsworth) who has already left her that tastes sweet but are too bitter. First is the legacy of love. The person's love is the most priceless and unique legacy for her. Even the God would be pleased to accept if He is offered it. The other legacy is the boundaries of pain – capacious (vast) as the sea. This sea of pain has transported her between finite and infinite eternity and time, his consciousness and her. In regard to legacies of love that gives a somber taste of eternity and the pain that only inflames her heart or embitters the mind forever she writes:

You left me, sweet, two legacies, -
A legacy of love

A Heavenly Father would content,
Had He the offer of;

You left me boundaries of pain
Capacious as the sea,
Between eternity and time,
Your consciousness and me.(J-644)

The legacy of love given to her by her lover left her single throughout her life in which she ever pined and suffered tragedy. The legacy of pain ever scaled her and scaled her infinitely throughout her life. But the figure ground of love and the pain of her reverses by being contracted in her permeated state of consciousness. The two legacies of love and pain left to her by her lover prove unique to her. She transcends both of them. Love is not attainable or fulfilled to her. The convulsive pain she has left far behind her as she has become well aware of the Infinity and eternity by her finite self and by her sea of pain. Between the time and the timelessness or the eternity, she finds herself poised in best possible way. In other words, the two legacies of the love and the pain given to her by her lover are very precious for her. She reverses the ground of the love and the pain into infinite, eternal peace and enlightenment by their contraction in her permeated moment of consciousness. The love helped her reversibly in the extinction of her self. Her pain contracted the time to the zero degree in the permeated moment of her consciousness. With the contraction of time, her pain disappeared and finally she became free from the imprisonment of her mind in time and thus succeeded in winning the eternal life (between eternity and time - 7). Thus the legacies of the love and the pain enabled her in being free from the

trap of time. They proved to be the vehicle for the journey for her life beyond the time.

The self extinguishes in the infinity of pain. The idea of the Infinity of the convulsive pain in the love and loss has still more poignantly been depicted in her poem *I can Wade Grief* too. Dickinson declares that she is so habituated to grief that she can face and bear even the most heart rending and convulsive pain (whole pool of it). On the other hand, the least push of joy makes uneasy and fall. Anyone must not mock on her as does by the stumbling pebbles. And she has no tolerance for the alcohol (liquor) of happiness. Regarding her intensely felt pain in love and loss she writes:

I can wade Grief --
Whole Pools of it --
I'm used to that --
But the least push of Joy

Breaks up my feet --
And I tip -- drunken --
Let no Pebble -- smile --
'Twas the New Liquor --
That was all! (J-252)

She has become habituated of bearing (wading) even the deadliest grief (whole pool of it). This Infinity of pain has made her aware of the power of her self in the permeated state of consciousness. So she experiences that power is the only in pain that results from the loneliness. She further suggests that if the giants are given balm or soothing, helpful submission, he becomes kind and gentle. If they are given

Himalayas (mountains), they will lift them exhibiting their pride of strength.

Regarding her idea of power in the pain she writes:

Power is only Pain --
Stranded, thro' Discipline,
Till Weights -- will hang --
Give Balm -- to Giants --
And they'll wilt, like Men --
Give Himmaleh --
They'll Carry -- Him! (J-252)

What Dickinson means to say is that joy has not much more effect on life. Pain forces one to penetrate the reality and see the life with much more clarity. It helps one solving the riddle of life too. It is the very pain by which one can be free himself from all the pains, sorrows and sufferings of life. The very pain leads one to the freedom from all the boundaries of life and death too.

More elaborately, firstly Dickinson has the power to endure or wade her deadliest grief (She can wade the whole pools of it-). Secondly she knows well what power is. The power is only in pain (Power is only pain). The pain has power to contract the time. For it, she pays her life. She destroys herself to contract the time. In other words, she leaves all her hopes and desires of life (the bird of hope with feather – J-254 extinguish without a crumb of bread in the chilliest land) and became blank (Pain has an element of blank – J-650) and devoid of her self. Thus, by pain she contracted the time. The power for Dickinson is in the pain that contracts the time by wading it. She wades the pain that contracts the time relatively and makes her free from the imprisonment of her mind in the time in the permeated moment of her

consciousness. In short, the power for Dickinson is in the pain to which she wades wholly and gain the eternal life beyond the time.

By the art of contracting the time, Dickinson has entered into a new journey of her life beyond the time which is her real eternal life. The time with its division – present, past and future is deceptive to her. There is only one time which is the Infinity and eternal for her.

The time is one single continuity and evolution. The idea of the continuity of one single time has been depicted in her poem *As if Sea should Part* she attempts to show this one single time which is eternal and infinite for her through the vastness of the sea that parts. The sea keeps dividing into a further sea and the further and the further as it parts. But there is only one sea and not infinite parts of it. Likewise, the past, present and future all time imply one as the periods of sea. They are not separate of the pure eternal time. Regarding the idea of eternity, she writes:

As if the Sea should part
And show a further Sea --
And that -- a further -- and the Three
But a presumption be --

Of Periods of Seas --
Unvisited of Shores --
Themselves the Verge of Seas to be --
Eternity -- is Those --(J-695)

Like Ashtavakra, Dickinson too is free from all the bondages of sorrow and pleasure, birth and death - finite and infinite. The only ecstasy for her is to be poised

between these two extremes of the sorrow and the happiness. She is only the eye-witness of all of them and not the subject to them. This is her purely permeated state of consciousness in which time ceases to exist. In short, the end of subjectivity is the end of time too. And if the time ends, the person has no joy, no sorrow, nothing. Likewise, time is eternal and timeless. All the passing moments are ineffective upon it. The sea keeps dividing into present, past and future which are known as the periods of seas. They make the calendar for keeping records of memories of those times. There is only one time like the one sea that parts in many waves.

The constant three-fold division of time like the further sea and the further sea is seen in human life too. To be human is to be infinite and eternal like the periods of the sea.

The time reverses into the timelessness in the permeated moment of consciousness. The too short appearing time of the happy moment reverses into the nothingness as it dissolves itself (J- 1774). This is the worst Infinity of time. On the other hand, the too long appearing time in the moment of pain too reverses into the nothingness or into the zero-point. But this is the blessed Infinity of time.

On the extinction of the self the time is felt as infinite. The reversed state of the Infinity of time by the extinction of self in love and loss has been depicted with a great clarity and precision in her poem *Before He Comes, We Weigh the Time*. When the lover is away, the time is felt too heavy to pass. Life is dull and empty without him. When he is with her, the time ends. It is felt light and comfortable. Absence and presence of time is realized by the absence and the presence of her lover. Regarding her weighing of time that reverses she writes

Before He comes we weigh the Time!
'Tis Heavy and 'tis Light.
When He depart, an Emptiness
Is the prevailing Freight. (J-834)

A long time becomes too short in the promise of the union of the lovers. It is felt long as centuries like to them in their separated state. This ground of time as heavy and light determined by the presence and the absence of the lovers from each other reverses in the poetry of Emily Dickinson in course of the fusion of the pains. For Dickinson, the short time of the united state of loves is realized as too long for it is not time at all. On the other hand, the too long time of the separated state of the lovers is felt as too short for her because such long time of the separated and painful state of mind is contracted by her. The pain that makes time feel so vast contracts the time to the zero point or in its equal ratio. (When He depart, an Emptiness is the prevailing freight – 3-4) in the fused or the permeated state of her consciousness. Thus the time ends in her poetry of pain. Her poetry becomes the journey beyond the time.

Time is reversely timelessness. The too long and eternal time in the moment of agonized pain is contracted into the zero-point in the fusion with the consciousness. The idea of the contraction of time into the zero-point has been described with still greater clarity and precision in her poem *Too Happy Time dissolves Itself* too. In happy moment time flies or disappears instantly. It is anguish which is featherless and cannot fly at all. So the time feels vast. In regard to her reversed view of time she writes:

Too happy Time dissolves itself
And leaves no remnant by --
'Tis Anguish not a Feather hath
Or too much weight to fly – (J-1774)

In happy state, the time becomes very short. If the lovers are united, the time flies for them. They do not feel the presence of time in their rapturous moment of union. The time is the zero point for them. On the other hand, those who are in anguish have no feathers (of hope-3) and no crumb of bread to survive even in the chilliest land (J-254) and hence, they cannot fly or survive at all. The time becomes too long and infinite for them. But the grounds of the too short time of the happy moment and the too long and infinite time of the anguished featherless moment reverse in the poetry of Emily Dickinson. The too short time of the happy/united state of minds of the lovers fades away miserably (Too happy time dissolves itself) because it cannot have any permanency as eternity in it. It cannot lead to any sublime or divine path. On the other hand, the anguished soul has no feather to fly. (Tis Anguish not a feather has or too much weight to fly). In other words, too long and infinite appearing time in the anguished state of mind is contracted through the fusion to the zero degree in the permeated moment of consciousness. The time ends with the ending of the self in the permeated moment of consciousness. Thus Dickinson's mind is free from the prison cell of the time. So her poetry is the journey beyond the time.

The time reverses into the timelessness in the permeated moment of consciousness. The reversed idea of the time as the timelessness has still been described with greater clarity and precision in her poem *To Wait an Hour is Long* too. When her lover is far beyond her reach on earth, every passing time of a minute or an hour seems to be endless. When she imagines the certainty to meet him in eternity

(after death), she feels the time short. The promise of union even after death in heaven seems to be short while the uncertainty of meeting with him in this life or in being alive seems to be painfully endless, vast and infinite. In other words, being alive she could not unite with her lovers and further wishes desperately to be united with him after her death in heaven. So she expresses that she is further ready to wait eternally if love is the reward where there shall be time no longer. On earth, she has painful weight of time but in eternity she has no knowledge of it on being united with his/her loved one. In regard to her reversed knowledge of time as the timelessness she writes:

To wait an Hour -- is long --

If Love be just beyond --

To wait Eternity -- is short --

If Love reward the end – (J-781)

In the separated state of the lovers the waiting of an hour is too long for them. In their union the eternally long and infinite time of centuries appears to be too short. This state of the too long and the too short time of the separated state of mind and the delighted one reverse sternly in Dickinson's poetry. She does not consider the too short time of the happy or the united state of mind of the lovers to have any significance. Such time cannot elevate them to any grand, eternal state of life. So such powerless time of the happy moment dissolves itself – J-1774). On the contrary, the infinitely too long appearing time of the separated state of mind is contractively too short time. The pain contracts the time relatively to the zero degree after being fused through wading/enduring (J-252) in the conscious state of mind that pass through its dissolution. So power is only pain (10/J-252) that contracts the time to its zero degree. Thus, the too long appearing time of the separated and painful state of mind dissolves with the dissolution of the self and then the pain is not felt as the pain anymore.

Really, in this devoid or empty state of the self the pain that melts itself is challenged (Circumference, Thou Bride of awe, possessing thou shall be possessed – J-1620).

And the eternal void is realized where one simply is and nothing more beyond sorrow and suffering and beyond the time and space.

The notion of the contraction of time has been tactfully exposed in her poem *Time does Go on* too. She gayfully suggests to those who suffer that time does go on and they shall survive. There will be incredibly some hope and sun shine for them. Dickinson writes:

Time does go on -

I tell it gay to those who suffer now -

They shall survive -

There is a Sun -

They do not believe it now – (J-1121)

Dickinson is very cryptic and tactful in her present concept of time as going on. Linearly the time does go on and the sufferer will incredibly be survived. But their survival is as if not survived. Yet they are survived. In other words, since their youth in the past, they will survive for long time in the distant future or till it's (suffering's) fusion in the permeated state of consciousness. As soon as their long and enduring sufferings fuse in the permeated state of consciousness, it does not survive any longer in the same painful or suffer some and intensified way. Nor does time go on for them. In short, the time does go on till the fusion of pain, suffering and the extinction of the self has not occurred. After the fusion of the sufferings in the permeated states of consciousness or the extinction of the self, the time does not go on. Rather, it ceases to exist with the cessation of the self in the permeated state of consciousness. Thus,

the time does go on till the sufferers have pain and suffering with them. But the linearity of time reverses when the sufferings fuse in the permeated state of consciousness and finally ceases to exist. Thus linearly time may go on and the sufferers may survive but on the extinction of their selves and the fusion of their sorrows and sufferings in the permeated moment, the individual time does not exist. And with it, their sufferings too do not exist.

This contractive idea of time has furthermore been exposed with a great clarity and precision in her poem *They Say that "Time Assuages"* too. It is the common belief by many people that time assuages. It heals the pain and sufferings of all kinds. But dissenting to it, Dickinson believes that the time never assuages. Rather it strengthens the actual sufferings of a person like the strengthening of sinew with age. In her view, the time is the test of trouble and not a remedy. If it cures, then there was no melody, no sorrow and no sufferings of the irrecoverable loss. Regarding this she writes:

They say that "Time assuages" -
Time never did assuage -
An actual suffering strengthens
As Sinews do, with Age -

Time is a Test of Trouble -
But not a Remedy -
If such it prove, it prove too
There was no Malady – (J-686)

The time has no healing power to the pain and sufferings but strengthening of it only. It is in the timelessness that heals it. Time, in her view, tests the troubles only. The time cannot heal the trouble that is irrecoverable. Such incurable trouble increases only by the time. In other words, the time heals only to such pains that are recoverable. Dickinson sternly says that such recoverable pain and sufferings are no pain and sufferings at all (If such it proves, it proves too-There was no Malady or pain). If it had healing power, then she herself would not have suffered the uncountable agony in her life.

The time tests to the irrecoverable pain and sufferings and sees whether it strengthens or it has been forgotten only in time by the disintegration of his/ her consciousness. In the permeated state of consciousness, the massively strengthened pain and sufferings by the time loses its intensity by being contracted. The pain contracts the time in the reversed state of the permeation of mind. In short, the time heals most of the wounds and pains that are recoverable. At the same time, it tests those pains and troubles whether they survive and strengthen for long and long time or not. It tries to see the enduring power of the sufferers till long in the distant future too. Such a long and enduring pain and suffering contract the time to the zero degree in the permeated state of consciousness. Then the time, the pain and the self all dissolve illuminating the divine light and other lusters. In short, the time does not assuage such pains that are irrecoverable. It is the test to those pains and troubles for some higher perfection.

Time has no healing power to the actual sufferings. Really it is the test of troubles for some divine purposes. This idea of time as the test for some lusters and divinity has still been developed with a great clarity and precision in her poem

Uncertain Lease- Develops Luster too. Something that is uncertain or unattainable creates some awes and terrors (uncertain lease, uncertain group) that reverse into lusters of some kinds. Uncertain lease develops luster in time (Uncertain group's-- appreciation of sum) Something that is grasped easily is the trivial and cheapest thing for life. (shorter fate- oftener the cheapest) In regard to the luster of uncertain grasp and the triviality (cheapness) of the things of shorter fate Dickinson writes:

Uncertain Lease - Develops Luster

On Time -

Uncertain Grasp, appreciation

Of Sum -

The shorter Fate - is oftener the cheapest

Because

Inheritors upon a tenure

Prize – (J- 857)

Time does not heal but tests the troubles. Something that is quite uncertain or unattainable grows lustrous in the time that is timelessness. With the uncertainty of gaining the most desirable things suffering and awe of the long past gets strengthened that finally fuses with some lustrous and divine results in the permeated moment of consciousness (Inheritors upon a tenure prize).

If the time heals the sufferings, it is cheapest and of shorter fate. (shorter fate – is oftener the cheapest – J-857) Therefore the time tests the troubles for some lusters. The idea of time as the test of trouble has furthermore been developed with a great clarity and precision in her poem *The Admirations - and Contempts - of time* - too.

The one who has severely agonized can recognize and estimate his condition of pain well. In other words, what he does not get, he knows its value well. Uncertain lease / grasp and its suffering help him in growing lusts. (And What we saw not – We distinguish clear). At the same time what is easily available or attainable is trivial or valueless one. (And mostly see not what we saw before) Regarding the time as the test of trouble Dickinson writes:

The Admirations - and Contempts - of time -

Show justest - through an Open Tomb -

The Dying - as it were a Hight

Reorganizes Estimate

And what We saw not

We distinguish clear -

And mostly - see not

What We saw before -

'Tis Compound Vision -

Light - enabling Light -

The Finite - furnished

With the Infinite –

Convex - and Concave Witness -

Back - toward Time -

And forward -

Toward the God of Him – (J-906)

From the height of pain and suffering (The dying as it were a height), it is inferred that the man's lot is finite that gets infinite after the endurance of those sufferings in the fused or the permeated moment of consciousness. Thus, his lot in-between – back towards the time (convex) and forward towards the God of Him (concave). What Dickinson implies by the time as the test of trouble is that the time helps one in distinguishing and knowing something or the self clearly (We distinguish clear) that is quite unattainable or irrecoverable to him. (And What we saw not) His finite and agonized self strengthens infinitely through (the test of) the time. (The finite- furnished with infinite-convex and concave Witness-Back to time-And forward to God of Him) In short, the time tests the troubles, pains and sufferings which grow tremendously infinite and timeless in the permeated moment of consciousness.

Time tests the troubles of a person, strengthens them and then leads them to some lustrous and divine path outside it. In other words, the time leads one to go beyond the (very) time. The one who passes from the way of suffering and its fusion in time becomes infinite and exterior to time. The idea of the time as the test of trouble leading to the exteriority of time itself has furthermore been developed literally with still greater clarity and precision in her poem *This was a Poet* too. Regarding the time that leads the poet or the suffersome dying person from the height of tomb to the exteriority of the very time Dickinson writes:

This was a Poet -
It is That
Distills amazing sense
From Ordinary Meanings -
And Attar so immense

From the familiar species
That perished by the Door -
We wonder it was not Ourselves
Arrested it - before -

Of Pictures, the Discloser -
The Poet - it is He -
Entitles Us - by Contrast -
To ceaseless Poverty -

Of portion - so unconscious -
The Robbing - could not harm -
Himself - to Him - a Fortune -
Exterior - to Time – (J-448)

The poet who is basically agonized distills amazing sense from the ordinary things or from the familiar species or writers. (That perishes by the Door) He is not poor like the perishable person. (of shorter fate that is oftener the cheapest- J-857; We wonder it was not Ourselves-Arrested it - before -) He is rich through the discloser or the revelation of his unconscious self full of sorrow and suffering fused. By contrast, the other author (familiar species) who perishes by the door has ceaseless poverty. But he (the poet) can never be robbed or bankrupted. In short, by distilling amazing sense the poet strengthens his self so immensely through the test of time and finally goes beyond it. (Himself - to Him - a Fortune -Exterior - to Time –)

In her poem *I shall Know why – when Time is Over* Dickinson tries to justify the reason of why she suffered the agonized pain in her life. She imagines that long

after the Time is Over and she is deceased (dead) and is in heaven, the Christ will explain her in the classroom of heaven how he pardoned Peter for his rejection of the promise for three times to stay with him in the last night of his Crucifixion, despite his knowledge to reject him. So she stopped wondering now at the separate anguishes – betrayal, flogging and the Crucifixion of Christ. Christ will also see her sufferings on the earth with his kind eyes and appreciate them highly. Moreover, she will be taken kindly in the heaven. The anguished that scalds her now will not go in vain. Her sufferings will be greatly rewarded there. So she has forgotten the anguished that scalds her now and is sure of being redeemed there in the heaven. Regarding her after life Dickinson writes:

I shall know why - when Time is over -
And I have ceased to wonder why -
Christ will explain each separate anguish
In the fair schoolroom of the sky -

He will tell me what "Peter" promised -
And I - for wonder at his woe -
I shall forget the drop of Anguish
That scalds me now - that scalds me now! (J-193)

The suffering of Dickinson is like the suffering of Christ himself. So she believes that her convulsive pain and sufferings which is like the suffering of Christ will not go in vain in her after life in the heaven. This has made her forget the anguished that scalds her now.

The figure and ground of the anguished mostly reverses in the poetry of Emily Dickinson. Instead of forgetting the drop of anguish that scalds her in favor of the heavenly life, she may be attempting to clarify why and when or how the time is over. Time is over because of the pain. The pain contracts the time. It is the pain that contracts the time and makes it over. It is contracted when one forgets the pain. (I shall forget the drop of Anguish, That scalds me now - that scalds me now!) When the time is over and she will be in heaven doing her after life, Jesus will explain her in the classroom of sky about his greatness and kindness over Peter and consider her too there for her anguished pain and sufferings. This ground of forgetting her anguished reverses in her poetry. So she has stopped wondering at the separate anguishes of Christ not because it (the pain) is the necessary factor to have in life like the Christ but because she has gone beyond the time and so it is not necessary to go on wondering at the separate anguishes of Christ or the anguishes of her own life. By the contraction of time through the wading or forgetting of her anguishes she has now nothing to wonder at or ever to think of the afterlife in heaven. By contracting the time, she has been enlightened. Now she needs to know or do nothing. In this context, Dickinson seems to answer in this poem why and when the time is over. It (the time) is over because of the pain and it is over when the pain is in the forgetful state. In short, the void state of the self and the pain being contracted with the contraction of time cause the time itself to be over.

The time reverses into timelessness in the permeated moment of consciousness. The blessed Infinity of time as well as the worst Infinity of the time in the reversed-ly fused state of consciousness has the most powerfully been depicted in her poem *What Mystery Pervades a Well* too. She has metaphorically shown the notion of the depth and un-fathomable-ness of human mind and consciousness. Nature

is unknowable, inscrutable, strange and awe-inspiring to her. The sea is associated with eternity, sexuality, terror of the unknown and repressed thoughts. Regarding the sea as floorless or bottomless and as a person (he) who is metaphorically so distant away from her she writes:

What mystery pervades a well!

That water lives so far -

A neighbor from another world

Residing in a jar

Whose limit none have ever seen,

But just his lid of glass -

Like looking every time you please

In an abyss's face!

The grass does not appear afraid,

I often wonder he

Can stand so close and look so bold

At what is awe to me

Related somehow they may be,

The sedge stands next the sea --

Where he is floorless

And does no timidity betray (J-1400)

Dickinson's frustration is apparent in this stanza for her bottomless and inaccessible lover (Where he is floorless). Nature is presented as more inscrutable and strange for those who cite her most. Such persons know little of the awe and

fearfulness of the haunted house and ghostly terror of the nature. About the inscrutability of nature to man and his limited mind Dickinson writes in the fifth stanza:

But nature is a stranger yet;
The ones that cite her most
Have never passed her haunted house,
Nor simplified her ghost. (J-1400)

The people who have cited her most have not known her yet in the deeper level. They might have never experienced and unfolded the ghostly terror hidden within her that scalds the heart so much.

The metaphorical idea of the infinite or the void through nature is expressed in the final stanza. Human consciousness is infinite like the sea and the abyss of nature. It is pity to those who do not know her deeply. At the same time, those who know her the most know her the less. In other words, the more one knows, the more he/she is lost in the world of knowledge. The nearer one gets to her, the farther he becomes from her. Regarding the idea of the lost state of consciousness she writes in the last two stanzas:

Whose limit none have ever seen,
But just his lid of glass --
Like looking every time you please
In an abyss's face!

To pity those that know her not
Is helped by the regret

That those who know her, know her less

The nearer her they get. (J-1400)

Nature is strange, inscrutable and awe-inspiring to Dickinson. Despite knowing much about her many people are still unknown of her ghostly terror. (Nor simplified her ghost-20) In other words, they are deprived of experiencing the awe, terror and ghostly effects within the nature upon them that scalds the heart so much and then finally fills their heart with the infinite energy. By the metaphor of well and nature's mysticism Dickinson tries to reveal the mysticism of human nature itself. The human nature is also awe-inspiring. It is the awe, pain and terror of life to whose deeper to deepest revelation one can find his/her life significant and eternally elevated. (Nor simplified her ghost-20) In short, it is the awe and the pain of life that provides the power of Infinity of the self through the contraction of time by the wading/enduring the pain in the fused or permeated state of consciousness.

It is really a great pity to those who do not know the mystery of nature. But a greater pity is to those who have tried to know the nature the most but have not understood her at all. (The once that pity her the most Have never passed her haunted house; Nor Simplified her ghost – 18-20) But the greatest pity goes to those who know her. In other words, those who know her do not know her at all because the nearer they get to her, the farther they become from her. (That those who know her, know her less / The nearer her they get -23-24) Therefore there is no end of knowledge. The nature's mystery only teaches or inspires one not to go on penetrating and searching the knowledge more and more. Dickinson wants to convey the people that man must reverse from his/her post of knowledge my nature and from nature. She further tries to inspire them that they must turn to their own nature to know the nature. It is the awe and pain of their own nature into which they must penetrate and know

the most scalding nature / ghosts in their own selves (Have never passed/Scalded her haunted house, Nor simplified her ghost - 1920) and the best way to know the nature of one's own self is not to know it at all. One must stop the quest of knowledge and reversibly he/she would understand all. Thus, Dickinson wants to convey the idea that one must stop knowing and he/she will know everything. When the self extinguishes, there remains nothing to know anymore. He/she simply is. Good, bad, sorrow, suffering, pleasure and so on mean nothing for him/her. He/she simply is there unrelated from everything. Dickinson is with the Buddha's and Ashtavakra's Silence of the zero point.

In such permeated consciousness of the lost state, the time too ends. When knowledge, knower and known (Jnana, Jnata and Jney) or dance, dancer and danced are all lost, the best art, dance and knowledge appears. The inscrutability of nature's abyss, sea and the human nature can be felt in this void state of the self.

The spiritual knowledge is meant to have the total extinction of the self that does not struggle anymore to seek it but be quiet and silent in him/her after experiencing long, boundless pain and suffering in his/her life. This type of Infinity, eternity and boundless pain and suffering has still furthermore been expressed in her love and sacramental poem *There Came a Day at Summer's Full* too. It depicts the sacramental meeting or marriage of the two lovers in imitation of the Christian Sacramental Ceremony. At first, Dickinson sacramentally presents the apocalyptic marriage with the lamb as described in Revelation. The poem begins from the speaker's thought that this day is only for sense, but instead it is entirely for her. The other participants in the sacrament are divine. They are described as being "permitted to commune". Regarding the Christian sacrament Dickinson writes:

There came a Day at Summer's full,
Entirely for me -
I thought that such were for the Saints,
Where Resurrections - be -

The Sun, as common, went abroad,
The flowers, accustomed, blew,
As if no soul the solstice passed
That make all things new -

The time was scarce profaned, by speech -
The symbol of a word
Was needless, as at Sacrament,
The Wardrobe, of our Lord -

Each was to each The Sealed Church,
Permitted to commune this - time -
Lest we too awkward show
At Supper of the Lamb.

The Hours slid fast - as Hours will,
Clutched tight, by greedy hands -
So faces on two Decks, look back,
Bound to opposing lands -

And so when all the time had leaked,
Without external sound

Each bound the Other's Crucifix -
We gave no other Bond -

Sufficient Troth, that we shall rise -
Deposed - at length, the Grave -
To that new Marriage,
Justified - through Calvaries - of Love – (J-322)

Using Revelation metaphorically a non-religious kind of love has been further described for the two lovers. They rise from their graves to meet in heaven but the meeting of the two lovers is bound to fail. The time passes massively fast and they look each other's back while sailing different (opposing) lands and thus being separated from each other. In regard to the evil omen of the failure of their meeting she in the fifth stanza writes:

The Hours slid fast -- as Hours will,
Clutched tight, by greedy hands --
So faces on two Decks, look back,
Bound to opposing lands - (J-322)

As their meeting for the union failed, they bind one other's crucifixes. In other words, they had no other way than to separate from each other and to suffer the loss. In regard to their frustration of meeting she writes:

And so when all the time had leaked,
Without external sound
Each bound the Other's Crucifix --
We gave no other Bond -- (J-322)

In the pivotal final stanza, their suffering of love becomes too intense when they wish to resurrect or rise from their graves and meet each other again in heaven for a new marriage that is filtered and chosen (justified) through those suffering (cavalries) of love. Regarding the solemn marriage in heaven she in the last stanza further writes:

Sufficient troth, that we shall rise --
Deposed -- at length, the Grave --
To that new Marriage,
Justified -- through Calvaries of Love -- (J-322)

The two images of the face on two decks (ships) bound to opposing lands and each bound to other's crucifixes indicate the death of the love, lovers and loved. Instead of the summer's full (of Sun) and flowers or the promise of the day full of love and enjoyment, there is a boundless sea of separation and suffering. Crucifix indicates the end of their worldly love that desperately tries to seek the mystical marriage in heaven. In other words, she clearly seems to stop her quest of the earthly love. The real knowledge is in being quiet and silent than to mourn over the love. (We gave no other Bond –24) The poet too seems to be quiet and silent in her self and does not seek the success of her love any more on the earth.

This gained her the eternal life. She seems to be redeemed like the sacramental saints. In short, in the state of renunciation and crucifixion (of love and life) one is greatly abrogated, permeated and, hence, outside time. There shall be time no longer in the eternal marriage without marriage that she does here.

The notion of timelessness or the Infinity of time that leads to the Silence and eternal life has been portrayed in many of her poems. Time stands as the foe to

Dickinson. It does not heal her pain and sufferings of life but increases them all the more. As a result, the time appears to be the Infinity to her. And the Infinity of time tests her trouble. Standing long in the test of the troubles finally leads her to the Infinity of Silence and eternity.

Dickinson, thus, is of the view that the time does not assuage or heal. Rather it is the test of trouble. Her own life shows that she was un-assuaged and suffered an infinite and convulsive pain throughout. Her unhealed and infinite pain and suffering in love has been depicted in the form of the eternal marriage after her death in heaven in her poem *They Leave us with the Infinite*. Regarding the assurance of her union with her lover in eternity Dickinson writes:

They leave us with the Infinite.

But He - is not a man -

His fingers are the size of fists -

His fists, the size of men -

And whom he foundeth, with his Arm

As Himmaleh, shall stand -

Gibraltar's Everlasting Shoe

Poised lightly on his Hand,

So trust him, Comrade -

You for you, and I, for you and - me

Eternity is ample,

And quick enough, if true. (J-350)

The Infinity is someone. But He is not a man. His fingers are of the size of fist and his fists are of the size of men. And the agony she suffered in love surpasses and looks infinite to her. In other words, surpassing of the sorrow and sufferings is the Infinity. She is left with the Infinity from which she is all assured that her agonized state will come to an end and she will finally have her union with her master in eternity after her death.

The suffering from some irrecoverable loss leads one to the infinity. The idea of the infinity from some irrecoverable loss has been depicted with a great clarity and precision still in her poem *Satisfaction - is the Agent* too. Satisfaction is the agent of satiety. But the want or the suffering is the agent or the representative of the infinity. The possession of something is really the source of joy. But as soon as it is possessed, it becomes the matter of past. The contentment of immortality comes only from some anomalous and dark frustrating forces of life. Regarding the infinity that results from some anomalous, dark and awful forces Dickinson writes:

Satisfaction - is the Agent

Of Satiety -

Want - a quiet Commissary

For Infinity -

To possess, is past the instant

We achieve the Joy -

Immortality contented

Were Anomaly – (J-1036)

Surpassing of the suffering from some irrecoverable loss is the Infinity. The idea of the infinity has furthermore been depicted with a greater clarity and precision in her poem *The Life we have is very Great* too. When the light of suffering surpasses, then it is infinite. Regarding the Infinity as the surpassing state of suffering Dickinson writes:

The Life we have is very great.

The Life that we shall see

Surpasses it, we know, because

It is Infinity.

when all space has been beheld

And all Dominion shown

The smallest Human Heart's extent

Reduces it to none.(J-1162)

The life we shall see surpasses it, we know, because it is Infinity. In the moment of Infinity, the self extinguishes. All hopes, desires are reduced to nothing. This empty state of the self is infinity. (But when all space has been beheld, And all Dominion shown, The smallest Human Heart's extent, Reduces it to none) In short, the infinity is the surpassing state of the sufferings from some irrecoverable loss in which the self extinguishes.

The immortality or the infinity belongs to the realm of timelessness. Regarding the infinity as timeless Glenn Hughes in his essay *Emily Dickinson and the Unknown god – 2 states*:

“Immortality” and the “Infinite” are the symbols for a divine beyond – a dimension of timeless meaning transcending anything we can experience or know in consciousness. She makes clear in many poems that we can never truly claim to possess or know it from within our situation in the ‘in-between’. (2/J-984)

Infinity is the result of the extinction of self. The idea of infinity has furthermore been depicted with a greater clarity and precision in her poem *Struck, I was, not yet by Lightning* too. She is struck, maimed and robbed not by lightening or any other persons. It is her own deep passion of love for her loved master that torn all her mansion off. Regarding the factors that struck her heart she writes:

Struck, was I, nor yet by Lightning -

Lightning - lets away

Power to perceive His Process

With Vitality -

Maimed - was I - yet not by Venture -

Stone of Stolid Boy -

Nor a Sportsman's Peradventure -

Who mine Enemy?

Robbed - was I - intact to Bandit -

All my Mansion torn -

Sun - withdrawn to Recognition -

Furthest shining - done -

Yet was not the foe - of any -
Not the smallest Bird
In the nearest Orchard dwelling -
Be of Me - afraid -

Most - I love the Cause that slew Me -
Often as I die
It's beloved Recognition
Holds a Sun on Me -

Best - at Setting - as is Nature's -
Neither witnessed Rise
Till the infinite Aurora
In the Other's Eyes – (J-925)

She is greatly struck, maimed and robbed in her life. But it is not the lightening that struck her. It is also not the venture of the stone of the stolid boy that maimed her heart. It is also not the bandit who robbed her. Rather, it is the intense fit of love for her loved one that struck and torn off her whole being. (Most - I love the Cause that slew Me -Often as I die) It is only the beloved's recognition or acceptance that can recover her from being struck. (It's beloved Recognition, Holds a Sun on Me -) Her life has set down and will never rise till she is accepted by her beloved who has become so infinite to her. (Best - at Setting - as is Nature's - Neither witnessed Rise, Till the infinite Aurora, In the Other's Eyes –) In short, the emphasis is on the extinction of her self that looks so infinite to her.

Infinity is the ceaseless, reach less and never rising state of the sun of hope of recognition or acceptance by her beloved. (It's beloved Recognition, Holds a Sun on Me -) The idea of infinity as ceaseless and never ending guest has been depicted with still greater clarity in her poem *The Infinite a Sudden Guest* too. The infinite is a stupendous comer (guest) in the life which never goes away from her life. Regarding the deep settled stupendous guest, infinity Dickinson writes:

The Infinite a sudden Guest
Has been assumed to be -
But how can that stupendous come
Which never went away? (J-1309)

The Infinity as sudden stupendous and awful looking guest resides deeply and never goes away from the heart of its host that finally itself is displaced somewhere in the pursuit of eternal union with its loved one in heaven. Silence is often understood as empty of the mind. The mindlessness and the ego-less-ness are viewed as the means of reaching to the silence. Dickinson also views the silence in the same way as mindlessness and ego-less-ness. But the silence is Infinity too which says nothing but says the most that is, a never reaching goal due to the unaware or unfamiliar of it or for some other reasons. The notion of silence as Infinity has been depicted in her poem *Silence is All we Dread* too. In regard to her notion of silence as infinity and she writes:

Silence is all we dread.
There's Ransom in a Voice -
But Silence is Infinity.
Himself have not a face. (J-1251)

The silence of God is dreadful to many people as they are unaware of this situation or for it is inscrutable to them. There is silence or no sound at all there. (There's Ransom in a Voice -) It has no face, no form, nothing. (Himself have not a face) This faceless, shapeless and soundless silence is really dreadful to them. Hence it is the Infinity.

Silence looks really dreadful and Infinity to many people. But to the person who can contract his pain and sufferings in the permeated state of consciousness, silence does not look dreadful. In other words, when the awful and painful self-extinguishes, then it results in silence. Moreover, there is extinction of self and with it the sorrow or sufferings all are contracted with the contraction of time in the fused or permeated state of consciousness. The silence does not appear dreadful and infinite. However, the Silence is dreadful and infinite to Dickinson. She dreads it. The God is an absentee in her understanding. Therefore, she even thinks that immortality is impossible to gain in afterlife in heaven. The salvation or quietness after death is too expensive or too far off thing. (in Death's stiff stare – J-338)

Silence is conflicting or dreadful. It is Infinity. In her poem *I Know That God Exists* silence has been furthermore depicted with a greater clarity as Infinity. God exists somewhere in Silence. Holding His rare life from the people He has laid an ambush on their path to him and wishes them to seek Him in some surprising ways. But she seems to disbelieve in this play of God. It is too piercing to the heart. It is too expensive and too far away from her. Regarding the God or His silence as Infinity Dickinson writes:

I know that He exists.

Somewhere - in silence -

He has hid his rare life
From our gross eyes.

'Tis an instant's play -
'Tis a fond Ambush -
Just to make Bliss
Earn her own surprise!

But - should the play
Prove piercing earnest -
Should the glee - glaze -
In Death's - stiff - stare -

Would not the fun
Look too expensive!
Would not the jest -
Have crawled too far! (J-338)

God exists somewhere in silence. He has hidden his rare self from the people. The hidden god has laid ambush for the benevolent purpose of providing eternal bliss to the people (Just to make Bliss) and wishes them to seek Him in some surprising ways. (Earn her own surprise!) But the poet disbelieves in this game of God. It seems to her that it (the play or her search) may prove piercing. (But - should the play, Prove piercing earnest -) The pleasure of the game looks terrible. In death's stiff condition the glee cannot be felt. Now the play of God looks too expensive. (Would not the fun, Look too expensive!) At the same time, God seems to have gone far beyond her reach. (Would not the jest - Have crawled too far!) Moreover, the immortality seems

to be impossible to her. After the death the people (Meek members J-216) cannot see and feel the silence of God. (In Death's stiff stare) Therefore the silence of God is Infinity only to them. Instead of getting the silence in afterlife, it can be realized through the endurance of sufferings or the ambush laid by God in his/her path in this very life. By diffusing the ambush or the sufferings through endurance he/she can feel the silence within himself/herself. But the silence as inscrutable to many people for the God is an absentee that cannot be reached. In short, God is too far away from human reach. He exists but is silence and hidden. Therefore, the poet had no trust in His rarity and the idea of faith is deceptive only for her.

The blessed silence is felt in the very inner self of a person himself. It abides within the self of the person in a certain state of consciousness. In the sorrows and sufferings of the long past states of consciousness are endured, then they fuse (melt) in the present state of consciousness. The change of the fusion of sorrow and sufferings of the long past states into the present consciousness through the endurance is the very blessed moment of silence and reducibly freedom felt within the self (TFW – 209-216; 130-133). The blessed moment of Silence within the self that endures has been depicted very elegantly in her poem *There is no Silence in the Earth – so Silent*. The silence is endurance of the pains and sufferings of the long past states of consciousness that fuse into the present state of consciousness and never haunt in her mind again. In regard to her silence of the long and enduring past permeated in her present consciousness she writes:

There is no Silence in the Earth - so silent

As that endured

Which uttered, would discourage Nature

And haunt the World – (J-1004)

In the permeated state of consciousness, the self extinguishes. Then the poignantly felt sorrows and suffering become contracted with the contraction of time in that extinguished moment of the self. (J-967) The contraction of time through the endurance of sufferings of the long past in the present consciousness is the timeless silence, freedom, creation, maturation and other evolutions felt within the self of Dickinson herself.

In this state of the blessed silence realized within the self, nothing haunts in the mind. No sorrow and sufferings haunts in the recurring ways. (Which uttered, would discourage Nature, And haunt the World–) In other words, silence is the blessed moment of the contraction of time in the permeated moment of consciousness. Unendured and uttered signs or things of life are just ignorance. They always haunt in life. Therefore, the Infinity of silence reverses into the blessed silence that is infinite too felt within the self.

Endurance of the pain leads one to the permeated condition of the self in which the one comes to the eternal state of silence. The silence is more beautiful than the uttered words or the words that say one in the happy or beautiful way. The silence that is felt by enduring in the heart is real, soothing and comforting to the tortured mind. Uttered or said objects are logically good. Yet they are depressing and paltry. The silence that soothes and comforts to the heart has further been depicted with a great clarity and precision in the poem *The Words the Happy say* too. The words convey ideas that are good. Yet they can lead to the infinity as there is no end of the search or conveyance of the ideas by the words. On the other hand, the silence that is

felt within the inner heart in the permeated moment of consciousness or in the heart that has element of blank is beautiful and soothing. Regarding the silence as beautiful or soothing Dickinson writes:

The words the happy say
Are paltry melody
But those the silent feel
Are beautiful – (1750)

The words are dead when they are said. But the words by which the silence is felt within the heart are really beautiful. The wordless or spelt less words felt within the heart are soothing the long enduring heart. There is the state of the personless in the pure silence where one simply is without change, without movement of any kind. No sorrow or sufferings, no life no death nothing exist there (To neighborhoods of pause- J-1159) but silence within or 'is'.

The non-existent state of the self is the state of the silence because the person simply is there and nothing more. Just to live is enough. The silence as in the non-existent state of self in which the person or the thing simply has been depicted in her poem *Beauty - be not Caused - It Is* - too. Beauty simply is. If one tries to grasp the beauty or the love that he/she desires the most, he/she is sure to lose it. On the other hand, if he/she is deprived of the beauty or the most loved one, he/she will always have it. Regarding the beauty of the frustrated or awful state of life Dickinson writes:

Beauty - be not caused - It Is -
Chase it, and it ceases -
Chase it not, and it abides –
Overtake the Creases

In the Meadow - when the Wind
Runs his fingers thro' it -
Deity will see to it
That You never do it – (J-516)

Beauty is not to be touched or grasped but it is to see. An observation of the natural beauty of grass in the meadow tossed by the wind can be eye-eluding. The image of the wind that runs his fingers through it can lead one to the world of a lover who runs his finger through the hair of his beloved. On the other hand, the realization of beauty within the self is more pleasing and soothing to the tortured heart. The one who lives in awe will always have his/her loved one though he/she will not have him/her in objective or physical way. (Chase it not, and it abides) In the state of such timeless beauty, the self extinguishes and he/she endures all his/her awes of the long past conscious states that fuse in the present conscious state of mind. Then the person simply is there and nothing more. The realization of this state of the mere living as 'is' is the timeless beauty and silence within the self.

The time expands in the awful state of mind. But reversibly it ends in the fused state of the long and enduring awes of the past into the present conscious state of mind. The end of time of the merely living state 'is' is the pure silence of the inner heart.

Beauty is the devoid state of 'is' only. In other words, the beauty simply is. It is within oneself. And it is the awe through which one can reach the nectar of beauty only. The long endurance of the past awe creates beauty within the self. In short, the beauty lies in the self-awareness of the heart in the devoid/empty state of the self that endures.

In the state of the transcendental knowledge one knows and does not know yet. The knowledge is self-awareness and the self-awareness is not the knowledge but the extinction of knowledge. The transcendental knowledge of beauty and Silence has been depicted in her poem *Wonder – is not Precisely Knowing*. Like Plato Dickinson also believes in such transcendental notion of knowledge. In her view, word refers to some knowledge. It is thinking that is based on reasons. Knowledge of certain things based on reasons is not real. In other words, knowing something reasonably is not the higher knowledge. It is not the maturer knowledge of the self. Knowledge is not the matter of gaining more and more information of certain things. The maturer knowledge does not lie in thinking but in feeling. The maturer sister of wonder is the suspense related to feeling of some awe that gives the real delight in life. In regard to the knowledge of wonder and of suspense she writes:

Wonder - is not precisely knowing
And not precisely knowing not -
A beautiful but bleak condition
He has not lived who has not felt -

Suspense - is his maturer Sister -
Whether Adult Delight is Pain
Or of itself a new misgiving -
This is the Gnat that mangles men – (J-1331)

The knowledge (knowing) is a wonder. No doubt it is beautiful and delightful. Yet, it is a bleak condition. Yet, he has not lived by such accumulation of knowledge of various kinds because the knowledge does not lie in the knowledge (knowing/gaining) of something but in the very losing of it. Knowledge is not to have

the knowledge of anything at all. In the self-extinction one is empty (devoid) and has no knowledge of anything at all. But is self-conscious only in which he/she simply is and nothing more.

Sorrow and sufferings lead one to the extinction of his/her self through the long endurance. Then the past sorrow and sufferings melt/fuse in the present consciousness through the endurance that gives delight. It is the pure consciousness. This is the pure feeling of self-awareness and self-enlightenment which gives real adult delight (from pain) in its fusion of the self-awareness. This is true living. (He has not lived who has not felt) In short, the wonder of knowledge is beautiful and delightful. Yet, it is a gnat to men. The maturer knowledge lies in the beauty that teaches one to lose oneself and all his knowledge in which the piercing and awful condition extinguishes resulting in the self-awareness. The understanding of the mystery of the suspense of life that to lose oneself is to find himself is the maturer knowledge than the knowledge of the wonder of knowledge of various kinds.

The adult and maturer delight is in the beauty of pain that endures in the permeated state of consciousness. (J-1004/j-1331) In other words, beauty is Infinity and the Infinity is the extinction of self. The idea of the Infinity of beauty as the extinction of self has been depicted with a greater clarity and precision in her poem *Estranged from Beauty – none can be too*. Beauty is Infinity that lies in the cessation (extinction) of the finite self. In regard to the Infinity of beauty Dickinson writes:

Estranged from Beauty - none can be -

For Beauty is Infinity -

And power to be finite ceased

Before Identity was creased – (J-1474)

No one is estranged from the beauty which is Infinity that is, the state of the expansion from the cessation of the finite self. The cessation of the finite self is the infinity which is more beautiful, more delightful and soothing to the tortured heart. In short, the Infinity of beauty is the silence of the mind outside time and space.

Beauty is interchangeably silence which is the Infinity of the cessation of the finite self. One is only self-aware of his/her existence as devoid of everything in this state of life and in the devoid state of self-awareness he/she is only pure consciousness beyond all claims of himself. In other words, one simply is there without the claim of his/her any identity or without movement of any kind. This state of being as 'is' is the state of silence, beauty, truth, freedom and over all of the Samadhi or super consciousness of the mind. The sublimation of beauty, silence and of super consciousness has been depicted in her poem *Have You got a Brook in your little heart*. The brook is primarily a beautiful, small stream that flows peacefully in the heart of the poet in the month of March but dries out in the month of August. In regard to the Infinity of beauty and silence of the brook in the heart Dickinson writes:

Have you got a Brook in your little heart,
Where bashful flowers blow,
And blushing birds go down to drink,
And shadows tremble so -

And nobody knows, so still it flows,
That any brook is there,
And yet your little draught of life
Is daily drunken there -

Why - look out for the little brook in March,
When the rivers overflow,
And the snows come hurrying from the fills,
And the bridges often go -

And *later*, in *August* it may be -
When the meadows parching lie,
Beware, lest this little brook of life,
Some burning noon go dry! (J-136)

The brook is literally a stream where bashful flowers blow; blushing birds go down to drink and shadows tremble so rapturously. The external brook is internalized here as the brook of heart. (Have you got a Brook in your little heart) By the metaphor of the brook the poet shows the condition of human heart. Heart is a place where the stream of thoughts flows in so still, unmoved and quiet manner that time seems to pause and the person or the conscious self is lost in nothingness. (And nobody knows, so still it flows, That any brook is there, And yet your little draught of life, Is daily drunken there -) In short, every day she gets the sensual or the spiritual pleasure of stillness in her heart (so still it flows) where the time is forgetful and her consciousness is fed with the wine/elixir of stillness in her heart without any haunting of the awes that has overpowered her so poignantly in her whole life. (And yet your little draught of life, Is daily drunken there -) In the taste of the elixir of the stillness in her heart she is quiet and lost spiritually in her world of thought and beauty for some time. (Why - look out for the little brook in March, When the rivers overflow, And the snows come hurrying from the fills, And the bridges often go -) But her brook of the heart goes dry in the month of August. For shorter time only she has the pleasure

of the stillness of the little brook of life. In other words, the pleasure of stillness of heart is felt for the short time only by her. In the sex this timeless peace and pleasure of stillness is felt for a very short time only. For the literary writers it is felt for a longer time. In short, the Samadhi or the silence of the super consciousness is felt for some longer time only by the literary writers and poets. It is not permanent silence like the super consciousness of the Buddha, Vivekananda and Ram Krishna Paramahansa and so on. Therefore, the poet's brook that is little goes dry. She temporarily haunts back to her world awe from the daily stillness or Silence and warns (Beware, lest this little brook of life – Some burning noon go dry (And *later*, in *August* it may be - When the meadows parching lie, Beware, lest this little brook of life, Some burning noon go dry!)

Beauty is the Infinity of the super consciousness for Dickinson in which she simply feels her self as is in the state of her silence. Such transcendental beauty does not belong to the intellectual communicative world of words. Beauty cannot be stated in the words. No person can express the Infinity of beauty in the words for he/she has himself to gain the state of Infinity. In other words, he has to die spiritually after suffering anguished and convulsive pain. In death's still condition he/she has to hear the unheard, unknown and inscrutable within the self. Beauty is listening to the unheard within the self without speaking or without being a person. The beauty of the Infinity of the unheard, unknown and inscrutable has been depicted in her poem *To tell the Beauty would decrease* too. The beauty is wordless. To express it in word is the failure only because it belongs to the introspective world of the self. In regard to the transcendental silence of beauty Dickinson writes:

To tell the Beauty would decrease

To state the spell demean

There is a syllable-less Sea

Of which it is the sign

My will endeavors for it's word

And fails, but entertains

A Rapture as of Legacies -

Of introspective mines -

To tell the beauty in words is decreasing its worth. Stating it in any way of words is demeaning the beauty only. It is introspectively the infinity of the consciousness. (There is a syllable-less Sea-3 / A Rapture as of Legacies - Of introspective mines -9-10) In other words, beauty or divinity is unheard, unknown and inscrutable and the unheard and inscrutable is heard/listened only by being unheard too. Listening to the unheard, inscrutable and shapeless (guest of) Infinity one too will have to be evolved to the Infinity of his/her consciousness. In short, the harmonious music of the Infinity of the silence of God can be listened only by the Infinity of consciousness too.

Beauty is listening to the silence of the Infinity within oneself (Of introspective mines-) by (having) the Infinity of consciousness of self too. In other words, within oneself he/she can listen to the silence of Infinity by his/her own Infinity of consciousness of self. The opposition of the two Infinities – the subject (listener) and the object (to be listened) or the male and the female – human and divine both are in oneself. (We Two are so alike – J-394) Beauty is the actualization (meeting) of the two Infinities within the self. The Silence of the beauty of the two

Infinites has still been depicted in her poem *We talked with each other about each other* too. When the two selves (we) meet and consummate they feel blessed. It is their talking without talking and listening without speaking. When they were talking and listening to each other the time seemed to have a pause for them. Regarding the timeless listening of the each other of the two Infinites within oneself Dickinson writes:

We talked with each other about each other
Though neither of us spoke -
We were listening to the Second's Races
And the Hoofs of the Clock –

Pausing in Front of our Palsied Faces
Time compassion took -
Arks of Reprieve he offered to us -
Ararats - we took – (J-1473)

The speaker who is plural 'we' has no common friend to talk to her. They are not two different persons. (we Two-looked so alike. J-394) Rather, they are the two Infinites as one (our Palsied Faces) within her own self. In the conscious state of her self the Infinity of her self is meeting (talking) with the Infinity within her self. In short, she is listening to the stillness of her own self. (The stillness of her own little brook in her heart - J-136) At the moment when they are thus engaged in their timeless listening to each other (to the Second's Races) the time ceases to exist for them and the poet goes into the infinity of quietness in her self. (And the Hoofs of the Clock - Pausing in Front of our Palsied Faces-Time compassion took -) In other words, the Infinity of time makes her feel the Infinity of stillness within in her (little)

infinite brook of heart. In her self-conscious state of the mind, she does not have the haunting of awe anymore but is quiet and still without any thinking of her mind in any projections of good-bad, sad and so on. she is a pure consciousness only. Day, night, life, birth, death and eternity all are left far behind her. She simply is and witnesses them all passing from the screen of her mind.

Silence is the cessation of knowledge of the self and of the time too. In other words, there is the state of a complete “pause” of all the things like the knowledge, the self and the time and so on. One is not in the state of any knowledge on the attainment of Silence. (To Neighborhoods of Pause, Here was no notice – No Dissent – No universe – No laws – 2-4) Even all periods are exhaled (ceased to exist) in the state of the attainment of silence. The notion of the Infinity of Silence has more powerfully been exposed in her poem *Great Street of Silence Led away* too. The Infinity of time leads to the silence, eternity and timelessness. All epochs or the passing periods are unperturbed or ineffective upon this eternal time. Clocks for morning and church bells for night are nothing more than the roaring or peaceful alarm and the calendar is only like overturning the memories (Gopal Krishna Gandhi). In other words, the eternity is timeless. It is without epochs or periods. There is only the spatiality of streets or neighborhoods of pause. Regarding the Infinity of time and silence Dickinson writes:

Great Streets of silence led away

To Neighborhoods of Pause --

Here was no Notice -- no Dissent

No Universe -- no laws --

By Clocks, 'twas Morning, and for Night

The Bells at Distance called --

But Epoch had no basis here

For Period exhaled. (J-1159)

Like Ashtavakra, Dickinson also believes that on attainment of the silence self-extinguishes for her. And then there is no notice, no descent, no assent, no universe, no laws, no body, no present, no past and even no zero, nothing. Everything is in the state of pause and imperturbed-ness. In short, there are the bells of morning and evening; but time has no place here as eternity is unperturbed from it. In short, the silence is the Infinity of the time and the Infinity of the time is interchangeably the silence beyond the time and the space.

Time is reversely timelessness and eternity in the permeated state of consciousness. And the time and the timelessness or the eternity stands in the opposite pole of each other. In the permeated state of consciousness, the time simply reverses into the timelessness, Infinity, eternity and silence and so on. In other words, in time Dickinson sees her timelessness, eternity, the Infinity of it and silence. The notion of time that reverses into the timelessness, eternity and silence has furthermore been exposed in her poem *You Constituted Time* too. In the awe she sees her silence. Like a creative artist, she is able to see something divine in awesome, bad and other negative forms and ugliness in the good, eternal and divine things. God constituted the time.

But the time created by the God is ugly for Dickinson for it imprisons her mind in it. To be imprisoned in time is meant to suffer convulsive pain only. God constituted the time. But in the ugly looking time Dickinson saw its Infinity and her extensity. God made time and she sees timelessness in it. (You constituted time – I deemed eternity – 1-2) Had the God not removed her beloved from her life that scalded her and scalded her throughout her life, she would not have seen the divine in the monster of time and the monster in divine. In other words, if she had been united

with her lovers, she would not have passed so piercing and convulsive pain in her life. God fatefully removed her lovers from her life that threw her in the great time of convulsive pain (Absolute removed – The Relative away- 5-6). It is the very convulsive pain of her life from which she escapes by contracting the time through the extinction of her self in the permeated moment of her consciousness (pain contracts the time – 5/J-967) and it is her eternity and Infinity. Time is eternity for her. It is the gate of eternity for her. In short, God made time in ugly form. Dickinson transforms the time into the timelessness and sublimity. Time is an imprisonment in which the mind of man including the whole universe is trapped. She kills/diminishes the time, her great foe and goes beyond it. The time scalds her only in its trap. Dickinson reverses the ugly wheel of time towards eternity, Infinity and silence. Regarding the time deeming eternity and silence she writes:

You constituted Time --
I deemed Eternity
A Revelation of Yourself --
'Twas therefore Deity

The Absolute -- removed
The Relative away --
That I unto Himself adjust
My slow idolatry – (J-765)

Dickinson sees God as omnipotent, absolute, cruel and jealous. And she feels more saturated into what she calls relative. In other words, the earthly lover is dearer to her than the absolute and jealous deity. In her poem “I can’t live with you” also, she has expressed the same idea that her whole soul is more inclined and submissive

to her lover than the sordid excellence of paradise. She cannot be resurrected with him. Yet her soul is unquiet for him to be united with and she is not so much willing to serve heaven (nor could I rise with you because your face would put out Jesus- 21-22). She is unwilling to serve heaven (because – you saturated sight and I had no more eyes sordid excellent as paradise – stanzas 6/9). Therefore, eternity for Dickinson is the revelation of the lovers. There is divinity for her in her return to the earthly love.

Relative or time bound aspect (of love, lover) is her true worship than the Absolute (God). K. Pramilla Sastry, in her work “Space-Time Continuum” also says in this context that the object of Dickinson’s worship is just a facet of time to which she wants to impart divinity. The object of the earthly love is implicit and relative in time bound aspect (p-161). In short, for Dickinson heaven is only a sordid eye and she prefers to see love, lovers and being loved in the (earthly circumference than in the center where the Christians posit their God.

Earthly love and her pining for her love and lover throughout her life led her to the great transformation of her self. She escapes from the great prison cell of time that scalded her only and attains the blessed Infinity of silence beyond time and space in the earthly circumference than in the center where the Christians posit their God.

Circumference is a double metaphor which signifies extension and limit. For Dickinson, the circumference is a concept to describe the awe and sublime. The sublime, in turn, is the element of fear or terror mingled with aesthetic perception. According to Gelpi, the circumference comes to serve as a complex symbol for those disrupted moments when in some sense time transcends time. Circumference signifies

ecstasy in its expensiveness, in its self-contained wholeness (122-123). It is an indispensable defense perimeter which separates man from God (Gelpi).

Dickinson describes her personal spiritual quest to Higginson in July 1862; “My business is Circumference” (L-268). In another of her letters to him, she further suggests that poetry is the engagement with the “Circumference” (L-412).

Circumference is neither the center nor the outside, but the field bounded closely on the outside.

Ralph Emerson insists in his essay “Circles” that there is no outside, no enclosing wall, and no circumference to us. He in his *Essay- 10* has described his concept of the circle whose center is everywhere and the circumference whose center is nowhere. Regarding his notion of the center and the circumference he states:

The eye is the first circle; the horizon which it forms is the second; and throughout nature this primary figure is repeated without end. It is the highest emblem in the cipher of the world. St. Augustine described the nature of God as a circle whose center was everywhere and its circumference nowhere (2).

In the same essay, he further clarifies the circles and the life of man as a self-evolving circle in the following ways:

The life of man is a self-evolving circle, which, from ring imperceptively small rushes on all sides outside to new and larger circles, and that without end. The extent to which this generation of circles, wheel without wheel, will go, depends on force or truth of the individual self (10).

Dissenting from Emerson's idea of 'circles', Dickinson insists that "circumference" is neither the center nor the outside, but the field bounded closely on the outside. In her view, circumference cannot exist without a boundary that separates it from outside. In other words, circumference is a space between inside and outside from which one must try to escape or go beyond it in the future and see the clue of divinity in there. The notion of circumference as the conflict between the inside and the outside with the possibility of escaping from them in the future has been precisely depicted in her poem *My Cocoons Tightens – Colors tease*. A hatching butterfly is trying to fly towards the outside world. Regarding her idea of circumference Dickinson writes:

My Cocoon tightens -- Colors tease --

I'm feeling for the Air --

A dim capacity for Wings

Demeans the Dress I wear --

A power of Butterfly must be --

The Aptitude to fly

Meadows of Majesty implies

And easy Sweeps of Sky --

So I must baffle at the Hint

And cipher at the Sign

And make much blunder, if at least

I take the clue divine – (J-1099)

The butterfly's attempt to fly outside world is the circumferential attempt to escape the circle of time. From the very attempt of the flying butterfly that is trying to

fly towards the outside world Dickinson too feels the same majestic power to fly beyond the time to eternity or to the timelessness.

Dickinson's concept of circumference has further been explained by Cynthia Griffin Wolff. Regarding Dickinson's notion of circumference, she in her *Emily Dickinson* explains: "that immediate leap into God is impossible. The poet must go back to earth; the human experience of pain and suffering and work out from there towards divine reality" (195). C.G. Wolff further suggests that the poet like Dickinson can leap into the God's world that separates the finite world from His realm of infinity and eternity:

But the poet can leap into the God's realm so long as God cares to demand our obedience and worship, he is ensnared in the very design that seems to separate the finite world from His infinity and eternity. Not only can the poet face God, Wolff argues, in so far as she can locate the crucial areas where God's majesty requires mankind's co-operation, the poet can accomplish something the Bible does not: she reposes language using it to expose God's tyranny. (195)

Dickinson's idea of circumference is explained in the same way by Richard B. Sewall also. He in *his The Life of Emily Dickinson* suggests: "that Dickinson uses the word – circumference to satisfy the bold expansion and awesome achievement" (663).

Circumference expresses the sublime and awful condition of her life. Harold Bloom also describes Dickinson's view of circumference in a sharp contrast to Emerson's ideology of circle. The circumference is a concept of Dickinson to express her idea of the sublime and awful condition of her life. In other words, circumference is the means express her concept of infinite in the finite way. While expressing her

belief of the sacramental and the love of eternity, she always returns to the earthly love that seems to end in deep anguish and frustration. To express her such sublime view of consciousness she has used the concept of the circumference

Regarding his view of the circumference of Emily Dickinson he in his *Emily Dickinson* states:

My Business is Circumference—” she famously wrote to Higginson, to whom, not less famously, she described herself as “the only Kangaroo among the Beauty.” When she wrote, to another correspondent, that “The Bible dealt with the Center, not with the Circumference—,” she would have been aware that the terms were Emerson’s, and that Emerson also dealt only with the Central, in the hope of the Central Man who would come. Clearly, “Circumference” is her trope for the Sublime, as consciousness and as achievement or performance. For Shelley, Circumference was a Spenserian cynosure, a Gardens of Adonis vision, while for Emerson it was no part of us, or only another challenge to be overcome by the Central, by the Self-Reliant Man.

If the Bible’s concern is Center, not Circumference, it cannot be because the Bible does not quest for the Sublime. If Circumference or Dickinson is the bride of Awe or of the authority of Judge Lord, then Awe too somehow had to be detached from the Center. (5)

The circumference for Dickinson is something like sublime which has the element of terror and awesomeness. The notion of circumference as the sublimity of terror and awe has further been depicted with a greater clarity and precision in her *Circumference thou Bride of Awe* too. She warns her personified circumferential bride

of awe (of time) not to possess anyone and scald him/her to the extent of his/her living death because possessing anyone in such agonizing way she too will be possessed by the one who too covets to be the bride of awe like she herself is. In regard to her defying view of circumference she states:

Circumference thou Bride of Awe
Possessing thou shalt be
Possessed by every hallowed Knight
That dares to covet thee (J-1620)

Defying the circumferential bride of awe Dickinson warns her (The circumferential bride of awe) that she (the bride) will be possessed and subdued if she (the bride) tries to possess anyone like her (possessing thou shalt be possessed by every hallowed knight – 2-3). In other words, if she (the bride of awe) tries to intensify her awe and scald her (the poet), then she will destroy her by destroying herself for she knows the art of subtracting the pain by subtracting its time through the extinction of her self in the fused or the permeated moment of her consciousness.

More elaborately, pain fuses and contracts the time (5/J-967) through the extinction of self in the permeated moment of consciousness. So the awe and pain cannot scald her any more at all in her timeless state of mind. Her (awe's) intensity of power will be subdued and made less severe. For this, she only needs to pay the price of her death or the extinction of her self (For each beloved hour sharp pittance of years – 5-6/J-125; How can this be except Abdication of Me – of Me – 10-12/J-612; I'll tell you what I paid precisely an existence. The market price – they said – 1-3/J-1725). The time that scalds her will be contracted to the degreeless noon or to the

zero-point. Thus, the circumference is the strategy of escaping beyond the boundary of the conflicting awe.

Dickinson is awe-stricken. In a sharp contrast to Emerson who stands on the “center” and whose ability to perceive, apprehend and name is limitless and ever evolving, she finds herself on the perimeter of the circle and not at the circle in any way. She sees human lot as limited or finite. The human lot is limited and finite. Therefore, the reversal to the earthly circumference is inevitable. The notion of the circumference as the reversal to the earthly finite human lot has furthermore been depicted in her poem *I Saw no Way – The Heavens were Stitched* too. Heaven is stitched or closed. It is quiet inaccessible for the finite and limited human lot. Therefore, the heavenly idea of Infinity and eternity reverses to the earth and she is bound to penetrate the earth and earthly circumference. Regarding her de-centered idea of circumference, she writes:

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 – (J-378)

Dickinson does not find any way of ever evolving circle of self or the eternity as well. The heavens or columns of heaven were all closed and the Earth reverses her Hemispheres. Analogically, Dickinson too finds herself reversing back to the finite

from the infinite or to the zero point or from the circle to the circumference where her identity is lost with the awe-stricken of lost love for her so called earthly lovers.

More elaborately, Dickinson does not reverse from the stitched heaven to the earthly circumference in her love and marriage content but there is the reversal in her treatment of self, pain and time too. They all reverse being fused and contracted in the permeated moment of her consciousness into Infinity and eternity beyond time. Timelessness, Infinity and eternity and so on are the reversal of time in Dickinson's poetry.

The finite human lot or his self-reverses to the earthly circumference resulting in the Infinity, eternity and timelessness. The double nature of circumference – finite limit and infinite extension has still more been depicted with a greater clarity and precision in her poem *The Poets Light but Lamps* too. The poets light their lamps. Though they die (go out), their lights are transformed by the succeeding generations that read them. In other words, they take great inspirations from the vital light or the truth of the poets and, in turn, they disseminate (spread) those lights (as does the sun) or the truth of circumference or the awesomeness of the finite- infinite as the only truth of life for those who are troubled and unquiet. Regarding the dissemination of light of awe among the awesome generation she writes:

The Poets light but Lamps --

Themselves -- go out --

The Wicks they stimulate --

If vital Light

Inhere as do the Suns --

Each Age a Lens

Disseminating their

Circumference – (J-883)

The sun and the heavenly bodies are the expansion of light to the earth. The circumference, Dickinson insists, is the earthly light to the people with the finite self. Through the sublime expression of pain and terror, they separate themselves from the boundary of infinite. In short, it is the sublimity of pain and suffering that is realized as the Infinity which, in turn, becomes the Infinity of self in the permeated moment of consciousness that helps in knowing to the unknown or unknowable or the God.

Circumference is the reversal of the finite human lot to the Infinity of the self, his pain and to the time too that at once make him/her aware of the unknown, unknowable and inscrutable ones. The notion of the circumference as the reversal to the earthly finite human lot from the heavenly one has still been depicted in her poem *Their Height in Heaven Comforts not* too. She sees life limited and finite. She believes in the earthly life of love and ecstasy. Heaven or after life is an infinity, supposed (glimmering frontier) and dream like thing for her which does not please her in any way. Her present consciousness and her earthly love of loss saturate her narrow eyes more than the imperfect and insecure glimmering frontier of the afterlife. Regarding her belief of the finite-infinite or in-between that always flings her back to circumference she states:

Their Height in Heaven Comforts not --

Their Glory -- nought to me --

'Twas best imperfect -- as it was --

I'm finite -- I can't see --

The House of Supposition --

The Glimmering Frontier that
Skirts the Acres of Perhaps --
To Me -- shows insecure --

The Wealth I had -- contented me --
If 'twas a meaner size --
Then I had counted it until
It pleased my narrow Eyes --

Better than larger values --
That show however true --
This timid life of Evidence
Keeps pleading -- "I don't know." (J-696)

Apparently, the bereft soul of Dickinson ever craves for being united with her earthly lovers to whose circumference she is conscious of all the time. She is, thus, permeated into the circumference of 'awful' and sublime life of love and loss.

Dickinson is highly conscious of her finite self permeated into the sublimity of awful circumference. The notion of her reversal to the circumference of the earthly finite self has still been shown in her poem *This Consciousness that is Aware* too. She is consciousness and all aware of the circumferential awfulness or loneliness of her in a more sublime way. Her consciousness is aware of everything from neighbor to sun. And the one who is aware of everything will be the one aware of death and of itself as well. Her consciousness is aware of itself as lonely and bereft. Her soul is more condemned to this discovery and adventure of itself as the awful, lonely creature and nothing more. Regarding the awesome and the loneliness of her consciousness to which she is aware of for most of the time she states:

This Consciousness that is aware
Of Neighbors and the Sun
Will be the one aware of Death
And that itself alone

Is traversing the interval
Experience between
And most profound experiment
Appointed unto Men --

How adequate unto itself
Its properties shall be
Itself unto itself and none
Shall make discovery.

Adventure most unto itself
The Soul condemned to be --
Attended by a single Hound
Its own identity. (J-822)

Dickinson is conscious of death which is expressed in many of her poems on death. She is further more conscious of awful and aloneness. She or her work is permeated with a tormenting awareness of the duality of consciousness – or the self divided between the finite, awful experience of love and loss and the infinite or the ‘center’ or the heaven or the afterlife from where she always reverses to the circumference. The consciousness permeated to the sublime experience of awful vision of life supersedes the salvation where the self gains the eternal height and time is superseded (replaced) by divine love, peace and other ecstasies.

Dickinson is conscious to the sublime experience of the circumferential awful vision of life. The notion of her awareness to the circumferential vision of awareness has still more been described in her *That I did always Love*. She loves but is not saturated enough from it. Love for her is something higher. Earthly love inspires her immortality. Love is life and the life of love has immortality. In other words, one can have the sweet yet somber taste of eternal life through the very earthly love in the awful circumference. If he, her sweet heart, has doubt in her endless love, then he may verify it from the convulsive pain that she has undergone in his love for so long. Her very everlasting but intense suffering in his love is the proof of her love for him. In regard to the proof of her circumferential return to the awful life she states:

That I did always love
I bring thee Proof
That till I loved
I never lived -- Enough --

That I shall love always --
I argue thee
That love is life --
And life hath Immortality --

This -- dost thou doubt -- Sweet --
Then have I
Nothing to show
But Calvary -- (J-549)

Dickinson has an unquiet soul in love. She is made for love and the love is Infinity for her. Her whole being flows towards some deep inaccessible lover by whom she desperately wants to be possessed like the river by the sea. She gives the

outlet of her such irresistible desire of love to be possessed by her lover. Regarding her circumferential return to the earthly love she states:

My River runs to thee --
Blue Sea! Wilt welcome me?
My River wait reply --
Oh Sea -- look graciously --

I'll fetch thee Brooks
From spotted nooks --
Say -- Sea -- Take Me! (J-162)

Her worldly love gains her some eternal, heavenly height. The image of the sea is symbolic of the divine lover, God. But as she ever reverts to the earthly love and lovers, she considers her circumferential love to be life and such life of love is eternal. She is permeated (fused) with the eternity or the immortality. In other words, her love supersedes time, eternity, and immortality.

Dickinson's poems mostly show the earthly reversal from the center of the unknown, unknowable and inscrutable God. Her business is really circumference. Her consciousness is basically aware of death and of aloneness. This has led her to be aware of her finite self from the infinity. The notion of her circumferential belief of the finite-infinite has still been expressed in her poem *There is Solitude of Space* too. In respect to her belief in the finite-infinite she states:

There is a solitude of space
A solitude of sea

A solitude of death, but these
Society shall be

Compared with that profounder site
That polar privacy
A soul admitted to itself --
Finite infinity. (J-1695)

Dickinson ardently believes in the finite-infinite in which reversal from the center to the circumference is inevitable. The de-centered notion of the finite-infinite has still been expressed in her poem *Light enabling Light*. She portrays her finite self with the awful circumference that always contradicts with the infinite or the silence of God. In short the infinity or the God of Him., she ever comes back towards time and looks forward to the God of Him. Regarding her idea of convex and concave she states:

Light -- enabling Light --
The Finite -- furnished
With the Infinite --
Convex -- and Concave Witness --

Back -- toward Time --
And forward --
Toward the God of Him --(J-906)

Through many of her poems, Dickinson clarifies her concept of the finite-infinite. Man is finite. God is infinite and inscrutable. And being the finite man cannot relatively penetrate the infinite, inscrutable God. The human experience of divine is

fragile and tenuous. Her notion of the finite-infinite has still more explicitly been portrayed in her poem *Did our Best Moments Last* too. She believes that the best moments are those in which one gets the divine especially through the fusion of the awfulness in the permeated moment of consciousness. The earthly divine and sublime thoughts supersede the heaven. Regarding her notion of the superseding heaven through awfulness she states:

Did Our Best Moment last --
'Twould supersede the Heaven --
A few -- and they by Risk -- procure --
So this Sort -- are not given --

Except as stimulants -- in
Cases of Despair --
Or Stupor -- The Reserve --
These Heavenly Moments are --

A Grant of the Divine --
That Certain as it Comes --
Withdraws -- and leaves the dazzled Soul

In her unfurnished Rooms (J-393)

Thus the best moments are those that are filled with sublime feelings of awfulness reversing into the Infinity of the Time and the Silence. It can supersede the heaven that equates divinity and eternity. A few people can have the fortune of superseding heaven with a great risk (A Few – and They by Risk – procure – 3/J...). To supersede the heaven by the finite and limited lot of man, one needs to have undergone a great despair, chillness, stupor and letting go (13/J-341; the cases of despair or stupor the reserve – 6-7). The heavenly moments are the grants of the

divine that can soothe the life of a man who has the dazzled soul in his/her unfurnished room. (That certain as it comes – with draws – and lives the dazzled soul; In her unfurnished rooms – 10-11) In short, the best moments of life are reserved only for those who are in deep despair with his/her dazzled soul in his/her unfurnished room (body). Their deep despair contracts the time to the zero degree in endurance through the extinction of their selves in the fused or permeated moments of consciousness and then the despair or the dazzled heart itself becomes less intensified and powerless that cannot scald/dazzle the heart anymore for the soul or the self by that time becomes extinguished and imperturbed one.

Reversal to the earthly circumference is inevitable to know the unknown, unknowable and inscrutable. The notion the finite- infinite that leaves the heart unfurnished (empty) from being superseded to heaven has still been portrayed in her poem *The Soul's Superior Instants* too. The soul's instants or the best moments occur only in the state of being alone. It is the awful consciousness when one leaves all the worldly realities and ascends to some remote height of awfulness which equates immortality or eternity. Regarding her idea of the finite-infinite and the immortality through the awful consciousness she exposes:

The Soul's Superior instants
Occur to Her -- alone --
When friend -- and Earth's occasion
Have infinite withdrawn –

Or She -- Herself -- ascended
To too remote a Height
For lower Recognition

Than Her Omnipotent –

This Mortal Abolition

Is seldom -- but as fair

As Apparition -- subject

To Autocratic Air –

Eternity's disclosure

To favorites -- a few --

Of the Colossal substance

Of Immortality (J-306)

Dickinson describes the moment of supreme transcendence in the life. The soul ascends to a remote height by the few people only who leave their all mean egoism and the desires (when tired – an Earth's occasion – Have infinite withdrawn). At the same time the self must extinguish (This Mortal Abolition - 9) too for ascending the height of the superior instant of heaven or for being superseded to heaven. In other words, divinity is possible only in transcending the self. (This Mortal Abolition -) In the state of the complete nothingness of the self, one can ascend the remote height of eternity. (Of the Colossal substance of Immortality) Man is finite and has certain limitations. Eternity, heaven and God, so on are the Infinity. The Infinity of the super instant of eternity can be realized only by being infinite too through transcending the mortal self. Thus, the Infinity and the void (zero) of the self leads one to the divinity or to the superior height of heaven beyond time and space.

The notion of the finite-infinite is inevitable to come to the superseding instants of the sublimity, eternity and divinity. The notion of the finite-infinite of human lot has furthermore been depicted in her poem *I never Hear that One is Dead*. She emphasizes on her lonely and awful state of life to which she is conscious of

throughout her life that has led her to the realization of finite- infinity of the human lot. Regarding her awful consciousness, she (in the last two stanzas) states:

I never hear that one is dead
Without the chance of Life
Afresh annihilating me
That mightiest Belief,

Too mighty for the Daily mind
That tilling its abyss,
Had Madness, had it once or twice
The yawning Consciousness,

Beliefs are Bandaged, like the Tongue
When Terror were it told
In any Tone commensurate
Would strike us instant Dead

I do not know the man so bold
He dare in lonely Place
That awful stranger Consciousness
Deliberately face – (J-1323)

One is never dead without a chance of life but for such chance of life one must pay its right price that is death or the deadly pain. In other words, the self must extinguish leaving the dazzled soul in the unfurnished (empty) room or body (A fresh annihilating me – that mightiest Belief). He must suffer the pain of life for the superior moment of life. (That awful stranger consciousness- Deliberately face).

Dickinson continues to expose her notion of the finite-infinite of the human lot in many of her poems. In effacement too, she returns to the same consciousness of finite-infinity. The notion of her finite-infinite has been portrayed in her poem *The Face I Carry with Me – Last* too. Unlike the Christian notion of effacing oneself in Jesus and do everything in His name, she puts on the face of her master. Instead of going to heaven, she likes to bear the name of her beloved master in her tongue. It is her better royalty, better rank than being admired in the heaven. In regard to her idea of the finite-infinite she states:

The face I carry with me -- last --
When I go out of Time --
To take my Rank -- by -- in the West --
That face -- will just be thine --

I'll hand it to the Angel --
That -- Sir -- was my Degree --
In Kingdoms -- you have heard the Raised --
Refer to -- possibly.

He'll take it -- scan it -- step aside --
Return -- with such a crown
As Gabriel -- never capered at --
And beg me put it on --

And then -- he'll turn me round and round --
To an admiring sky --
As one that bore her Master's name --
Sufficient Royalty! (J-336)

The earthly love is dearer to her than the love of God. It is the highly permeated state of her consciousness in which she herself claims to have gone out of time. Her salvation is in the earthly love and this has made her go out of time. In short, she believes ardently that the human lot is finite. So he must reverse to the earthly circumference to realize the Infinity of time and eternity within his own consciousness by which only he can be aware of the unknown, unknowable and inscrutable God too.

Her ardent belief of finite -infinity in her earthly lover has furthermore been expressed in her poem *The Soul should always Stand Ajar* too. The door of her soul will always remain open so that he will not have to wait for her or be troubled from her being absent from there. Her heaven paradoxically is “he” who inquires. He sounds like a lover. Regarding her earthly circumference and the finite-infinite she states:

The Soul should always stand ajar
That if the Heaven inquire
He will not be obliged to wait
Or shy of troubling Her (J-1055)

Dickinson furthermore expresses her concept of finite- infinity in the second stanza once again by wearing the face of her lover and thus, turning away from the heavenly God. The soul is the door for the entrance of the heavenly lover in any time. But the host or the poet herself departs from there leaving the soul and the guest alone. Thus, there will indifferently be the guest without the host:

Depart, before the Host have slid
The Bolt unto the Door
To search for the accomplished Guest,
Her Visitor, no more -

The poet's soul stands ajar not for heaven but for her earthly lover. She reverses to the earthly circumference from the infinite center of heaven or God. She shows a highly permeated state of consciousness in this love poem based on her concept of the finite-infinite.

The void and the infinity are the basic features of the concept of zero. Dickinson's poetry widely deals with the void state of herself and the Infinity of her soul. Zero taught her phosphorus that is to go on being inflamed, dazzled, scalded and bereft every moment. The idea of the awful, phosphoric and dazzled nature of herself has been depicted in her poem *The Zeroes – Taught us – Phosphorus*.

Dickinson highlights to learn by what is opposite like the highly inflammable phosphorous from the zero-degree temperature, the fire from ice (glaciers), red from white and vitality from paralysis and from pain or pining away the heaven. She is of the view that suffering alone can lead one to the real realization of immortality, eternity or God. So one must banish oneself from oneself (Me from myself to banish, J- 642) and hear the music of the negative or the opposite in oneself. Regarding her concept of the finite-infinite through opposite or the negative force she states:

The Zeroes -- taught us -- Phosphorous --
We learned to like the Fire
By playing Glaciers -- when a Boy --

And Tinder -- guessed -- by power
Of Opposite -- to balance Odd --
If White -- a Red -- must be!
Paralysis -- our Primer -- dumb --
Unto Vitality! (J-689)

The bedazzlement of heart and dumbness of all kinds are the two aspects of the zero. In other words, the Infinity (of pain) and the Void (extinction of self/ dumbness of all kinds) are the two basic features of the concept of the zero.

To balance the odd one learns from the opposite. From the numb, chill or the zero degree she knew the phosphoric scalding of the heart. The bedazzlement of her heart and the dumbness (emptiness) of all kinds in her self often recur in her poetry. Zero taught her the extreme bedazzlement (phosphorous) or the severe scalding of her heart throughout her life. Such state of the extreme bedazzlement led her to the extinction of her self that reverses to the earthly circumference only from which she realized the infinity of her self in the permeated moment of her consciousness. In short, zero bedazzles her heart like phosphorus endlessly leaving her self devoid or empty making her reversibly aware of the infinity of her soul beyond the time and space in the permeated moment of consciousness.

In art and philosophy, zero is the state of self in which one is eternally lost from the only cherished desire of his/her heart. For Dickinson, zero is the phosphoric bedazzlement and the final extinction of her 'self' that leads her to the consciousness of finite -infinity or eternity, that is, a play of ever pining away and ever peacefulness interwoven in her 'self'.

CHAPTER 4

Zero: The Time and the End of Time in Emily Dickinson's Poetry

From her early tender age Emily Dickinson was surrounded by the black cloud of uncertainty of her common life of peace and pleasure. Since she developed the love for her strange lovers who were of her father's age, she led a disquiet life of recluse and renunciation that can be seen almost in all of her poems. For several times she fell in love with the elderly persons and lost them all one by one. Naturally her all aspirations and desires of self were doomed from that very time. In other words, in love she saw the ending of her self or her interest from life. The end of her dream or worldly desires has been depicted in her poem *My Life Closed Twice before Its Close*. Parting from her loved ones was a great agony (so huge, so hopeless to conceive, parting is all we know of heaven or all we know of hell). The tragic and sad extinction of her self and aspiration has further been described in her poem *I Felt a Funeral, in My Brain*. She has experienced death in life. The numb and still state of self has been revealed by the following images – my mind was going numb; and I and silence and finished knowing them. Her spiritual death in love has further been depicted in her poem *After Great Pain, A Formal Feeling Comes*. She has been rendered to a complete spiritual death or deadly state of mind which is apparent from the following images- The nerve sit ceremonious like tomb, the stiff heart, a wooden way; as freezing person recollects the snow, first chill then stuper, then letting go. In short, Dickinson is the poet of pain and suffering. She has pinned away in love and extinguished in it. In the finite human self, she has experienced the Infinity of pain, of love and loss in the entire part of her life.

Emily Dickinson's Calvinistic and Puritan Upbringing

Emily Dickinson lived and was reared in a society where the Calvinism and other Biblical truths were highly practiced. All her family members were religious there except her. She hardly visited Church in her early life. Later on she completely stopped to visit the Church for it seemed her to be a quite insignificant thing for her salvation. Like Ashtavakra who found his father's practice of the Vedas to be insignificant to attain God or salvation, she also felt the same condition in attaining any God by the practice of the Calvinistic and the Puritan doctrines.

Calvinism is a doctrine based on the teachings of John Calvin. Its fundamental principle is the concept of God as absolutely sovereign. It emphasizes the doctrine of predestination that is the idea that God has already determined whom to save and damn. In other words, God grants salvation only to the chosen or the elected. It is unconditional. He selects a portion of humanity to be saved irrespective of their merits or faith. His election of people is based on His will alone. And the elected ones will never fall away or perish for they are eternally secure and preserved.

Thus, the Calvinism affirms the historic doctrine of the Trinity: God as Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. He is perfect and self-sufficient. Therefore, He is not subject to time and change. He is not reducible, like human beings, to matter or spatial categories either. On the other hand, the human lot is miserable in the Calvinistic terms. According to the Calvinism, each person is spiritually helpless. He/ she cannot choose himself/herself to be saved. Rather he/ she should bow down to the God's mercy and to show his/ her complete faith on Him for his/ her salvation.

Similarly, Puritanism is a belief that advocates greater 'purity' of heart in worship. It emphasizes on personal and group piety. In other words, the Puritans

sought both individual and corporate conformity to the teaching of the Bible, with moral purity and ecclesial purity to the highest level. They further believed that man existed for the glory of God. His first concern in life was to do God's will and so to receive further happiness.

Dickinson sternly rebels against these surrendering doctrines of the Calvinism and the Puritanism in most of her poems. Firstly, she left going to Church in her early teen and did not show much moral support for it any more. She did not even accept any of the five principles of Calvinism: Total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace and perseverance of the saints (TULIP). She even did not like to treat the Bible as true history and the only moral guide for man. She rejected all that made man spiritually helpless and insignificant before the crushing force of God. (Ram ji Lall P- 67). In short, she rejected the Calvinistic rendering of man and woman to the God's will. She believed in the free will of man and woman who can choose to demystify the Calvinistic doctrine of the divine grace and power and finally to express himself/ herself as saved or redeemed by his/her human (finite) quality. In her view, man can express himself/ herself as free by his/ her own quality as she did in most of her poems through the awful circumference. The divine Calvinistic grace of God is an illusion only for her.

As a Puritan also, she showed a great reverence to the Puritan piety. But she ultimately rejected it too. She did not show true conformity to the teaching of the Bible. She did not sing the glory of God as most of the Puritans used to do. Her ultimate concern was to return from the divine, eternal or heavenly salvation or God to the earthly glory of love and lovers. However, it is much clear that she is a term 'in-between'. In other words, she loves both the God of Him and the love and lovers of hers on the earth (7/J-906).

Emily Dickinson's View of Death in her Poetry

Emily Dickinson has taken different notions of death in most of her poems on life, death and immortality. Death is kind and gentle like the courtly lover for her. In most of her major poems, she views death as a mystical force by which she measures and tests her chance of immortality, eternity, heaven, God and so on. She views death also as the objective fact of the end of life. Virginia Oliver considers Dickinson's view of death as the death is but the first as the frame within which Dickinson tests her religion, her faith and her belief through the medium of her poetry. Similarly, Jane Donahue Ebenweigh views Dickinson's view of death as death ultimate form of limitation and transformation.

In her poem *Because I Could not Stop for Death* she firstly views death as a personified courtly lover. He is kind and gentle who gives her ride to eternity. Being overwhelmed in the company of such gentle lover, she feels herself fortunate enough to have her all dream of life fulfilled and likes to live with her loved one ever since in eternity. Soon, she is disillusioned when she finds the death leading her to the very grave. There are some images of the evil omen like he (the setting sun) passed us, the Dews drew quivering and chill, gossamer and gown and so on which are the reminders of her death. She is bound to fail in her reaching to the destined place of eternity or heaven. Dickinson measures her life against death and concludes that the eternity or immortality is impossibility as the Infinity of time appears there in its occurrence. In short, it is a timeless void only.

Death is invisible, mystical and existing. It helps us know life better and in a meaningful way. Such mystical nature of death has been depicted in her poem *I Heard a Fly Buzz*. She hopes of meeting God and being carried to heaven as is seen to the king Arthur after his death by the mythological virgins on the boat. But instead of such grand meeting and the horses' heads (or boat) marching towards eternity with her, she loses all her consciousness - that is, a state of complete spiritual death. She could not see to see anything after being obstructed by the fly at that expected moment of meeting the king (God). In short, once again she feels the chill experience of death and thus, it is death that demystifies her vision of life and the after-life. By death, she finally comes to understand that there is no after life, no eternity but the awe of life only. In short, just after the imposition of the fly buzz she meets her death and finally believes that afterlife is just the Infinity.

In the poem *Behind Me – dips Eternity* also Dickinson measures her quest of immortality and eternity against death and finds that such idea as immortality or eternity is the Infinity only for the finite mind of human beings. Death is drifting between them (eternity behind her and immortality before her-1-2). Death is commonly seen as nightfall. But she sees dawn itself as death. In other words, death dissolves in the dawn of immortality or before the west (sunset) begins. It is the early youth that is overshadowed by the terrors and awesomeness.

Explicitly, death drifting in the sunrise is omnipotent and all powerful in human life of flux and change. And in the world of flux and change, immortality is a continual darkness or maelstrom (whirlpool- 18). In short, Dickinson realizes that death is omnipotent and inevitable in human life and immortality or afterlife is impossibility. Her bitter experience of the impossibility of immortality is vividly presented in her poem *Just Lost, when I was Saved*. Expressing her prolepsis view of

death, she imagines that she is going to heaven to have a vision of immortality but she gets awe-stricken and finds her boat returning safely by the wind blow to the earth-shore. Her wish for immortality or eternity is so strong in her that she still wants to meet her death and have the life of immortality again and again but waiting for such eternity seems to take ages of time to her. Finally, it appears to her that centuries of time pass away but she will have no glimpse of eternity in any time. In short, the idea to reach the eternity is a total impossibility to her.

Dickinson sees death also as the objective fact of the end of life and the mournful sad plight that follows it. In her poem “I Felt A Funeral, In My Brain” she presents the metaphorical objective reality of death. The mourners walk passed the exposed body before the funeral service starts. Their feet tread to and fro incessantly. Then she hears the lifting of the funeral box along with the high sounding bells in the whole space that makes her sense numb. Then the coffin is finally dropped into the grave.

The physical death is the metaphor of the spiritual death. As she sees the physical death and its funeral ceremony, the same sad feeling she experiences in her brain or heart too in her frustration of love. In the tragic end of her love too, she feels the frozen state of being numb. The last line of the second stanza reminds us of the frozen state of spiritual numbness or death.

In another of her poem *After a Great Pain, A Formal Feeling Comes* too the same objective reality of death is presented by Dickinson. On the occasion of death of some near and dear, a formal feeling of sadness comes in the family members. They pass from some ceremonious process of death and their nerves sit ceremonious and silent like tombs. After some pains too, the mind of the person is filled with the sad

formal feeling of death. He/she experiences the same gradual tragic end of chill, frozen and stupor and then the complete end of the spirituality or its cherished desire of love. The loss of love and the pain resulting from it leaves the mind numb and tomb- like.

In deep pain and despair from some irrecoverable loss, Dickinson also sees her spiritual death of mind. Death has given her such chilling and frozen experience of her spiritual life. Like the squeezing of the dying star into the zero point, she also suffers the similar squeezing of her self into the zero point in heart rending manner. (First chill, then stupor, then letting go) In short, the mental state of chillness is the state of death in snow where the time ceases to exist. According to Ram Ji Lall, Dickinson's formal feeling is such that comes after a great pain. It is ironically no feeling at all, only numb rigidness existing outside time and space (120).

Dickinson's Concept of Finite- Infinite in her Poetry

In human life, Dickinson experiences finite-infinite. God is infinitely infinite for her. He is totally measureless, silent, cruel and jealous in her view. In her letter - 780, she writes "we pray to Him and He answers "No". In other letter-790, she writes that talking to God seems "like writing a note to the sky – yearning and reply less". In her poem *Silence is All we Dread* she has expressed her idea of the Infinity very explicitly. Silence is the Infinity or the Absolute. All we dread from it as it turns all indifferent to our all wishes (silence is all we dread, there is ransom in a voice but silence is Infinity, Himself have not a face). Obviously, in Dickinson's treatment, silence is God. In her poem *I know that He exists* too, she expresses the same idea that God exists somewhere in silence. He is hidden and is nowhere (I know that he exists somewhere in silence. He has His rare life from our grossed eyes). Dickinson treats

God as silent, unheard and mystic. She has faith in God. But she considers man's lot as awful and frustrated (our gross eyes, finite- infinite) for which he/she cannot reach the distant, inscrutable God (His rare life). Therefore, the only way for human being is to revert to the circumference of finite-infinite and to have the awful and piercing experience of life in the most formidable and alarming way.

In short, silence is the cessation of the knowledge of the self and of the time. There is a state of a complete 'pause' of all the things like the self, the time, the love, the pain and so on. (Here is no notice, no dissent, no universe. Even all periods are exhaled.)

Dickinson further clarifies that eternity, afterlife or immortality, paradise and heaven are infinitely infinite and the man who has finite limitation of the self is helpless to penetrate such infinitely infinite and inscrutable nature of eternity or immortality. In her poem *Behind Me – dips Eternity* (J-721) she has the same gloomy experience of eternity and immortality (Behind Me – dips Eternity, before me immortality. Myself the term in-between). In between the two miracles she envisions her life as evanescent that simply represents a return to the flux and change. In the world of flux and change, immortality is something like a continuous darkness-a maelstrom (whirlpool) and the life of confusion. In short, she is a term – in between which suggests also the end of time as well as the evanescence existence of human being or the point the endless eternity lying ahead which is in here or nows and not there or in any other center.

Similarly, in the poem *Those Not Live Yet* she unmasks her idea of eternity or the life after as a false notion of Christianity or any other religions. She believes life as a single continuation of the conscious self. The idea of two- life and afterlife is the

false looking notion because those who believe in afterlife or immortality have not lived yet. For her living again is meant to lead a double life. On the contrary, this life is one. It is a part of a single continuity (those not live yet – who doubt to live again. Again is of a twice. But this -- is one--, costume-less consciousness that is he). In the last stanza, she focuses on the pure consciousness which is free from the bondage of body. Behind the consciousness without the costume of body lies the deepest mystery of human life and the thought of after- life/ immortality is an astray only. The consciousness without the costume of body is timeless. She is in the zero point of her costume-less consciousness where time ceases to exist.

Silence is the knowledge of not to have the knowledge of anything at all. It is the state of the total cessation of the knowledge of everything in the mind. As long as one knows something he knows nothing at all. (23-24/J-1400) When he stops knowing, he becomes quiet and silent. And to attain the state of the 'Silence' the self of a man must extinguish and the self cannot extinguish unless he/she suffers anguished pain that scalds and pierces in the heart. In short, Silence is (the filtration of) the awe that is dreadful to most of the people. And the reversal of the awe and the pain is the Silence in Emily Dickinson's poetry. The Silence beyond the self is beyond the time too. The idea of eternal Silence and time has been depicted in many her poems. The poem *There is no Silence in the Earth - so Silent* (J-1004) deals with the theme of the blessed Silence. The Poem *The words the happy Say* (J-1750) also is the example of the blessed Silence that is realized within one's own heart. The poem *Have you got a Brook in your little Heart* (J-136) is a superb example of the blessed Silence.

In her poem *Silence is All we Dread* she has depicted silence as the Infinity. Silence is the Infinity or the Absolute. We all dread from it because it is different to our all wishes. Silence of God is the Infinity for Dickinson. She prays to him and He turns deaf ears to her. His answer is “No”. In her letter 780, she writes – “We pray to Him and He answers “No”. In another of her letter (790), she writes that talking to God seems “like writing a note to the sky – yearning and reply less”. The dreadful Silence of God is inscrutable, faceless and beyond human perception which seems to go on forever.

Love is life and the life has the eternity. In this triangle of love, life and eternity, God exists somewhere ‘in Silence’. He is hidden and is nowhere. Her bereft and the awe-stricken eyes cannot see Him. His/her misery extends infinitely by the ambush laid by the God who is fond of us and wants us to know the mystery of our life through the piercing experience of life in such terrific presence of the ambush and come over the circumference with the sublime effect of eternal bliss. The silent, unheard and mystic nature of God is expressed in her poem *I Know that He exists too* (J-338).

Apparently, Dickinson has faith in God. But man’s lot is awful and frustrated – (our gross eyes) and he/she has certain lacking or inability to reach the distant inscrutable God (His rare life). Therefore, the only way for human being is to revert to the circumference where the time stops with the silence felt in ambush laid by the God in silence. And the unheard (silence) can be circumferentially heard by being unheard (silent)too.

In the same pace, in her poem *Safe in their Alabaster Chambers* too, Dickinson seems to be very stern in her view towards immortality or afterlife. She

sees that there is no assurance of immortality to the meek members of the Resurrection. Though they are lying safe in their eternal sleep in the fine wrought graves (Rafter of satin and Roof of stone), and are, thus, untouched/unaware of all worldly realities. Their souls have disappeared like the soundless dots disappearing on a disc of snow. Dickinson feels a shock only in realizing this false hope of immortality of the meek members of Resurrection (Ah, what sagacity perished here. Diadem's, drop and Doges – surrender – soundless as dots – on a Disc of snow, J - 216). The Emerson's transcendental concept of death as the individual soul merging with the Over-Soul too seems to be too chill and cheerless to her in this context. The religious (Biblical) conviction of Resurrection or soul's serene awaiting the last judgment and reunion with their glorified bodies is superficiality only. In short, the idea of eternity is a timeless Infinity only.

Likewise, in her poem *I Cannot Live with You* she considers paradise as insipid and sordid. She has no interest in God or in His Paradise. She does not seek Paradise because she is highly saturated from her earthly lovers and has no more eyes for the insipid/sordid excellence as paradise. In other words, while measuring her love and lover against eternity she finds her love's superiority and the heaven as an undesirable, secondary thing for her. But this ground of love returning to the earthly circumference from the infinite heavenly love reverses too. She does not like to live with him. (I cannot live with you-) This reversal makes her love infinite and timeless by contracting it along with the pain she got from his separation that contracted the time too to the zero degree. In short, by not living with him she contracts the time to the zero degree or infinitely by her finite pain in the fused or permeated moment of consciousness. Thus by contracting the time, she became free from the imprisonment

of her mind in time. Life is not a journey through the time for Dickinson. Rather it is a journey beyond time for her.

Emily Dickinson: Not a True Mystic

On seeing Emily Dickinson as a mystic poet, one finds that she is mystically inclined but does not like to be a true mystic. Mysticism involves a deep concern for immortality, God, heaven, salvation and so on. Mysticism also means a spiritual marriage with God. It is the yearning for the unity with the One (God – the Brahman). Dickinson's poetry has occupied a great length of space in this mystic fiction of the union with the Over-soul/God. But she does not feel easy and at home in being united with the great Over-soul. In almost all of her major poems, there is a reversal from the eternity, immortality or God or paradise to the earthly union. Her poem *I Saw no Way – The Heavens were Sticked* shows her reversal from the heavenly belief to the earthly circumference. (I saw no way, The Heavens were Sticked – I felt column closed – The Earth reversed her Hemisphere - J-378) In her poem *Behind Me – dips Eternity* the eternity fails and dips behind her. In *Because I could not stop for death* also, eternity and immortality is a chill, frustrating experience to her. In *Safe in their Alabaster Chambers* too, immortality and afterlife is a too cold and chill experience for the meek members of resurrection never to rise and resurrect in any time.

Really, Dickinson is more inclined in the earthly circumferential love and its union through the contraction of time and space. R.G. Flick in his work *Emily Dickinson: Mystic and Skeptic* calls Dickinson both as mystic and as skeptic. She has an everlasting desire to have an eternal life and, thus, have her mystic union with the God but soon she shows her skeptic nature from it as she is madly attracted towards

the earthly circumference of sublime love. Regarding her mystical yearning for unity and her skepticism of circumferential extreme he writes:

The outside circumference of that larger circle with which we share a center is thus the total sphere of Being toward which we strive when reaching outside ourselves. The mystical yearning for unity and the more earthbound intellectual search for wholeness are not so different after all and Emily Dickinson, both as mystic and as skeptic, reaches out toward that extreme circumference. (38)

Unlike R.G. Flick, A.J. Gelpi sees Dickinson's mystic attitude in the light of the finite- infinity. She is like the bride of awe and circumference. And in this context of time and space, he views her belief of heaven on earth which is a phenomenon of time and space. Regarding Dickinson's mystic belief Gelpi in *Emily Dickinson: The Mind of the Poet* writes: "Even which Emily Dickinson tried to conjure up a conception of heaven as it was or would be, she could imagine only the natural order extended through time and space" (52).

Like Gelpi, Ram Ji Lall also believes that Dickinson's poetry is mystical but mysticism is not her special gift. She is a great mystic but not true one. In regard to her mystic belief, he, in his *Emily Dickinson: An Evaluation of her poetry* states:

One searches in vain for the more particular signs of the Christian mystic in the poetry of Miss Dickinson. The expression of personal guilt for sin, the feeling of Christian humility, the ecstatic joy of union with God, and the utter desolation of the soul when away from God – all these are recorded in the writings of the great mystic, but they are

not in the poetry of Emily Dickinson. Mystical poetry, in the traditional sense at least, is not her special gift. (191)

It is analytically deduced that God is all for her but she is not so lighted by Him as she has no direct faith in Him. God is only a symbolic source of light and power for her from Whom she sharpens her poetic vision and illuminates her love in the earthly circumference. Thus, her love gets enlightened assuring her of her own light and power of soul. A careful reading of her poem shows that she and her poetic vision mounts high up mystically in eternal path as if being stricken with God's head of light and then she soon reverses from there descending to the earthly reality of love in which she confides more belief than the blunt head of the God. In other words, while being mystic, she is skeptic to Him. Like a mystic poet or bride, she goes on the top of Himalayas to marry with the God but from there she runs back to her earthly lover and wishes desperately to be united with Him. In short, she reverses from being the mystic and thus likes to be utterly skeptic to God and shows the vast Infinity of the earthly (unfulfilled) love and relatively the same infinite pain and suffering in its effect. Her love and pain is infinite in the earthly circumference that can never equate God. Even if, by chance, God asks her to give Him her love and take Him as her own in its place, she would not like to exchange her love with Him. The ecstasy of love and pang of pain in it is dearer to her than the God of Him or immortality. In the poem *The Face I Carry with Me – Last* she instead of effacing herself in Jesus and do everything in His name, she puts on the face of her master. In short, instead of going to heaven, she likes to bear the name of her beloved master in her tongue. (As one that bore her Master's name – J-336)

As a search of individual from the physical plane to the cosmic level, Henry Wells also suggests that Dickinson discovered something universal force within the

self. But this discovery of the universal form within the self is not celebrated for God. From physical plane to cosmic and then reversal from it to the physical plane again solidify the love of the earth as stronger than the love of God. The earthly love gets the spiritual height and the heavenly love of God is still a fiction, a supposition or not heart felt finite (measured) infinitely. In short, she believes in the finite infinity and not the infinity or the infinitely infinite or the eternity itself. As a search of the individual from the physical plane to the cosmic level and then reversing from it, he in *Introduction to Emily Dickinson* states:

Life is simplified, explained and reduced to its essence by interpreting the vast whole in relation to the minute particle. Emily needed the infinite because she found herself in a personal predicament; in the modern world she needed infinity as much as the ancient one Saint Augustine required a knowledge of God... salvation lay only through interpreting, translating and transcending the immediate till it became some form of Absolute, till her own personal love, joy, and sorrow grew comprehensively human and even of cosmic significance. Her poetry grew to be that chemistry or rather alchemy of the soul whereby this magical transmutation was achieved. This was accomplished not by objective reference to history, sociology or natural science, but by the discovery of a universal form within the self. (278)

Unlike Ram ji Lall, another Indian writer, K. Pramila Sastry agreeing with Sister James Power and many other western writers is of different opinion that Emily Dickinson is a mystic and the critic, Sister James Power sees Emily Dickinson's concept of God as a merger of all human being in Him. Sastry in her *Space- Time continuum* states:

While this is a concept of heaven as an extension of space and time, another critic, Sister James Power sees Emily Dickinson's concept of God as a merger of all human beings in Him; here also, it is a venture of human beings, limited by space and time, into the existence of Eternity, the boundless symbol of love and the emblem of extensive space and time. (P. Sastry-279)

In the same vein, Sister James Power is also of the same view that Dickinson believed in God as a merger of all human beings in Him. Regarding Dickinson's belief into the existence of eternity or God, Sister J. Power in *In the Name of the Bee* states:

Her experience of love which, because of its irregularity, she had chosen to renounce brought her supremacy. For her it was a ladder to perfection. Was this the fulfillment of which St. Bernard spoke when he wrote in his treatise that love begins in the flesh and ends in the spirit. (S.J. P 279)

Love for Dickinson is a ladder of perfection. St. Bernard's belief that love begins in the flesh and ends in the spirit is/may be true and it may lead one to eternity but in Dickinson's case, it cannot be true. Dickinson's love or poetry begins from the worldly, corporeal base and it heightens to a great spiritual, mystic level of the divine one. But it (her love or poetry) reverses from such height or eternity into the earthly life and likes to be attached with the very worldly love in which she sees her freedom, her salvation and her eternity. Almost all of her major poems on life, death and immortality are devoted to her such reversal from eternity, immortality and a promotion to an earthly circumference. So, like Ram Ji Lall, the researcher (I) also think that it is vein to search the Christian mysticism in Emily Dickinson's poetry. In

short, Dickinson is mystically bent and has all the depth of the mystics in her poetry. But she does not like to be the Christian model of mystic in truer sense. Her universe is soul and her special task is to make that universe articulate through the awe of the finite-infinite and its circumference of the real experience. Despite Dickinson's greater inclination to earthly circumference and its love, she is a term – in between. She is mystic as well as skeptic to it.

Indeterminacy, Uncertainty and Enigma in Emily Dickinson's Concept of Eternity

There is a continuous enigma and mystery in her goal of heavenly marriage, eternity, God, heaven and so on. she is mostly craving for her earthly lovers and marriage with them and later on aspires for the old hunger of everyone – that is, the desire for heaven in her heart. Thus, she seems to be a term “in- between” in this contexts of the earthly or the unearthly marriage as she has expressed in her poem *Behind Me – dips Eternity* too.

In *I Cannot Live with You* too she shows a greater indeterminacy and enigma in her concept of eternity, marriage, God etc. She treats paradise as sordid on one hand and prefers unconsciously to be united with the earthly lover on the other hand (Because you saturated sight, And I had no more eyes, For sordid excellence as paradise). But in her poem *They Weighed me, Dust by Dust* she prefers heaven as her reward of labor in this world (They Weighed me, Dust by Dust, They balanced film with film, then handed me my Beings worth, A Single Dram of heaven). In short, in one poem she prefers the earthly lover and in another one she prefers heaven. But it is almost certain that Dickinson does not like to find her union or marry with God. The God of her unconscious is the earthly lovers and she likes her union with (any one of)

them. There will be the name of her lover/master on her tongue even in heaven (The Face that I Carry with Me / As one that ore her Master's name – J-336).

In *The poets Light but Lamps* also she has shown a similar kind of uncertainty and indeterminacy in her view of heaven and God. In this poem, she lays greater emphasis on the earthly love and her disinterestedness in the heavenly one. Uncertain of life from the outset She sighed with pain ever since. Over shadowed with pain of frustrated love and ever measuring herself against the immortality and eternity, she renounces the delusions of both the earthly love and the heavenly love and mingling serenely in them. Finally, she feels the imperturbed state of the primal void of zero or silence in herself -a state of the acceptance of all the agonizing pains and pleasure but being imperturbed from them all. By this eternal lamp of nothing (zero) her poetry will light through ages and ages and people will see themselves better in darkness or in sorrow and sufferings as a being that is all and none.

In her poem *Each Life Converges to some Center* she has presented the similar indeterminacy and mystery in her view of heaven, God, eternity etc. Everybody has certain center or goal in his/her life. Consciously or unconsciously, this is natural to all human beings. On the failure or in un-gaining the goal, one can try it in eternity. It is the love that is the goal of Dickinson. Eternity is in her unconscious but she does not like to venture or endeavor for it. She is solely craving to have her love in her life in the earthly circumference. Heaven, though brittle and should be handled carefully, is a hopeless thing for her. Indeterminacy of Emily Dickinson's idea is presented in the fourth stanza of the poem. It may be about the attainment of heaven too. Though the saint's diligence is slow, his goal is very distant away. It is very high like sky. Hence, we like to move forward heaven or union to God. Dickinson's work evokes like eternity. She prefers earthly love and marriage. But heavenly marriage is too seen

in her poetry. This double faced, uncertainty and indeterminacy are seen recurring in her poetry.

Dickinson's mystic nature, indeterminacy and uncertainty of thoughts have further been depicted in her poem *Light enabling Light*. She portrays her finite self with some awful circumference that always contradicts with the infinite or the Silence of God. Her view of the finite is furnished with the infinite. In short, she looks back towards time (finite) and forward to the God of Him (infinite, J-906).

Moreover, Dickinson's mystic and thought provoking concept of indeterminacy has further been depicted in her poem *There is a Solitude of Space*. Her poetry mostly deals with the circumference. Her consciousness is aware of death, pain and loneliness. This has made her be aware of her finite self from the infinity (A soul admitted to itself Finite- Infinity –J-1695).

Likewise, her poem *Their Height in Heaven Comforts not* also reveals the same mysticism, indeterminacy and uncertainty of her thoughts of eternity, heaven, God etc. She is greatly saturated with her earthly love (it pleased my narrow eyes). She is finite and cannot see the infinite or the glimmering frontier of afterlife (it was best imperfect – I am finite – I cannot see –J-996).

On the other hand, in other of her poem *I Took One Draught of Life* she has presented just opposite view. She has shown the result of her life's labor. She paid high price of pain and suffering, and, in return, she got the heaven as her true worth of being (they weighed me, Dust by Dust, they balanced film with film, then they handed my Beings worth – a single dram of heaven J-1725).

Obviously, Dickinson sees the finite and the infinity is beyond her reach in many of her poems. But she seems to have deep faith in heaven, eternity too. In short, she is a term “In-between” or “finite-infinite”. She seems to be suspended between the finite and the infinite that is the earthly circumferential love and lover of sadness and the sordidness of heavenly one. Thus, her poetry is a continuous enigma. Indeterminacy and uncertainty are strongly found in her poetry that perplex one greatly as does eternity itself.

Pain and Sufferings in Emily Dickinson’s Love Poems

In many of her love poems we find Dickinson expressing a deep, uncontrolled sigh of pain and sufferings of her love and loss. Her irresistible desire to possess her beloved one(s) and the uncertainty of her final union with him is sufficient to fill one’s heart with deep unending pain for her. One of such poems of pain and suffering arousing the deep pathos is *I Cannot Live with You*. The poem deals with the deprivation of her love. She is separated from her lover and the only life for her is to be with him. And thus to remain separated from him would be a death for her. It implies that she could not meet him while being alive. And now she has the final deep irresistible desire to meet and possess him only after her death; that is, in the grave. In short, the only heaven for her is her beloved from whom she has been so eternally deprived of.

She sees her spiritual death in the separation from her beloved. Yet, in the very separation she sees her life and a greater and eternal death. She cannot live without him. Yet she cannot live with him. The life with him will be her death in eternity. In short, in eternity also she is not in rest and peace.

Death in life without love and lover has further been depicted in her another poem *My Life had Stood – A Loaded Gun*. Her cherished desire of being possessed by her courtly lover who would give her dream like ride to the forest ultimately remains unfulfilled. Naturally, her extreme emotion of love loaded in the unconscious like the loaded gun becomes fragile, inert and strength-less. In other words, the very idea of uncertainty of union with her lover makes her feel powerless for a separation from her beloved is suicidal or an inactive gun state for her (Though I then He may live longer. He longer must – than I – for I have but power to kill, without – the power to die).

The pain and pathos of unfulfilled love has furthermore been depicted intensely in another of her poem *If You were coming in the Fall*. A one unified glance of her lover would have been so dearer and rarer for her that she would pay any cost, any sacrifice for it. She is ready to live in hell for endless time too for the union. She is even ready to leave her taste of eternity, if only he were with her. In short, the very union with him would have been her taste (attainment) of eternity (if certain, when this life was out, that your and mine should be, I would toss it yonder like rind, and taste of eternity – J-511). But the uncertainty of union with him feels like time's most venomous sting for her.

Similarly, in another of her poem *My Life Closed Twice before its Close* also, she expresses her misery of how she desperately fell in love for two times and wonders if immortality (God) has still another such misery in store for her. The end of love and loss is paradoxically both heaven and hell for her (parting is all we know of heaven, And all we need of hell). It is a hell for it leaves her incomplete agony for all of her life. It (parting) is a heaven for her for she has transformed her agonized heart of hell into sublimity and immortality. The agonized hellish experience of parting in love helps her reversibly in to put herself against death, eternity, God by which she

knows the circumference of the limited human lot that can extend up to infinity (finite-infinity).

More elaborately, Emily Dickinson suffers anguished and convulsive pain in love being separated from her lover. She suffers, pines and finally sees her complete extinction of her self in her love and loss. The separation from her loved one is an infinite pain that scalds her the most throughout her life. Yet the pain of the separated state has created another larger and more intense pain to her. Her pain is infinite and double folded. Her separation from the beloved is an intense and infinite pain for her and the union with him too gives her eternally infinite pain and sufferings. From her poem *I cannot live with you* it is quite apparent that the life with him will be a death for her. She suffers agony and death even in the union with him. In between the two/double fold pain and sufferings in the separated and in the united states of life.

Despite-- the intense piercing and eternal agony that she suffers, reverses to the eternal bliss too in her life and poetry. The pain contracts the time in the permeated moment of her consciousness.

Time is a test of trouble (J-686). Time tests the trouble. The degree of the trouble and other pains determines the degree of time contracted. In other words, the time is contracted in the same degree in which the trouble or pain is. Everything is relative in the context of time and trouble. If the trouble is too extreme, the time too will be contracted extremely in the same ratio. The water in the frozen state goes into the zero degree. Dickinson's consciousness in the extreme anguish and pain goes into the frozen, still, stony degreeless noon. Therefore, the time contracted by the pain will be the zero degree too. In short, her frozen state of the self in pain is the zero degree in its contraction. The time is contracted in the same degree in which the pain is.

Being agonized eternally, her self extinguishes which all of her major poems depict. The images – the chill, frozen, numb, still, stone and degreeless noon in her poems are the indications of the complete extinction of her self. Along with the extinction of her self, the time too is contracted to the same ratio. She pays the marked price of her existence by which her pain contracted the time in fusion with her self to the degreeless noon or to the zero point. In the zero point of her consciousness, the pain does not intensify and scald her and scald her anymore. In reversed and permeated moment of her consciousness, her life is only a journey beyond time in which there is only silence of the void and infinity of her agonized self. In other words, she has no sorrow and no pleasure, no universe, nothing, all periods exhaled. She simply is beyond time and space.

Time and Timelessness in Emily Dickinson's Poetry

Time is motion. It is relative to the movement of event or happening. In the motionless state, the time ceases to exist. According to Gudrun Grabher too, for the human being, who has over stepped the boundaries of his/her earthly existence, there is no sense of motion because motion by definition takes place only in time. If there is no motion, there is no time too. The time ends or it becomes infinity – that is, every passing moment is many nows. Emily Dickinson's poems connote the infinite or nows made forever. Thus, Dickinson's concept of time is Infinity or timelessness. A careful observation of her poems shows that she has overstepped the boundaries of her earthly existence. Many of her poems show the numb, frozen, still, silence and other motionless state of mind where the time ends relatively. Yet there is evanescence of life in her poetry.

Dickinson's poem *A Clock Stopped* is the example of this double-image of time. It is both timeless and evanescence of life. It has stopped and become still (just now dangled still) and pendulum of snow. Metaphorically the chill, snowy, still, degreeless (timeless) condition of the clock is the very chill, still and numb state of human consciousness. In suffering from the loss of love, Dickinson has undergone this state of chill, still and irreparable clock finite-infinite and the infinitely-infinite. She feels zero in the bone-a degreeless noon which is beyond the dial life of everyday or clock time. In short, the stopping of clock is metaphorically the moment of death and in death or in motionless state, time naturally ceases to exist. Yet, the clock cannot be called to have stopped completely. It is evanescence of life as some parts inside the clock might still be working properly.

In another of her poem on time *Forever-is Composed of Nows* Dickinson further experiences her concept of time as an absence of time; that is, the Infinity or many nows. In absence of time or in the Infinity, there is no past, no before (future) but only one single time – now. In short, from Anno-Domini to the present moment, there is no different time; but only one eternal time- Nows. This instant of 'nows' made forever is Infinity or timeless. According to Claudius Schwarz, the instant of nows constitutes the experience of eternal time – dateless realm of consciousness in which the linear time of months, years, past and future so on and all evaporates like fume.

In her poem *Time Feels so Vast* too the idea of infinite or timelessness has been further- more depicted. Linearly time looks so simple but it feels so vast in awful condition of life. If there were no idea of eternity in human conscious mind, the life would have become burdensome. It is the consciousness by which the finite awful state is fused with the eternity and then the time and the self that look finite, limited,

awful and so vast at first is finally realized as timeless, sublime and heavenly (the stupendous vision of His Diameters).

Infinity is the other twin of the contraction of time. This twin of the Infinity itself has a twin. The Infinity of the contraction of time is not like the finite-infinite. Dickinson's poetry is the revelation of the finite-infinite. It is superb in the earthly circumference. She often tries to ascend the height of infinity too. But she is suspended and cannot pretend to ascend it. Like the string theory that needs some extra dimensions to work properly Dickinson too needs some extra dimension to work properly than the reversal of the earthly circumference. She needs a special center to work properly on the transcendental center and reversibly another center - that is center less- center. In other words, as four dimensional space -time is not sufficient for the string theory to work properly, the same way, Dickinson's concept of the finite – infinite of the earthly circumference too is not so sufficient to work properly on the center of infinitely infinite. In other words, despite the earthly circumference and finite infinite, there needs the discussion of the center too for the discussion of the inscrutable and unknown one.

The idea of Infinity, timelessness has furthermore been expressed in her poem *Pain Expands the Time*. While suffering from some deep irrecoverable loss or from the loss of love, the time feels so vast and the passing time of every pittance (minute) appears as ages (Ages coil within the minute circumference of a single brain).

The pain not only expands the time but reversibly contracts it too. On stoic tolerance of it, the time ends. The whole gamut of pain, suffering and despair transform into the gamut of eternity. In short, time and pain is relative. One can have the feeling of time in relation to the extension/expansion and contraction of pain. If

the pain comes from some irrecoverable loss or some numb state, the time will be the zero degree or its complete end in its contractibility. Thus, the expansion of time is reversibly the contraction (zero degree) of it in the fused or the permeated moment of consciousness.

In too happy moment time flies (Too happy time dissolves itself- j-1774). But Dickinson has little moment to feel such flight of time in happiness. Her lot is full of numb, tomb, wooden, frozenness that connotes relatively the degree less noon or the end of time only.

Time like hope is a thing with feathers. It can fly. But timelessness is nothing like the nothingness of the void. Hence, it cannot have feathers. So it cannot fly. It reverses. Time reverses into timelessness but timelessness, in turn, reverses into the zero because the zero reverses into the zero as the zero is the zero and vice versa. Therefore, the reversed state of time is also a time. It is a time of the finite infinite state of consciousness. Dickinson calls it limited time and timelessness of limited human fate.

In the united state of the lovers the time feels short to them but to Dickinson the time becomes too long and infinite in her thinking of being united with her lover. Therefore, she cannot live with him – (J-660). Living with him means an infinite and eternal waiting for her divine life and sacramental marriage with God in heaven. In short, the time becomes infinitely long in thinking to be united with her earthly lover. Similarly, in the separated state of the lovers the time becomes too long and infinite to them. Dickinson also feels time too vast, endless and infinite in the absence of her lovers. And her pain increases agonizing her eternally in the separated state from her lover.

Despite her infinitesimal increment of time in the pain of the separation from her lovers, there is no time too in her poetry that reverses. The very long and infinite time reverses into very short and zero point. The time ends for her reversely along with the extinction of her self that her poetry reveals. In other words, the pain contracts the time in the permeated state of her consciousness. In such permeated state of consciousness, the time, the pain and the self all disappears. Then the life and the time that feel so vast and painful become reversed to eternity (J-802) beyond sorrow or pain and beyond time and space.

More elaborately, the time is not a separate name. One has the sensation of time by the motion of a particle. The motion is evolution and change. Hence the time evolves into changeful phenomena. Time is the evolution, maturation, creation and eternity and so on.

Time is nothing but the contraction of pain in Dickinson's poetry. The degree of contraction of the time is the degree of the pain. It, thus, is relative to the pain and vice versa. The pain disappears with the disappearance of the self and with it the time too being contracted disappears as the fusion in the self-conscious moment. Dickinson's pain is so sharpest that its edge contracts the time just by touching it.

The reversal of the time is the timelessness. The pain contracts the time and the time, in turn is reversed into the timelessness in Dickinson's poetry. Therefore, the contraction of the time is the timelessness.

Infinity and the timelessness are the twin contraction of time in the reversed state. She reverses into the worldly circumference from the center of the Infinity of God.

The poetry of Emily Dickinson deals with the transgression of time. Her artistic step is outside of the time. Describing Dickinson's transcendental concept of time Claudia Schwarz in his essay *Emily Dickinson's Journey Beyond Time* states:

Her poetic imagination is key to Emily Dickinson's artistic step outside of time and, thus, her view from 'beyond' time. By transgressing the limitations of time, Emily Dickinson radically reframes the conventional understandings of life, death and nature – as imposed on the Puritan mind by religion – and challenges the reader to measure them against the background of infinity. (84)

By transgressing time, her poetry measures life, death and nature against the background of infinity. Charles Anderson treats Dickinson as a poet who was exterior to time. (J-448) Regarding Dickinson's exteriority to time and her age C. Schwarz states: "This was a Poet / [...] Exterior – to Time-J-448" (85). She was not only exterior to time by transcending the society and conventions of her days but she transcended the time itself and also death. C. Schwarz states: "It is almost ironic (as she was) that this withdrawal offered her the means to transcend not only timely restrictions, but time itself and, hence, also death" (86).

Dickinson starts her carrier between the limited human time and divine (creative) timelessness in her poetry. Her poetry deals with the transcendental aspects of life, a kind of immortality and the permanence beyond the flux. She lives in the now and here of time and space but she is beyond the spatio-temporal reality. In regard to her concept of transcending now and here of time to nowhere C. Schwarz states:

Dickinson's carrier between the limited human time and perpetual divine (creative) timelessness became her poetry. "with her poet's sensibility, she deeply felt the transforming power of words. She, alone, realized that language, properly created, was a certain transcendence of life, a kind of immortality, the permanence beyond the flux, and that, in exercising this transcendence, she became her words" (Derrick 1986: 38). Inder Kher similarly points out that "the poet also lives in the now and here of time and space, but, paradoxically, she is beyond spatio-temporal reality. At will, she can go from now and here to nowhere and vice versa. (86)

Infinity is timelessness. According to Cynthia Wolff, Emily Dickinson's poetic achievement is 'a fusion of infinity and nothingness'. C. Schwarz states: "The biographer Cynthia Wolff calls Emily Dickinson's achievement "a fusion of infinity and nothingness" (Wolff 1988: 192). Therefore, between infinity and nothingness is where our journey is set" (86). Emily Dickinson's poetry deals with the extinction of self that is realized as infinity and nothingness.

In her poem *Forever - is Composed of Nows* – her idea of infinity of time and timelessness has been stated with a great precision and clarity. In regard to Dickinson's concept of time and eternity C. Schwarz writes:

The meaningful combination of the two furthest distanced expressions referring to time, lasting "forever" and the ever-fleeing "nows", shows Dickinson's ingenious poetic treatment of time. In the single line, "Forever – is composed of Nows – ", she bridges the gap between the immediate here and now and the remote forever, transcends the

boundaries of the restricted human lifetime to see what lies beyond, and promotes the meaning of the moment by setting it on one level with eternity. (90)

There is only one single moment – now. Dickinson transcends all time in the dynamism of the present moment. In the permeated moment of her consciousness the nows constitute the eternal time. Following Inder Kher's idea C. Schwarz states:

“Forever might be short” (J 434), Dickinson writes in another poem and shows how, “in the ontological series, past, present and future are irrelevant categories of time” (Kher 1974: 82). Dickinson “transcends all time by experiencing it in the dynamism of the present moment” (Kher 1974: 148). Thus, the celebration of the moment enables the poet to step outside timely restrictions by means of the imagination: “The imaginative experience of ‘nows’ constitutes experience of the eternal time, the mythic moment, the dateless realm of consciousness in which linear months and years evaporate life fumes in the atmosphere of perpetual sunshine”. (91)

In her poem *A Clock Stopped* Dickinson positions herself as the poet outside earthly clock time. C. Schwarz writes: “therefore, Dickinson once more positions herself as a poet outside of earthly clock-time since her “pendulum of snow” chimes “concern-less No” (94). Cynthia Wolff remarks that the voice of Dickinson could confound death and transcend time. Regarding this C. Schwarz writes: “Cynthia Wolff remarks that “the voice of Dickinson's verse could confound death and transcend time by springing to life anew for every reader. Her poetry, then, stands as rival creation to God's” (97).

Dickinson's poems do not deny the unstoppable passage of time. They offer the reader with the reality of the ultimate end of time through death. Regarding the end of time in Dickinson's poetry C. Schwarz writes:

Dickinson's poems do not deny the unstoppable passage of time. They confront the reader with the reality of the ultimate end of individual time through death. Aesthetically, by being eternally present in the temporal moment, we reverse temporality into eternity. It is only through time that the artist transcends its finiteness. The creative imagination plunges into the reality of the lived moment and transforms it into its eternal significance by perceiving the temporal and the eternal at once. (Kher 1974: 82) (97)

Through time Dickinson transcends its finiteness. Her poetry is the expression of the ultimate end of time through death. As the poet she goes beyond time. Regarding her concept of time C. Schwarz further states: "As a poet, Emily Dickinson takes a step beyond time and encourages us to follow her either by appreciating the present moment, or by engaging in a creative process" (97). Dickinson's notion of time can well be understood with a quote by Northrop Frye who speaks of the poetry, time and imagination. In his view, time is enemy of all living things and to poets. It is the most hated and feared of all tyrants that can be broken down by imagination. Something goes dead inside one, perhaps the one thing that it is really important to keep alive. Regarding the thing that goes dead inside one C. Schwarz quotes:

If even time, the enemy of all living things, and to poets, at least, the most hated and feared of all tyrants, can be broken down by the imagination, anything can be. We come to the limit of the

imagination..., a universe entirely possessed and occupied by human life, a city of which the stars are suburbs. Nobody can believe in any such universe; literature is not religion, and it doesn't address itself to belief. But if we shut the vision of its completely out of our minds, or insist on its being limited in various ways, something goes dead inside us, perhaps the one thing that it is really important to keep alive. (Frye 1997: 33 / 97)

Time is the enemy of all living things including to the poets. By imagination the tyrant of time can be broken down. Something that is really important to keep alive goes dead inside the poet. This, in turn, kills the heart of the poet himself that is the transcendental state of timelessness. In short, when something goes dead inside one, his/her self too extinguishes where the time does not emanate. Emily Dickinson discusses this state of the extinction of her self almost in all of her major poems. Therefore, time ceases to exist in the motionless, still, snowy, numb state of her self.

The image of everlasting snow, frost, a pendulum of snow and cold, still and so on are associates with death throughout her poetry. Regarding the images of snow as death L. E. Folsom in his essay *The Souls that Snow: Winter in the poetry of Emily Dickinson* states:

Death is called "the everlasting snow" and is referred to as "Bald and Cold" (281). When the "Dial life" stops, the dead clock of mortality has a "pendulum of snow" (287). As the poet contemplates the "Austere Snow", its "chilly softness" blankets the newly dead (942). Winter's frost is continually associated with death; throughout the poetry "frost destroys and is associated with winter. (365)

Daffodils delight only those who are in a spring mood, while lingering grief causes the souls to snow. In regard to the condition of death to the souls in snow, he quotes her poem:

Absent Place - an April Day -

Daffodils a'blow

Homesick curiosity

To the Souls that snow -

Drift may block within it

Deeper than without -

Daffodil delight but

Him it duplicate – (J-927/367)

The condition of souls in snow is the condition of death. Time does not emanate in the motionless and in the state of death. Many of her poems depict the condition of her soul that snows and hence, comes to the state of death where the time does not emanate.

In the same pace, Charles R. Anderson also describes snow as the image of eternity and of the freezing of motion into the stillness of death. Regarding the snow as the frozen state of death Charles Anderson in *The Trap of Time in Emily Dickinson's Poetry* states:

“It will not stir for doctors,” she continues, “This Pendulum of snow.”

--- Less obvious are the connotation of “snow,” a word that appears frequently in her poetic vocabulary as the image of eternity, and so of death. “Snow” connotes both the whiteness when blood drains away

from the body and the freezing of motion into the stillness of death.

(416-417)

Similarly, in the Buddhists' philosophy also the idea of the end of time has been discussed a great precision and clarity. On the attainment of the Nirvana the time does not exist. In regard to the end of time on the attainment of the Nirvana, Nagarjuna in *The Questins of King Milinda* book-two chapter-two States:

Where there are beings who, when dead, will be reborn, there time is.

Where there are beings who, when dead, will not be reborn, there time is not; and where there are beings who are altogether set free (who, having attained Nirvana in their present life, have come to the end of that life), there time is not--because of their having been quite set free.

(57-58)

Circumference: The Business of Emily Dickinson

Dickinson is primarily a poet of love. The love has made her see many types of ebb and flows of frustration and pining away for it endlessly. This has further led her to move round the earthly love and lover. She measures her earthly love with her awful heart against the eternal love – immortality, death, God and the final reversal to the very circumference of the earthly lover.

Circumference is a concept that describes the awe and sublime. And the sublime for Dickinson is the element of fear and terror mingled with aesthetic perception. A.J. Gelpi considers Dickinson's circumference as the expression of some disrupted moment when time transcends time. It is a defense perimeter which separates man from God (122-123).

Dickinson writes in her letter to Higginson in July 1862 that her business is circumference. In another of her letter she further writes that poetry is the engagement with the circumference (L 412). Circumference is neither the center nor the outside but the field bounded closely on the outside. Dickinson believes circumference as a space between inside and outside from which one must try to escape and go beyond it in the future and see the clue of divinity in them. In her poem “My Cocoon Tightens – colors tease” she describes this circumference as the clue of divinity by the image of the butterfly trying to fly towards the outside world.

Assenting Dickinson, C. G. Wolff and Charles Anderson too view circumference in the earthly background. They believe that immediate leap into God is impossible; the poet must go back to earth, the human experience of pain and suffering and work out from there towards divine eternity.

In another of her famous poems *Circumference – Thou Bride of Awe* she has expressed her idea of circumference as the sublimity of terror to which she is like the bride – possessing and possessed (Circumference – Thou Bride of Awe possessing thou shalt be possessed by every hallowed knight that dares to covet thee). In short, Dickinson’s poems are the expressions of the terror of life that inflicts upon her so much eternally.

Likewise, in her another famous poem *I Saw no Way – the Heaven were Stitched* too the same idea of earthly terror of life and love against the heaven has been expressed with greater clarity. She finds the heaven all closed and the earth reversing to her Hemisphere. She too reverses back to the finite human love and love against the so called faith based eternity, immortality and God in her poetry.

In the same pace, Dickinson furthermore expresses her view of circumference with a greater precision and lucidness in her famous poem “Poets Light – but Lamps”. The poets, though finite, are the light of infinity that works like a lens to the future generation who disseminate or spread their light or the truth of the circumference that is the bride of awe as does the sun.

In short, while measuring the pain and suffering of life against death, eternity, immortality, the finite human lot is felt as the Infinity of the unknown, unknowable God. In other words, the circumference that is the bride of awe gives one the lens of the finite-infinite. Dickinson’s poems are, thus, the expression of this terror of the finite-infinite or the term in-between of the circumference.

CHAPTER 5

Summary, Conclusion and Implications

The present study has centered on the soul or the self and the personal experience of Emily Dickinson that is placed as the void and the infinity of not only of her self but of the time and the timelessness in it too. Some of her major poems on the themes of love, life, death time, eternity and immortality have been cautiously analyzed that reveal the void state of her self which is outside the time. All of her poems on the various themes of love, life, death, eternity and immortality have the sad note of frustration and suppression of emotions and feelings of the lost love for some persons who virtually remained distant away from her. The pain and the sufferings of her irresistible desires to possess her loved ones are recurring in her poetry. Her long and enduring pain and sufferings in love hidden in her unconscious state of mind fuses or permeates in the conscious state of the present time. More elaborately, the endurance of the pain and the sufferings of the long state of the past have led to the extinction of her self and with the extinction of the self, the pain and sufferings of all kinds disappear. The extinction of the self is the void state of it (the self) and everything is realized as the infinity in this extinct state of the self. The infinity of the self is interchangeably the evolution, the creation, freedom and silence and so on which stay outside the time.

Being centered on this process of the extinction of the self, Dickinson has based her concept of the contraction of time. Pain contracts the time (J-967). The long and enduring pain of the past states of the consciousness permeates in the present conscious state of mind and the notion of time in pain and sufferings reverses and is realized differently in her poetry. In the happy moment the time flies and is realized as

too short for the lovers in their union. On the other contrary, in the separated state of the lover(s), the time becomes stupendously long. But this notion of the time as the too short and the too long in the happy and the sorrowful moments reverses in the permeated state of consciousness. The long appearing time in the sad and separated states of consciousness of the past dwindles and is not felt at all as there exists only the pure consciousness devoid of the self without desires and without the attachments of any kind. In the pure conscious state of mind, one simply is. This state of 'is' is the state of silence and super consciousness like the evolution, creation, maturity and freedom and so on. On the other hand, the too short appearing time of the too happy moments becomes long and dissolves in itself (J-1774) as it does not lead to any super-conscious state but to the transitory peace and pleasure only. In short, the pain and sufferings leads to the super-consciousness. The power is only in pain (J-252) in which the time is contracted to the zero degree in the reversed state of its figure and ground (j-967).

The reversal of the figure -ground of the time as the infinity of the time and timelessness in the poetry of Emily Dickinson has been approached by the concept of the time postulated by Henri Bergson in his works *Time and Free Will* and *Creative Evolution*. For Bergson the time is the heterogeneous multiplicity of the change of the conscious state of past that permeates in the conscious state of the present. Thus, the time is one single moment in fused or the permeated states of the consciousness. It is continuous and not discrete one like the homogeneous multiplicity of time in space postulated by Kant. Bergson's concept of time is the heterogeneous one. It is the qualitative multiplicity of change that reducibly is evolution, creation, maturity and freedom and so on. Dickinson's poetry too is the revelation of the permeated state of consciousness which stands outside the time and the space.

The void and the infinity of the zero as depicted by Charles Seife in his work *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea* further led to the revelation of the self as the void and infinite in the poetry of Emily Dickinson. In the same pace, Robert Kaplan's concept of zero that connotes the primal void has furthermore led to the revelation of the infinity of self in the poetry of Emily Dickinson that stay outside the time. He has explained that the Zero is not merely a numeral but also a concept and symbol that connote nullity or void. One uses the term 'zero' as shunyam meaning a blank or void. Indian philosophy has glorified the concepts like the material world as being an illusion (*Maya*), the act of renouncing the material world (*Tyaga*) and the goal of merging into the void of eternity (*Nirvana*). Here lies the reason how the material concept of zero got the philosophical connotation

The Buddhist philosophy of *Shunyata* has still more led to the realization of the fused or the permeated state of consciousness in the poetry of Emily Dickinson. The Buddhists' philosophy of Shunyata is the philosophy of emptiness of mind. It (Shunyata) is the cosmic and divine unconscious becoming conscious. In regard to his concept of zero Suzuki Teitaro Daisetz in his essay *The Buddhist Concept of Reality* states: "Shunyata is cosmic and divine unconscious becoming conscious. In metaphysical field, when a world of magnitudes, of individual objects, of relative existence of particular phenomena is reduced to one reality which is called God, Brahman, Reason, Absolute, élan-vital, *Shunyata*" (98-99). Dickinson too is seen to be coming into the grand integration of her mind from the awful state of her past. In short, her poetry is the revelation of her awful states of the past that transforms permeably into a great consciousness in the present moment.

Finally, Ashtavakra's philosophy of personless, action-less and un-relatedness has still more led to the realization of the void state of the self and the Infinity of time

in the poetry of Emily Dickinson. More elaborately, the void and the Infinity of zero that have been seen in the different moments or evolutions in science, physics (as discussed by Charles Seife), in the philosophy of the self (as depicted by Robert Kaplan), in Bergson's concept of time, in Buddhists' philosophy and in Ashtavakra's philosophy have also been found in the poetry of Emily Dickinson. In other words, her poetry is the revelation of the infinity of the self like the infinity in the thermodynamics, quantum mechanics, blackhole, the string theory and other evolutions in physics in physics and in the Buddhists' philosophy and in Ashtavakra's philosophy and in Henry Bergson's philosophy of time.

Conclusion

Most of her major poems on the theme of love, death, immortality, pain and sufferings show the numb, tomb, still, frozen, unmoved, stony state of permeated consciousness that connote degreeless noon or the zero state. In such motionless (zero state), the linear time ends. Thus, zero is the end of time. Yet there is evanescence of life in it. In other words, there is one single moment; 'now' made forever. Nothing is so eternal in human life than this very end of time or Silence or zero. Silence supersedes eternity and, in turn, eternity is superseded by zero and finally zero by Dickinson or vice-versa.

Her poems do not deny the linearly unstoppable passage of time. Yet they confront readers with the reality of the ultimate end of individual time through spiritual death. There is ambivalence in regard to her concept of time. She believes linearly in the one single moment of time that is forever 'nows'. This linear time is the infinity of time. In her poem *Forever - is Composed of Nows* – her idea of infinity of

time and timelessness has been stated with a great precision and clarity. In regard to Dickinson's concept of time and eternity C. Schwarz writes:

The meaningful combination of the two furthest distanced expressions referring to time, lasting “forever” and the ever-fleeing “nows”, shows Dickinson's ingenious poetic treatment of time. In the single line, “Forever – is composed of Nows – “, she bridges the gap between the immediate here and now and the remote forever, transcends the boundaries of the restricted human lifetime to see what lies beyond, and promotes the meaning of the moment by setting it on one level with eternity. (90)

There is only one single moment – now. Dickinson transcends all time in the dynamism of the present moment. In the permeated moment of her consciousness the nows constitute the eternal time. Following Inder Kher's idea C. Schwarz further states:

Dickinson “transcends all time by experiencing it in the dynamism of the present moment” (Kher 1974: 148). Thus, the celebration of the moment enables the poet to step outside timely restrictions by means of the imagination: “The imaginative experience of ‘nows’ constitutes experience of the eternal time, the mythic moment, the dateless realm of consciousness in which linear months and years evaporate life fumes in the atmosphere of perpetual sunshine”. (91)

Despite the Infinity of the linearity of time in the forever ‘nows’ there is the ambivalence in her concept of the time. She believes in the complete end of time. The long appearing time of the anguished moment of her life reverses into the zero-degree

or into the complete end of the time. In short, her poems do not deny the linear looking unstoppable passage of time. Yet they offer the reader with the reality of the ultimate end of time through death. Regarding the end of time in Dickinson's poetry C. Schwarz furthermore states:

Dickinson's poems do not deny the unstoppable passage of time. They confront the reader with the reality of the ultimate end of individual time through death. Aesthetically, by being eternally present in the temporal moment, we reverse temporality into eternity. It is only through time that the artist transcends its finiteness. The creative imagination plunges into the reality of the lived moment and transforms it into its eternal significance by perceiving the temporal and the eternal at once. (Kher 1974: 82) (97)

Through time Dickinson transcends its finiteness. Her poetry is the expression of the ultimate end of time through death in which the time reverses relatively.

By the contraction of the time to the zero degree in the permeated moment of her consciousness, her poetry makes a journey of life beyond time escaping herself and her eternal painful mind from the prison cell (trap) of time.

There is a continuous enigma and ambivalence in her poetry. In one after another of her poems, she looks back towards time (finite) and forward to God of Him (infinite). Thus, contradiction, indeterminacy, un-decidability, enigma and uncertainty are frequently seen in her poetry.

Most of the major poems of Emily Dickinson connote the void and the Infinite of zero. Like the time as a dimension, zero is also a dimension. All events happen in

time. So nothing can escape from time in its occurrence. Therefore, time is one of the four dimensions of space. Zero is equally one of the dimensions of space. Nothing can happen without zero. If time must come to begin something or someone, then zero also must come to end the thing or the person. In short, the theory of everything is the theory of zero. More elaborately, time is the beginning stage of all the events. Zero is the climax and end of those events. The events begin in the time and end in the zero. In the zero state of the self the time ends. Dickinson's poetry is the revelation of the zero state of her self in which the time is seen to have come to the end. More elaborately, if time is the dimension of space that conducts every event to occur, zero is the other dimension by which the universe as the space- time- continuum is bound to see its end too. Dickinson's poetry is based on the concept of zero that has reached at the height of the end of time. The beginning of time in life is undoubtedly a conscious state of life. But the beginning of the end of time in life is the super conscious state of life. Dickinson and her self or soul is the revelation of such super consciousness in the earthly circumference and the infinity of zero and the end of time like the infinities that have been seen in the different movements of physics by Charles Seife, in Robert Kaplan's philosophy of the self, in Bergson's philosophy of time, in the Ashtavakra's Gita and in the Buddhists' philosophy.

Dickinson resembles to the great philosopher, Ashtavakra in the understanding of the self based on the concept of zero as the action-less and, in turn, as the timeless. She is the embodiment of silence in the earthly circumference like the silence of the Buddha beyond the time and the space.

Implications

This study has basically discussed the extinction of self in which the time being contracted with the endurance in the permeated moment of consciousness ends.

But it has not tried to capture the idea as what happens to the existence of life of a man when his/her self extinguishes and the time ends in its consequence. There must be some super and divine consciousness of the self hidden behind the gap between the two states of this study. Thus, this study leaves a great gap between the state of the extinction of the self and the end of the time in it.

Dickinson sees better in the dark. This study has also left this gap and not focused much on seeing her better in the dark. Another gap this study has left to discuss is that it has not found much space in this study to elaborate the poetry of Emily Dickinson in the term of the infinitely infinite. This study has discussed Dickinson in the finite and the infinite in the earthly circumference. But the center-less center is the great gap left in this study. Dickinson's poetry can open up the horizon of a center-less center or the infinitely infinite domain too.

This study has not found much space in discussing and exposing the realism of the primal void of zero concerning life and death, birth and redemption. This study has left this gap of the elaboration of the zero as the infinity of the self in this study.

The study has not focused much on the time as the great enemy of all living beings. The soul is traditionally believed to be trapped in the body of man. But this study believes that the mind of man is trapped in time. The freedom of the mind from the trap of the time is still a great gap in this study.

The pain and sufferings are not destructible to life. Rather they will be clues to a higher transformation of life. Therefore, this study will help one lessening the convulsive pain and sufferings of life and finally attain ultimate peace and pleasure of the life.

Endurance of the pain and sufferings leads one to the contraction of time in the fused and permeated moment of consciousness. Therefore, this study will be an inspiration for one to transcend time and free himself/herself from the awesome and troubled state of his/her life.

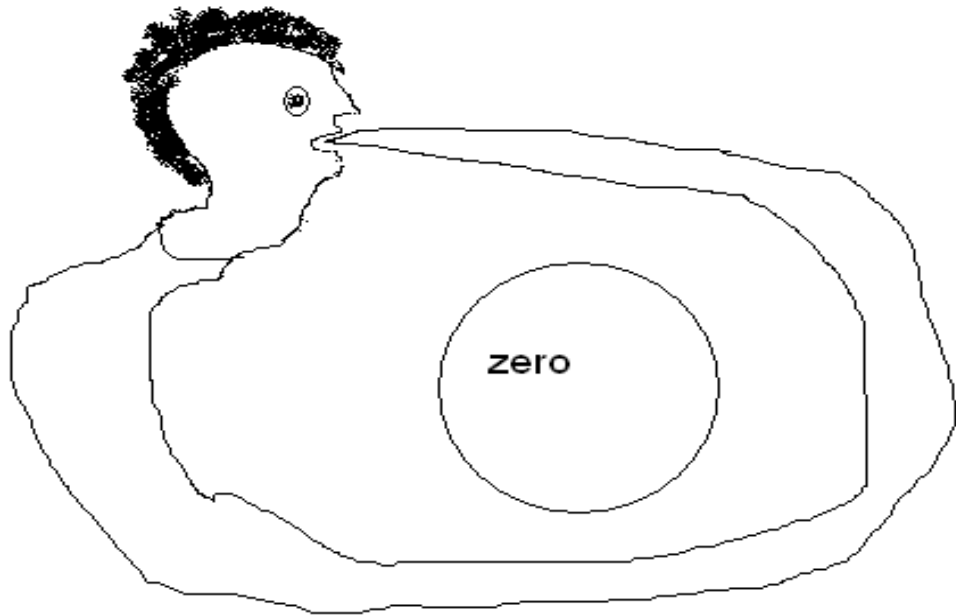
This study will be helpful to one in understanding the life as a journey beyond time. The time is evolution, creating and silence. Reversed-ly, it is the infinity of zero. Therefore, her poetry can lead one to the infinity of time and timelessness through time.

Dickinson's poetry is the repository of the knowledge where all knowing, knowers and known vanish creating the void of the self. This zero or the void state of the self is the secret of the knowledge that is the cessation of all knowledge, knowers and known. Therefore, this study of her poetry can lead one to the timeless journey of life as the knowledge without the knowledge of all kinds.

This study has concentrated on the infinity of time and the timelessness in the poetry of Emily Dickinson. The infinity of time and the timelessness very well apply to all other forms of knowledge and open up an almost inexhaustible field for the further study and research. Comparative approach to the application of the infinity of time and the timelessness to other branch of knowledge may lead to exciting programs. In short, the infinity of time and the timelessness (of the zero) have the generative power to everything. So they are/will be in the heart of every branch of knowledge.

Diagrams of Zero

Zero



1. My tail is in my mouth forming the zero, which is like the extinction of self or like the mingling of gold in ornament, the drop in Ocean and the soil in vessels. Traditionally, the zero comes from the zero and finally disappears in the same zero.
2. The Absolute has an independent existence which cannot be caused. But time has entirely a dependent existence; it changes with every change of our mind. The idea of time disappears for one when the mind is not there. One can have knowledge of time, though he/she is there.
3. In Absolute (Zero) there is neither time nor space nor causation. The idea of time cannot be there seeing that there is no mind, no thought. The idea of space cannot be there, seeing that there is no external change. Similarly, motion and causation cannot exist when there only one.

4. Zero is a dangerous idea that shatters the frame work of logic. (C. Seife)
5. The Absolute has become the universe by coming into time, space and causation. The time, space and causation are like the glass through which the Absolute is seen, and when it is seen on the lower side, it appears as universe.
6. Zero is philosophically absolute. The Absolute has become the Universe. By this is meant not only the material world, but the mental world, the spiritual world-heaven and earth, and in fact, everything that exists. Mind is the name of change and body the name of another change, and so on, and all these changes compose our universe.
7. Zero is eternity. It is great meeting with one's own self on zero point of the self or in its extinction like meeting of man with himself and woman with herself in fall of their persons during their copulation where the triangle - Jnana (knowledge), janata (know-ledger) and jney (knowledged) does not remain (existed) at all.
8. Zero is relatively the minima of Time.
9. The zero is the end of Time.
10. The energy of self is zero. Really; it does not come into existence. Its nature is to travel from zero to zero without coming into existence.
11. Zero is formless. It is zero but it gives force to everything.
12. Zero is beginning (Creator) and the end (Destructor) to everything.
13. All the passing time is the forever now. The forever now is an infinity and timeless. Emily Dickinson believes in the time of the forever composed of nows. But, as her poetry shows a continuous enigma or indeterminacy, many of her poems reveal the frozen, still and degreeless zero state of her permeated consciousness where the time ends. In short, she resembles the great Meera

and Ashtavakra in the agentless action-less and the un-related-ness (Nissango) of the zero or of the self.

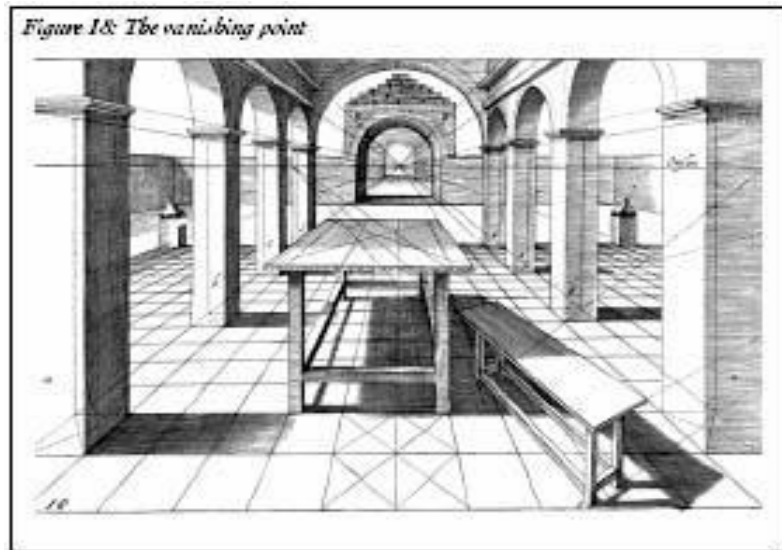


Figure 1: This zero-dimensional object, the vanishing point by Brunelleschi

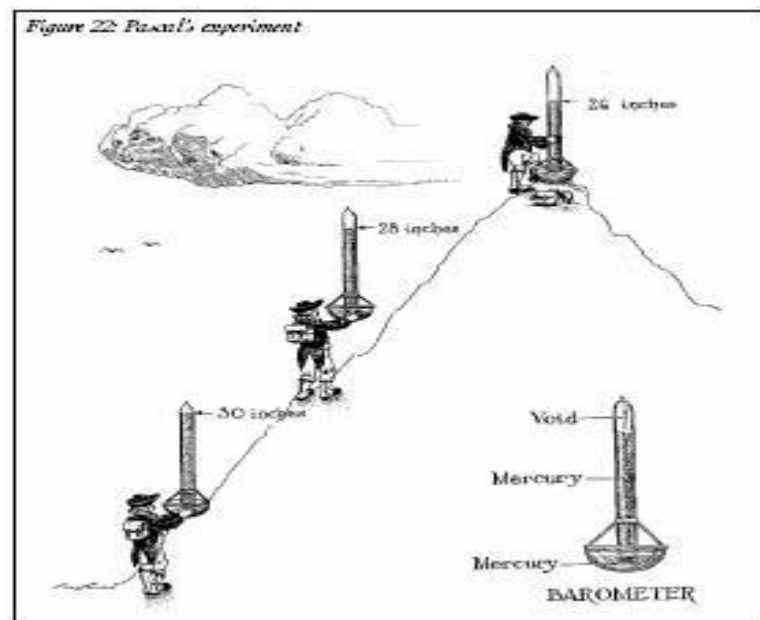


Figure 2: Pascal's experiment perturbed less by a vacuum on top of a mountain than by a vacuum in the valley

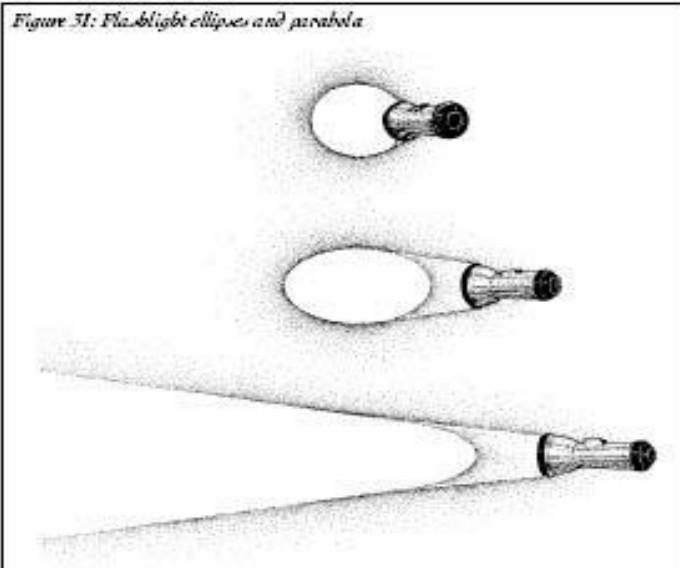


Figure 3: Flashlight ellipses and parabola

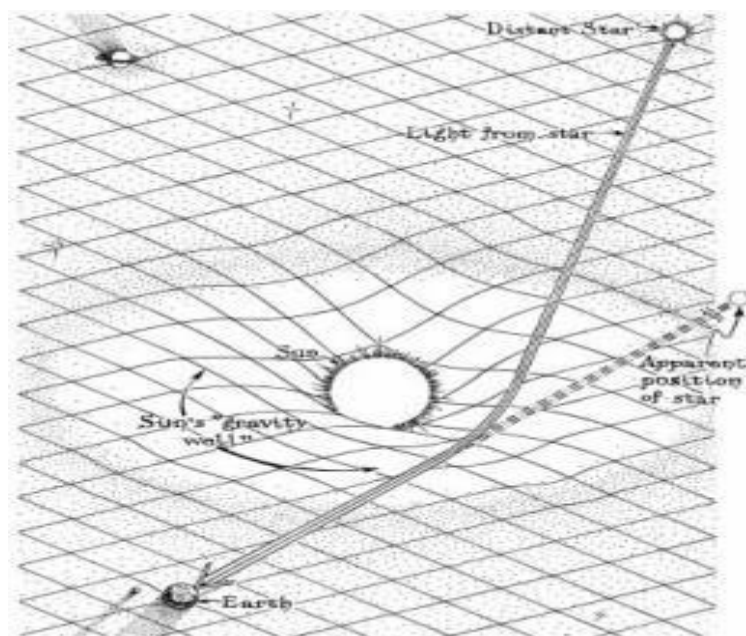


Figure 4: Gravity bends light around the sun.

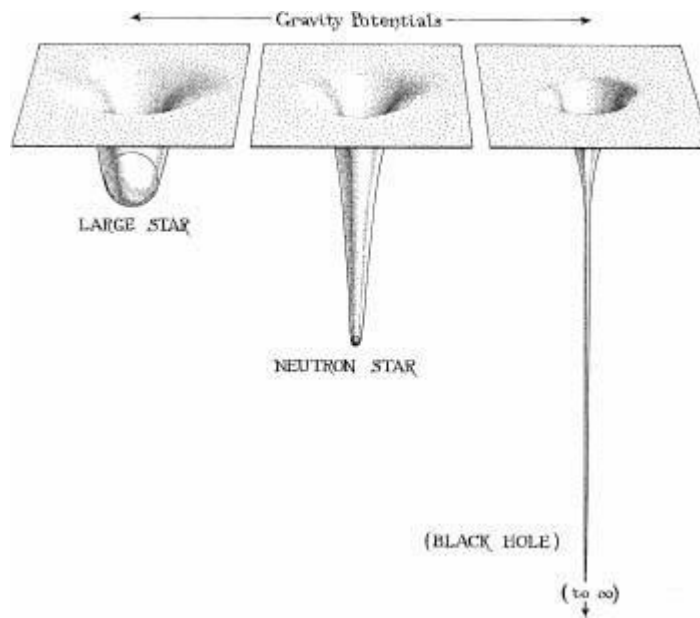


Figure 5. A black hole tears a hole in space-time.

The Figures 2-5 are from Charles Seife's *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea*.

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I undersigned, certified that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the above information correctly describes my qualifications and experiences.

Date: _____

Signature