

A Comparative Study of Longing, Desire and Loss in 19th-century English and Japanese Love Poetry

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Abstract:

The language of love transcends national boundaries. Although love and emotional conflict are universal human experiences, they are expressed differently across cultures and literary traditions. Different poets articulate longing, desire and loss with varying intensity, mood, imagery, and cultural identity. However, despite these differences in expression, the underlying emotions remain fundamentally the same, reflecting a shared human experience beyond geographical and linguistic boundaries. This paper offers a comparative study of nineteenth-century Japanese and English love poetry, investigating how emotions such as longing, desire and loss transcended national boundaries while being shaped by distinct cultural and historical contexts. Set against the backdrop of Meiji modernization in Japan and the industrial, moral, and social transformations of nineteenth-century England, the study examines how poets articulated similar emotional experiences through different moods, intensities, and cultural identities. The study argues that while the expression of emotion varies across literary traditions, the fundamental human experience of love and emotional conflict remains universal. Through close reading and cultural-historical analysis, the paper examines select poems by Masaoka Shiki, Yosano Akiko, and Ochiai Naobumi, alongside poems by Christina Rossetti, A. E. Housman, and Rupert Brooke.

Keywords: Longing, Desire, Loss, Love Poetry, Japanese Poetry, English Poetry, and Nineteenth Century Poetry

Introduction

Love stands as the most universal theme in poetry across all ages, places, and languages. captures the ecstasy of union, the anguish of absence, and the mystery of longing, its sound waves echoing across cultures and centuries like a whisper that never dies away

During the nineteenth century, across the globe, societies experienced rapid transformation driven by industrialization, political reform, technological change, and shifting moral frameworks. These developments altered not only public life but also private emotional worlds. Japan and England, despite their distinct historical trajectories, both faced the challenge of rethinking tradition amid change. Poetry in each culture became a sensitive register through which poets negotiated emerging forms of subjectivity, intimacy, and emotional self-awareness.

Japan's nineteenth century cultural and social transformations reshaped social hierarchies, gender relations, linguistic practices, and literary tastes. These new trends questioned Long-established poetic conventions grounded in suggestion, seasonal imagery, and emotional restraint. Poets such as Masaoka Shiki, Yosano Tekkan, Yosano Akiko, Ochiai Naobumi, and Ozaki Kōyō wrote at a moment when poetry itself was undergoing redefinition. Some sought reform through realism and linguistic clarity, while others embraced emotional directness and individual expression.

England's nineteenth century unfolded under different conditions, yet comparable tensions marked it. The Industrial Revolution transformed patterns of work, family life, and social mobility, while Victorian moral codes shaped public behaviour and emotional expression. Poets such as Christina Rossetti, A. E. Housman, and Rupert

Brooke responded to these pressures in varied ways. Their poetry reveals a persistent negotiation between restraint and intensity, private feeling and public expectation. Rossetti's work, often associated with spiritual discipline, is haunted by emotional conflict and renunciation. Housman's restrained lyricism conveys profound longing and isolation, shaped by social silence and personal loss. In these poems, emotional expression becomes increasingly inward, fractured, and reflective of historical rupture.

Literature review

Research on Japanese and English poetry has examined poetic form, culture, and aesthetics in detail; however, fewer studies compare how nineteenth-century social and cultural changes influenced emotions such as love, longing, desire, and loss in both traditions. This literature review discusses major scholarly contributions and identifies the research gap addressed in the present study.

Research on Christina Rossetti in general focuses on the themes of spirituality, renunciation, gender, and emotional restraint. Gilbert and Gubar argue that Rossetti's poetry reflects the tensions experienced by Victorian women negotiating societal expectations and religious commitments. Other scholars also interpret Rossetti's poetry through feminist frameworks, arguing that her works negotiate Victorian expectations of femininity and religious devotion. Her *Goblin Market* has been studied for its symbolic representation of desire, temptation, and female solidarity. Another critic, Isobel Armstrong argues that Christina Rossetti expresses emotional conflict through highly controlled lyrical forms, using formal restraint, regular rhyme, and measured rhythm to contain tensions between desire, faith, and social expectation (Armstrong-334-36). Studies on Rupert Brooke often note nationalism, idealism, and patriotic sentiment, especially in relation to the World Wars. De la Mare Walter examines Brooke's poetry beyond simplistic patriotic readings. She investigates the tensions between idealism, emotional vulnerability, and the changing realities of modern war. The discussions of A. E. Housman centers on melancholy, mortality, rural reminiscence, and emotional suppression. Critics interpret *A Shropshire Lad* as reflecting anxieties surrounding isolation, transience, and unattainable desire. Queer readings of Housman's poetry have also emerged, exploring coded expressions of emotional and sexual longing within restrictive Victorian and Edwardian social structures. Researchers highlight Housman's concise lyrical style and recurring themes of death and youthful impermanence.

In Japanese literary studies, Masaoka Shiki is widely recognized as a reformer of traditional poetic forms, especially haiku and tanka. Scholars such as Donald Keene and Haruo Shirane argue that Shiki modernized Japanese poetry by introducing realism (*shasei*) and advocating direct observation of everyday life. His literary criticism challenged older conventions and sought to align Japanese poetry with modern literary sensibilities while preserving indigenous aesthetics. Comparative scholars often connect Shiki's realism with broader global literary movements toward modernism and empirical representation.

Research on Yosano Akiko largely examines gender, sensuality, and female subjectivity. Her collection *Midaregami (Tangled Hair)* has been extensively analyzed for its passionate articulation of female desire and resistance to patriarchal norms. Feminist critics consider Akiko a pioneering voice in modern Japanese literature for her challenge to traditional expectations regarding women and sexuality. Studies also explore her role in the development of modern tanka and her engagement with nationalism and social reform during the Meiji era. Ochiai Naobumi has received scholarly attention for his contribution to the modernization of Japanese poetry and the revival of classical literary forms. Critics note that Naobumi sought to preserve traditional Japanese aesthetics while simultaneously adapting poetry to the linguistic and cultural shifts of the Meiji period. His involvement in literary reform movements and educational initiatives positioned him as a significant figure in the transition from classical to modern Japanese literature. Traditional Japanese Poetry by Steven D. Carter explains the importance of brevity, seasonal imagery, and emotional subtlety in Japanese verse traditions. In relation to gender and emotional expression, *The Woman in the Shōji* by Rebecca Copeland discusses how poets such as Yosano Akiko challenged traditional gender roles through emotionally direct and sensual poetry.

Scholarship on nationalism and cultural identity may also include *The English Cult of Literature* by Jonathan Rose, alongside studies of Meiji literary modernization in Japan. In comparative studies, most examine love poetry

within English or Japanese literary traditions separately, comparatively fewer analyze how the emotions of love, longing, and desire are represented across both nineteenth-century English and Japanese poetry.

Research Gaps

The existing research primarily focuses on nationalism, modernity, and gender roles within the poetry of Japan and England; however, the emotional dimensions of longing, desire, and loss remain relatively underexplored. Also, there is a noticeable gap in comparative studies that examine these themes across Japanese and English poetry. The present study addresses these gaps by offering a comparative analysis of nineteenth-century Japanese and English love poetry grounded in close reading and cultural history. By focusing on love, longing, desire, and loss, it demonstrates how emotional expression functions as a response to social change rather than as a timeless lyric impulse. This approach contributes to comparative literature by foregrounding emotion as a historically situated phenomenon shaped by cultural transition. This study adopts a qualitative literary research methodology grounded in close textual analysis, historical contextualization, and comparative interpretation. The methodological approach is shaped by the premise that poetic representations of emotion cannot be separated from the cultural and historical environments in which they emerge. Rather than attempting quantitative generalization, the study seeks to understand how emotions such as love, longing, desire, and loss are articulated through poetic language during periods of social transformation. The research follows an interpretive framework commonly employed in comparative literature and cultural studies. Poetry is approached as a cultural practice that reflects, responds to, and at times resists the conditions of its production. This framework allows emotional expression to be examined not simply as personal sentiment but as a historically situated mode of meaning-making. Such an approach is particularly suited to cross-cultural analysis, where differences in form, language, and aesthetic convention require careful contextual interpretation rather than formal equivalence.

Analysis of select Japanese poems

For the Japanese love poems, this study has taken Masaoka Shiki, Yosano Akiko, and Ochiai Naobumi into the discussion. Masaoka Shiki occupies a pivotal position in the transformation of nineteenth-century Japanese poetry. Although he is most frequently discussed as a reformer of poetic form, his significance extends beyond technical innovation. Shiki's insistence on *shasei* (sketching from life) reshaped not only how poetry described the external world but also how inner emotional experience could be represented. In his work, emotion emerges not through inherited symbolism but through close attention to lived reality, often marked by uncertainty, fragility, and restraint.

Shiki's reformist impulse was directed against what he perceived as excessive artifice in classical poetry. Traditional *waka* and *haiku*, while aesthetically refined, relied heavily on allusion and conventional imagery to convey feeling. Shiki questioned whether such conventions could adequately express emotional experience in a rapidly changing world. His call for realism was therefore inseparable from an ethical concern. Poetry, he believed, should be grounded in honest observation rather than poetic habit. This commitment altered the emotional texture of verse, allowing feelings such as longing, desire, and loss to appear as immediate and personal rather than symbolic or idealized.

Many of Shiki's poems are marked by a subdued but persistent emotional tension. Rather than declaring love or grief openly, he presents moments of isolation, physical weakness, or quiet reflection that invite emotional interpretation. His frequent references to illness and bodily limitation are especially significant. Illness in Shiki's poetry is not merely autobiographical; it becomes a lens through which emotional vulnerability is intensified. Longing appears as a sense of distance from the world, while loss is registered through an awareness of impermanence that feels personal rather than aestheticized. One of Shiki's *tanka* illustrates this shift clearly:

Yo ni idete ware omou koto mukashi yori
yami wa fukaki zo michi mo hakanaki
Going out into the world, what I feel now
more than ever before-the darkness deepens,

And the road ahead is uncertain.

(Shiki, trans. adapted from Beichman 112)

The poem avoids overt emotional declaration, yet its imagery of deepening darkness and uncertain paths conveys a profound sense of existential unease. What is striking here is the absence of conventional love imagery. Instead, emotion is conveyed through mood and perception. The speaker's emotional state is inseparable from his experience of the world, reflecting Shiki's belief that poetry should emerge from direct engagement with reality. According to Beichman, "The speaker's sense of dislocation reflects a modern emotional consciousness emerging in Meiji poetry (Shiki qtd. in Beichman 72)."

Scholars often emphasize Shiki's role in modernizing poetic technique, but his contribution to emotional expression deserves equal attention. By rejecting excessive ornamentation, Shiki created space for emotions that are hesitant, incomplete, and unresolved. This quality distinguishes his work from both classical court poetry and later romantic expressions of passion. His poems do not seek emotional intensity for its own sake, rather, they register feeling as something fragile and contingent.

Yosano Akiko stands as a transformative modern poet, particularly in her reconfiguration of love and desire. Writing at the intersection of literary reform, gender debate, and cultural modernization, Akiko did more than introduce emotional intensity into poetry. She redefined who could speak desire and how that desire could be voiced. Her work challenges the long-standing assumption that poetic intimacy must be mediated through restraint, symbolism, or masculine authority.

Akiko's early collection *Midaregami* (Tangled Hair, 1901) marks a decisive break from classical conventions. While tanka had traditionally expressed love through implication and seasonal imagery, Akiko's poems often speak directly from the body and its emotions. Desire in her poetry is neither abstract nor allegorical. It is immediate, personal, and unapologetically articulated. This directness unsettled contemporary readers precisely because it disrupted established expectations of feminine modesty and poetic decorum, as he writes:

Yuku e made koi shite itashi waga kokoro

hakanaki mono to nado omoi ken

How could I ever have thought my heart,

loving you to the very end, was something fleeting, something insubstantial?

(Yosano, trans. Goldstein and Shinoda 54)

The speaker's astonishment at her own depth of feeling reveals a crucial shift in emotional perspective. Love is no longer framed as transient or socially regulated; it is asserted as enduring and substantial. The poem does not seek validation from tradition or moral authority. Instead, it affirms emotional experience as self-legitimizing. This assertion of desire marks a radical departure from earlier poetic norms, where emotional excess was often tempered by aesthetic distance. Akiko's representation of desire is inseparable from questions of agency. Unlike classical female voices that often appear constrained or idealized, Akiko writes from a position of emotional autonomy. Her poems claim the right to feel, to long, and to desire without apology. Scholars such as G. G. Rowley and Sarah Frederick have emphasized the feminist implications of this stance, noting how Akiko's work intersects with emerging debates about women's education, individuality, and social participation during the Meiji period. However, to read her poetry solely through a feminist lens risks overlooking its broader poetic intervention. Akiko does not merely invert gender roles, but she also reshapes the emotional grammar of tanka itself.

Loss and longing in Akiko's poetry also take on new forms. While longing had traditionally been associated with distance or absence, Akiko often presents it as an intensification of presence. Desire does not fade into melancholy; it sharpens emotional awareness. Even when addressing separation or fear of loss, her poems retain an assertive emotional voice. This is evident in poems where love is framed as a force that resists impermanence rather than yielding to it.

Ochiai Naobumi occupies a complex and often understated position in the landscape of Meiji-era poetry. Unlike figures such as Shiki or Akiko, whose contributions are frequently framed in terms of radical reform, Naobumi's work reflects a quieter but no less significant engagement with the emotional consequences of modernization. As both a poet and a linguist, he was deeply invested in questions of language, national identity, and cultural continuity. These concerns shape the emotional texture of his poetry, particularly in its treatment of longing and loss. Naobumi's poetry frequently expresses a sense of emotional ambivalence rooted in cultural transition. While he participated in the shintaishi movement and supported linguistic reform, his verse often looks backward as much as forward. Longing in his poems is not limited to romantic attachment; it extends to place, memory, and a sense of cultural belonging. This broader emotional scope distinguishes his work from the more intensely personal expressions found in Akiko. A recurring motif in Naobumi's poetry is nostalgia for the familiar rhythms of the past. In one representative tanka, he writes:

Kuni no uta kokoro ni nokoru furusato no

shima no kaze koso ware o yobu kana

The songs of my land remain within my heart; the wind of my home island alone keeps calling me back to where I belong.

(Naobumi qtd. in Miner 247).

Here, longing is directed toward homeland and memory rather than toward an individual beloved. The emotional pull of the poem lies in its quiet invocation of distance and return. The wind from the poet's native place functions not as a symbol of romantic desire but as a call from a vanishing world. Loss, in this context, is cultural as much as personal.

The analysis of the above poems suggest that the distinctive character of nineteenth-century Japanese love poetry lies in its subtle and controlled treatment of love, longing, desire and loss. Unlike many Western practices that frequently rely on the passionate declaration of love, Japanese poets often represent love through suggestion, emotional nuance, and an awareness of transitoriness. In the works of Yosano Tekkan, Masaoka Shiki, Yosano Akiko, and Ochiai Naobumi, love emerges not merely as romantic attachment but as a complex emotional state shaped by longing, memory, absence, and self-reflection. Tekkan presents love as an idealized and elevating experience, while Shiki locates emotion within the uncertainties of lived experience, reflected in his observation that "the darkness deepens" and "the road ahead is uncertain" (Beichman 112). Akiko expands the possibilities of love poetry by giving voice to personal desire and emotional selfhood; in *Midaregami*, the image of "crimson flowers bloom" (Yosano 17) transforms desire into a legitimate poetic subject while preserving the delicacy of the tanka tradition. Naobumi, meanwhile, emphasizes nostalgia and emotional hesitation, portraying love as inseparable from remembrance and cultural continuity. Collectively, these poets demonstrate that the modernization of Japanese love poetry did not replace traditional sensibilities with overt emotional expression; rather, it preserved a uniquely Japanese preference for subtlety, emotional moderation, and the beauty of incompleteness. Love is often conveyed through longing rather than possession, through moments when "the darkness deepens" (Beichman 112) rather than through certainty, and through fleeting images such as Akiko's "crimson flowers bloom" (Yosano 17) that suggest desire without exhausting its meaning. The study therefore finds that nineteenth-century Japanese love poetry developed a modern emotional consciousness while maintaining aesthetic values deeply rooted in Japanese literary culture, creating a uniquely nuanced poetics of love that balances desire with restraint and individuality with cultural memory.

Analysis of select English poems

The discussion on English poets will explore Rossetti's treatment of love in her poetry, which is intricately linked to her religious beliefs. Rather than celebrating romantic fulfillment, her poems often delve into love as a force that is subjected to testing, delay, or renunciation. This does not result in emotional absence. On the contrary, restraint becomes the means through which emotional depth is conveyed. Desire is present in her poetry, but it is filtered through spiritual language and moral hesitation, creating a tension that defines much of her emotional landscape.

This tension is particularly evident in poems that address romantic refusal. In “No, Thank You, John,” Rossetti presents a speaker who rejects emotional obligation with clarity and composure. The poem resists the Victorian expectation that women should accept affection as duty. However, the firmness of the refusal does not negate emotional awareness. Instead, it asserts the right to emotional autonomy, revealing how restraint can function as an act of self-definition rather than submission. Longing and loss appear most powerfully in Rossetti’s meditations on separation and death. In “Remember,” the speaker anticipates absence with quiet melancholy, asking to be remembered but also granting permission to forget. This emotional gesture is neither dramatic nor sentimental. Loss is accepted as inevitable, yet its emotional weight is unmistakable. The poem illustrates how Rossetti negotiates the boundary between personal attachment and spiritual resignation, allowing affection and detachment to coexist.

Desire in Rossetti’s poetry often operates through displacement rather than declaration. “Goblin Market,” often read allegorically, presents sensual imagery that stands in for temptation, yearning, and emotional risk. While the poem resists a single interpretation, its lush descriptions suggest that desire cannot be fully contained by moral discourse. Instead, it is redirected, transformed, and ultimately redefined through sacrifice and solidarity. This indirect treatment of desire reflects the broader Victorian strategy of encoding emotion within symbolic structures.

What distinguishes Rossetti’s emotional poetics is her refusal to resolve tension neatly. Love is neither fully embraced nor entirely denied. Longing persists even within renunciation, and loss becomes a space for ethical reflection rather than closure. Critics have often emphasized her spiritual orientation, but such readings risk overlooking the emotional labor her poems perform. Rossetti does not erase desire; she disciplines it, shaping emotion into a reflective and morally charged experience. Within the context of this paper, Rossetti represents a mode of emotional expression defined by inwardness and control. Her poetry demonstrates how Victorian emotional culture valued restraint not as emotional deficiency but as a form of moral and psychological depth. Love, longing, and loss are not diminished by discipline; they are intensified through it. Rossetti’s work thus establishes an emotional framework that later poets would inherit, resist, or transform as the century progressed.

A. E. Housman’s poetry occupies a distinctive place in the emotional landscape of late nineteenth-century English literature. Marked by formal clarity and emotional restraint, his verse conveys a persistent sense of longing that is rarely named directly. Unlike Victorian poets who frame emotion through religious reflection or moral discourse, Housman presents feeling as an unspoken burden carried quietly by the individual. His poetry suggests that emotional intensity does not require overt expression; rather, it gains force through silence, repetition, and understatement. Much of Housman’s work, particularly in *A Shropshire Lad*, is shaped by the experience of emotional isolation. Love appears as something unattainable or unacknowledged, often existing only in memory or anticipation. The absence of an explicit romantic declaration creates an atmosphere of emotional distance, yet this distance is precisely what gives his poetry its poignancy. Longing in Housman’s verse is not dramatic or hopeful; it is habitual, persistent, and quietly endured.

This emotional restraint is closely tied to social context. Housman wrote within a culture that offered little space for the open articulation of certain forms of desire. As a result, emotion in his poetry is frequently displaced into images of youth, landscape, or mortality. The recurring figure of the young man, poised between vitality and loss, becomes a vessel for feelings that cannot be spoken openly. Desire remains present, but it is encoded, suggested through tone rather than declared through language. Loss is perhaps the most dominant emotional register in Housman’s work. Death, the passing of youth, and the inevitability of separation recur with striking regularity. Yet these themes are treated without sentimentality. His diction is plain, his rhythms measured, and his emotional gestures restrained. This controlled style intensifies the emotional effect, allowing sorrow to accumulate gradually rather than erupt suddenly. Loss is not framed as a singular event but as a condition of existence. Housman’s approach to emotion differs markedly from that of Rossetti. Where Rossetti disciplines desire through moral reflection, Housman internalizes it through silence. His poems rarely offer consolation, spiritual or otherwise. Instead, they acknowledge emotional pain as enduring and unresolved. This refusal of resolution contributes to the modern quality of his work, anticipating later poetic explorations of alienation and emotional fragmentation.

Within the framework of this paper, Housman represents a mode of emotional expression defined by suppression rather than renunciation. Love and desire are not denied, but they are rendered inaccessible, confined to the inner life of the speaker. Longing becomes a quiet persistence, and loss a constant presence rather than a moment of crisis. Through this restrained yet deeply affective poetics, Housman reveals how emotional life in late nineteenth-century England was shaped as much by what could not be said as by what could be expressed. Rupert Brooke represents a transitional emotional sensibility in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century English poetry, standing at the threshold between Victorian romantic idealism and the disillusionment that would soon follow. His poetry is marked by emotional elevation, clarity, and a belief in the ennobling power of love. Unlike Rossetti's disciplined restraint or Housman's quiet melancholy, Brooke's emotional world is characterized by confidence and affirmation. Love, in his verse, is often imagined as pure, uplifting, and morally sustaining.

Brooke's treatment of love reflects the cultural optimism of the late Victorian and Edwardian periods. His poems frequently present affection as an ideal state rather than a conflicted experience. Emotional complexity is simplified into clarity, and desire is sublimated into admiration. This approach gives his poetry its lyrical brightness, but it also reveals its limitations. Love in Brooke's work rarely confronts contradiction or inner tension; instead, it aspires toward harmony and completeness. Longing in Brooke's poetry is similarly idealized. It often takes the form of aspiration rather than lack. Whether directed toward a beloved individual or toward an imagined homeland, longing becomes a forward-looking emotional force. In poems such as "The Soldier," affection for place and identity merges with personal feeling, transforming love into a collective sentiment. This fusion of private emotion and national ideal illustrates how individual longing can be absorbed into broader cultural narratives.

Desire, when present, is distanced from the body. Brooke's poetry avoids the physical immediacy found in Akiko or even the coded tension of Housman. Instead, desire is elevated into spiritual or aesthetic appreciation. This distancing reflects a lingering Victorian discomfort with bodily expression, even as emotional affirmation becomes more pronounced. Love is celebrated, but it remains abstracted from psychological conflict. Loss occupies an ambiguous position in Brooke's work. While death appears as a theme, it is often framed through idealization rather than grief. Sacrifice is rendered noble, and loss is transformed into affirmation. This treatment reflects a pre-war sensibility in which emotional meaning is derived from purpose and belief rather than from suffering.

A comparative reading:

A comparative reading of Masaoka Shiki, Yosano Akiko, and Ochiai Naobumi alongside Christina Rossetti, Rupert Brooke, and A. E. Housman reveals both convergences and divergences in the representation of love, longing, desire, and loss during the nineteenth century. Japanese poets increasingly explored emotion as a component of emerging individual selfhood. Shiki's awareness that "the darkness deepens" and that "the road ahead is uncertain" (Beichman 112) reflects the emotional uncertainties of a society in transition, while Akiko's *Midaregami* transforms desire into a legitimate poetic subject through images such as "crimson flowers bloom" in the "spring of my life." Naobumi similarly associates longing with cultural memory and displacement, expressing attachment through restraint rather than declaration (qtd. in Miner 247). By contrast, English poets often filter emotion through moral, spiritual, or social frameworks. In Rossetti's "Goblin Market," desire appears in the temptation to "long to buy," while love ultimately becomes an ethic of sacrifice and sisterhood. Brooke's "The Soldier" redirects personal affection into patriotic devotion through the image of "some corner of a foreign field," and Housman's poetry repeatedly portrays love as unspoken and unattainable, as in "Because I liked you better / Than suits a man to say." While both traditions engage with longing and loss, Japanese poetry tends to emphasize emotional subtlety, impermanence, and cultural continuity, whereas English poetry privileges introspection, remembrance, and moral reflection. Together, these poets demonstrate how universal experiences of love and desire acquire distinct meanings when shaped by different literary traditions and historical circumstances.

A further point of comparison lies in the relationship between language, form, and emotional expression. The Japanese poets examined in this study—Shiki, Akiko, and Naobumi—primarily employ the concise forms of

haiku and tanka, which rely on brevity, suggestion, and evocative imagery rather than extended explanation. Their language is economical, often conveying profound emotional states through a single image or phrase, such as Akiko's "crimson flowers bloom" in *Midaregami* or Shiki's observation that "the darkness deepens" (Beichman 112). Meaning frequently emerges through implication, silence, and the reader's participation in completing the emotional experience. This stylistic restraint reflects long-standing Japanese aesthetic principles associated with subtlety, impermanence, and emotional moderation. In contrast, Rossetti, Brooke, and Housman work within longer lyric forms, including narrative poems, sonnets, and ballad-like structures, which allow for greater elaboration of thought and feeling. Rossetti's richly descriptive language in *Goblin Market*, Brooke's idealized and rhetorical style in "The Soldier," and Housman's musical repetition and reflective tone in poems such as "Because I Liked You Better" demonstrate a preference for sustained emotional development. Whereas Japanese poetry often compresses emotion into suggestive images and carefully measured silence, English poetry tends to unfold emotion through narrative progression, lyrical reflection, and direct verbal expression. These formal differences reveal contrasting aesthetic approaches: Japanese poets achieve emotional intensity through concentration and implication, while English poets create depth through elaboration, rhythm, and sustained meditation on feeling.

Conclusion

The feeling of love expands beyond the boundaries. No map to pin it, no clock to time it. Across every tongue and terrain, it resounds, a cosmic frequency tuning us to one another. The poets examined in this study reveal distinct ways of articulating longing, desire and loss, yet their works consistently point to the universal emotional force of love. Cultural traditions, social expectations, and literary conventions shape how love is expressed, but they do not alter its essential emotional significance. Thus, despite the diversity in expression, the fundamental emotional experiences of longing, desire, and loss remain remarkably consistent across national and historical boundaries.

The comparison therefore reveals two complementary models of emotional modernity. English poets often emphasize individual emotional expression, personal agency, and the exploration of inner feeling, whereas Japanese poets frequently balance personal desire with social responsibility, aesthetic restraint, and an awareness of impermanence. Yet these differences do not suggest fundamentally different experiences of love. Rather, they illustrate how a universal emotion is interpreted through distinct cultural lenses.

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