ISSN: 1994-4217 (Print) 2518-5586(online)

Journal of College of Education

Available online at: https://eduj.uowasit.edu.iq

Lect. Hafsa Ra'ad Abdullateef

College of Education for Women- Al Iraqia University

Email: hafsa.abdullateef@aliraqia.edu.iq

Keywords:

Amy Lowell, Imagism, Imagist movement, woman's image.

CC BY

A r t i c l e i n f o

Article history:

Received 5. Jul.2026

Accepted 3. Sep.2026

Published 10. Nov.2026

The Image of Woman in Amy Lowell's Poetry

A B S T R A C T

Amy Lawrence Lowell (1874–1925) is one of the most distinguished poets and a prominent member of the Imagist School. She is a woman poet who participated in the twentieth-century American Imagist movement. The perception of women's suffering in contemporary culture has been the primary subject of the modern century.

The main subject of this paper is the analysis of Lowell's selected poems and the image of modern women. This study aims to examine women's roles in literary culture and society. It made her a good defender of poetry. In her poems, she uses the image of a 'woman' in "The Sisters," "The Taxi," "Patterns," and "A Lady." These poems show that her aim was instead to explore her female desires and offer her readers the chance to explore their own. Lowell's poems express her poetic voice, and her female desires also reveal a claim to citizenship in the art world. Also, Lowell's poetical and critical output will explore her active role in culture and her vision of women.

This paper summarizes the analytical study of women's images in Lowell's poems. The aim of her poems, which attempt to explain, was to reveal her female wants and allow readers to express their own, as these poems illustrate. In addition to expressing her poetic voice, Lowell's female aspirations demonstrate her right to citizenship in the creative world. Additionally, Lowell's analytical and literary work will be used to examine her perspective on women and her active participation in society.

© 2026 EDUJ, College of Education for Human Science, Wasit University

DOI: https://doi.org/10.31185/eduj.Vol65.Iss1.5312

صورة المرأة في شعر ايمي لويل

م. حفصه رعد عبد اللطيف
الجامعة العراقية ـ كلية التربية للبنات

الخلاصة:

تعد إيمي لورانس لويل (١٨٧٤–١٩٢٥) من أبرز الشاعرات وأهم الشخصيات في المدرسة التصويرية الأمريكية. وقد شاركت في الحركة التصويرية الأمريكية في القرن العشرين، وكانت معاناة المرأة في المجتمع المعاصر موضوعًا رئيسيًا في الأدب الحديث.

وقد تناول هذا البحث تحليل مجموعة مختارة من قصائد لول مع التركيز على صورة المرأة في الشعر الحديث. كما يهدف إلى دراسة دور النساء في الثقافة الأدبية والمجتمع. مما جعلها من أبرز المدافعات عن الشعر، استخدمت لول في قصائدها، مثل "الأخوات" و"سيارة الأجرة" و"الأنماط" و"السيدة"، رمز المرأة للتعبير عن أفكارها. وان الهدف من هذه هو استكشاف رغبات المرأة، ومنح القراء فرصة لاستكشاف مشاعرهم الخاصة. كما تعكس قصائد لول صوتها الشعري الفريد، وتعبر عن رغبتها في إثبات وجودها في عالم الفن. فضلا عن ذلك، سيتناول هذا البحث الإنتاج الشعري والنقدي للول لاستكشاف دورها الفعال في الثقافة ورؤيتها للمرأة.

تُقدم هذه الورقة ملخصًا للدراسة التحليلية حول صور المرأة في شعر لول، كان هدف قصائدها كما بينا، هو الكشف عن رغبات المرأة ودعوة القراء للتعبير عن آرائهم. فإلى جانب تعبيرها عن رؤيتها الشعرية، تُظهر طموحات لول الأدبية حقها في المشاركة الفعّالة في المجال الإبداعي. وقد تم استخدام أعمال لول التحليلية والأدبية لاستعراض نظرتها تجاه المرأة ودورها الفعال في المجتمع.

الكلمات المفتاحية: إيمي لويل، التصويرية ، الحركة التصويرية ، صورة المرأة.

Introduction:

Amy Lowell (1874–1925) was one of the greatest writers of her day, a master lecturer, and a communicator as well as a critic. Her writing of more than 600 poems strengthened her advocacy of impressionism as a strong substitute for conventional forms. The vast amount of poems degrades her canon by mixing inferior pieces with masterworks like “Patterns” and “The Sisters,” which uphold the artistic merit of women. She was mostly ignored until feminist criticism upheld her status as one of the greatest poets of the early 20th century, partly because her bisexual and lesbian perspectives on interpersonal relationships were disapproved of by homophobic critics. Some of Lowell’s contributions to the emerging imagism poetry movement were *Can Grande’s Castle* (1918), *Pictures of the Floating World* (1919), *What’s O’clock* (1925), *Ballads for Sale* (1927), which includes some of her most well-known short poems, and *Legends* (1921), a critically acclaimed anthology of narrative verse. (Snodgrass, 2000).

Lowell is a remarkable poet who rejects the rules and conventions of nineteenth-century verse, favoring common language and a preference for simple rhyming schemes that are consistent with the modernist concept. Her rendition of the volume *A Dome of Numerous Colored Glass*, her introduction to *Sword Blades along with Poppy Seed* 1914, in the 1917 *North American Evaluation*, and her extensive use of polyphony in *Man, Women, and Ghost* in 1916 all serve as reminders that she was a true pioneer of verse. Lowell was twenty-eight years old when she realised her life's purpose and composed her first poem. Her first poem, "A Fixed Idea," was published in the *Atlantic Monthly* for August 1910. The Houghton Mifflin Company then released her debut poetry collection, *A Dome of Many Colored Glass*, in October 1912. Even as debut volumes go, this little collection of sixty-nine poems is not particularly good, and its tone differs greatly from that of her later works. Lowell revealed that her first version of *Well-Informed* was a stadium with many Tinted Goblets. However, several of her compositions, particularly her outstanding verses, were featured in the first and second versions of *Some Imagist Poets: An Anthology*, released in 1915 and 1916, respectively.(Pallathadka et al., 2021)

The imagist poet Lowell was particularly affected by the method known as polyphonic prose, which he learned from the French poet Paul Fort (1872–1961). Fletcher, who also enjoyed employing this approach, came up with the phrase for it. According to Lowell, this form is like free verse but more liberated. Because it made use of all the poetic 'voices,' including meter, cadence, rhyme, alliteration, and assonance, she referred to it as the most flexible form of poetic expression. Lowell was going to find her calling in the workplace. Lowell discovered that, like Ezra Pound, Hilda Doolittle, Carl Sandburg, and others, she was an imagist after reading an edition of a poetry magazine in which Ezra Pound introduced imagism, an avant-garde movement based on late 19th-century French symbolist poetry. Based on the Imagist view that "the sound should be an echo to the sense" and that language should be clear, concise, and focused on the image itself, she utilised polyphonic, unrhymed free verse, which she termed vers libre, in her second, wildly popular book, *Sword Blades and Poppy Seed* (1914). When her writing is in this format, the poem is printed in prose, but the writing style represents many poetic forms. In her essay "A Consideration of Modern Poetry," which she published in *the North American Review* in January 1917, Lowell explained this method. Though many critics attacked Lowell's poetry for lacking substance, many also admired her skill with polyphonic prose. (Galens, 2002)

'Polyphonic prose' was initially attempted by the English poet Amy Lowell. She tried using this specific form for a variety of picture patterns. Her use of color imagery is the earliest example of her style. The hue changes of natural objects and human moods produce striking imagistic patterns in her poetry. Her utilization of color to convey impressions and vividness is an unusual realistic approach to producing eye-catching imagery. A simultaneous presentation of audiovisual elements is achieved through colours integrated into the lyrical composition, rhythmic changes, and a phonological variety of sequences. This polyphonic prose experiment can also be used to systematically and simultaneously document the different aspects of an image that are compressed in terms of contrast and compromise. The cataloguing method attempts a thorough enumeration, expressing the inner worry of the

visualizer of the visuals. The visuals and objects are cohesively and rationally connected to the experiences and sentiments. (Munich & Bradshaw, 2004). Paul Fort, a Frenchman, gave Lowell the concept for her new form. He combined prose and an Alexandrine section in one writing piece, but the text was printed as straight prose, leaving it up to the reader to pick out the rhythms and line breaks. Captivated by this typeface, she began experimenting with an alternative shape. John Gordon Fletcher, the one who proposed the term 'polyphonic prose,' offers the following observations regarding her research and findings:

"It seemed to her that there must be some way of fusing unrhymed vers libre and rhymed metrical patterns, giving the rich decorative quality of the one and the powerful conciseness of statement of the other. In short, she was seeking some means whereby she might free herself, and the other poets after her, from a constant and dogmatic adherence to a single meter throughout a poem. In this respect, she was acting as the successor of Coleridge, Keats, and Poe, who spent their lives trying to make English meter more flexible to mood and richer in sound effect. . .

She found it possible to vary the rhythm and metre of these strange new poems of hers almost at will, following the inner emotion of the thing she had to say. . .In short, here was the opportunity, long sought, of displaying, within the limits of a single poem, all the resources of her art." (Fletcher, 1915)

Lowell describes imagist poetry as follows: "Imagist verse is a verse which is written in conformity with certain tenets voluntarily adopted by the poets as being those by which they consider the best poetry to be produced. They may be right, or they may be wrong, but this is their belief." (Lowell, 1917) As a result, to form the best poems, imagist poets adhere to the previously established guidelines. To create a beautiful tableau, every element in the text must be in perfect balance or consistency with every other element. Poets from both England and America spearheaded the important modernist poetry movement known as Imagism in the early 20th century. From 1912 until 1914, this style of poetry was very popular in both England and America. The school's founder, Ezra Pound, eventually refined his concept into three imagist poetic tenets. Imagism highlights the benefits of accuracy, compactness, and clarity in language. They embraced visuals and spoke sharply. 'Des Imagists', an anthology of imagist poetry produced by Pound in both England and America in 1914, marked the culmination of the movement. Pound, H. D., Richard Aldington, F. S. Flint, Amy Lowell, James Joyce, and William Carol Williams were among the poets whose works were included in the collection. Imagism peaked in both Britain and the United States within a limited period, commonly regarded as 1909–1917. In fact, Lowell did not abandon the principles of Imagism to establish herself as an Imagist. Pound founded Imagism. Conversely, she was adamant that the following ideas ought to serve as the foundation for Imagist poetry: "The object depicted must be dealt with directly and to the point, whether it be subjective or objective; the words used must be concise and clean, and not a single word that has nothing to do with the content must be used; as to rhythm and rhyme, the natural sense of meter of poetry should be followed, and there is no need to adhere to strict meter and rhyme." Pound's theories of imagistic writing, which Lowell has adhered to throughout her life, are the same rules for her poetry; however, she emphasises the expression of her feelings and senses more than Pound did, and she even more so avoids the metre and rhyme of poetry. Imagist poets

sought inspiration from a variety of themes as they worked to develop a fresh poetic voice as part of the modernist movement, moving away from the sentimentality and moralising tone of Victorian poetry. (Galens, 2002). Lowell's famous divide with Pound regarding the term imagism and his role in leading the movement have become a part of modernist lore. Whether she is recalled as the intruder who leveraged wealth and familial ties to appropriate the term from Pound, dilute its significance, and commercialize it for the general public, or whether she is seen as crucial in presenting modern poetic concepts to American audiences through her astute use and promotion of the term, varies based on the narrator's perspective. Undoubtedly, the conflict between her and Pound, along with her famously outspoken support for Imagist poetry, overshadows Lowell's other achievements. (Munich & Bradshaw, 2004)

Across literary history, female intellectuals have been compelled to exist on the edges of society within the established norms and regulations of the patriarchal system; their identities were limited by the rigorous constraints on the definition and role of women as limited authors. The area of women and writing analyzes these limitations and concerns by demonstrating that women's literature arises from the contexts affecting women. *Women and Writing* seeks to examine patriarchal literature through a gender lens, striving to transcend boundaries by developing an independent literature in its periphery while redefining and recentering women's literary works. In *Women and Writing*, numerous figures, including Virginia Woolf, Elaine Showalter, Susan Gilbert, and Sandra Gubar, are discussed. They highlight the responsibilities and restrictions of a woman in society as both a creator and a person; by examining these circumstances, they give voice to women and enable them to take charge of their own lives. A contemporary, exceptional poet of the 20th century, Amy Lowell seeks to do exactly that; her poetry reflects the inner struggles of female authors. She investigates the absence of female tradition during that era, the constraints, and the suppression within a patriarchal structure, simply existing in the margins of female creators. Identifying as an Imagist poet, she relies heavily on her capacity to succinctly depict any theme or subject she aims to elaborate on. (Derebek, 2022).

A beautiful device in Amy Lowell's poetic technique is imagism. In many poems, she uses the image of a 'woman' in "The Sisters," "The Taxi," "Patterns," and "A Lady." To establish themselves as legitimate poets, literary women had to fight against the prevailing myths around femininity. Elizabeth Browning, Emily Dickinson, and Sappho are just a few of the female literary figures that Lowell mentions in her poem "The Sisters," which is aimed at creating a female literary lineage. To be regarded as one of the greatest male writers of the contemporary age, Lowell examines the sense of isolation and loneliness that comes with being a woman writer. Examining the routes taken by her foremothers, she finds her corpus of work. Lowell helps herself and upcoming generations get over the "anxiety of authorship". To prove that a woman's literature can only be accomplished through a new literary matrilineage, a woman writer should pursue her female power in her writing despite the difficulties of having an identity of authorship, including the "anxiety of authorship". Gilbert and Gubar urge female writers to study the lives of women in the 19th century and see how they overcame their "anxiety of authorship".According to their book, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*, women

accomplish this by "recovering or remembering the lost foremothers who could help them find their distinctive female power". (Derebek, 2022) Although the title "The Sisters" would imply an intimate family theme, Lowell's poem takes a completely different route, as the first lines make clear: "Taking us by and large, we're a queer lot/ We women who write poetry." Thus, the sisters in this instance are specifically 'women who write poetry.' Lowell allows viewers and readers to observe her three-hour discussion with American poet Emily Dickinson, English woman Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and Greek poet Sappho. As critic Chery Walker notes, this is an unconventional move for its genre; unlike previous female and male poets, Lowell cites three poetic forerunners. During the 1970s and 1980s, many feminist literary academics began studying Sappho, Browning, and Dickinson, among other women writers who had been overlooked in literary history. Lowell's allusions to these three well-known female poets are primarily responsible for the attention that "The Sisters" has garnered. (Gregory, 1969). Lowell's allusions to these three well-known female poets are primarily responsible for the attention that "The Sisters" has garnered. Women were compelled to describe themselves as a different kind of feminine because they felt that the poetess was 'frightfully near and rather terrifying'. Women tried to be on equal footing with their male counterparts, who highlighted gender differences, by moving away from 'women's poetry.' In *The Poet as Woman*, John Crowe Ransom indicated his struggle in appraising Edna St. Vincent Millay, a poet who 'is also a woman':

"No poet ever registered herself more deliberately in that light. She therefore fascinates the male reviewer, at the same time horrifies him a little too. He will probably swing between attachment and antipathy, which may be the very attitudes provoked in him by generic woman in the flesh, as well as by the literary remains of Emily Dickinson, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Christina Rossetti, and doubtless, if we only had enough of her, Sappho herself."

"The Sisters" might be interpreted as a meditation on the social systems that restrict or mould women's creative expressions, as well as an investigation of the relationship between gender and artistic production. Lowell addresses the conflict between women's traditional obligations and the need to express themselves creatively by posing the question of why women are forced to create poetry and characterising them as 'already mother-creatures' who bear burdens greater than those of males. This disparity between women's internal and outward worlds implies that poetry writing is a way for them to negotiate their complicated, multidimensional identities in addition to being a creative activity. (Butler & Trouble, 1990). The poem has drawn notice for its rich imagery, profound emotional content, and examination of intricate connections. A well-known representative of the Imagist movement, Lowell is renowned for her ability to use vivid visual details and precise, unambiguous language to portray deep emotional experiences. "The Sisters" is no different, offering a deep examination of female identity and social relationships. It was praised for its deft use of metaphor and imagery when it was first published. Lowell's skill in evoking strong emotions and fusing the universal with the personal won praise from critics. Readers were able to consider their familial ties and the difficulties of emotional closeness as a result of the poem's examination of sisterhood and the speaker's relationship with her siblings. "The Sisters" exhibits Lowell's command of both form and topic in the larger framework of her writing. Though the underlying layers of meaning offer depth for critical study, her choice of imagery

permits straightforward and unadorned descriptions of emotions and relationships. The poem's sparseness and deliberate word choice were praised in particular as being representative of the Imagist aesthetic, which emphasises economy, clarity, and accuracy in language. (Munich & Bradshaw, 2004). In the poem's opening lines, Lowell first identifies both the 'others' and then the 'self':

"Taking us by and large, we're a queer lot

We women who write poetry. And when you think

How few of us there've been, it's queerer still." (Lowell et al., 2002)

"And when you think / How few of us there've been, it's queerer still." The speaker highlights the historical dearth of female poets in the literary canon, pointing out that this contributes to the 'queerness' of their status. This might be a reference to the larger historical background of gender discrimination, in which women were frequently denied access to school and the opportunity to participate in general intellectual activities, as well as exclusion from literary societies. This 'double-bearing' may allude to the difficulty of striking a balance between the creative urge that drives women to 'scribble down' their innermost feelings and thoughts, which may be viewed as 'fragments' of who they are, and the expectations society places on them (motherhood, domesticity). The woman poet, the narrative 'I,' and the reader have to confront this. Lowell starts by examining the picture and identifying parallels and divergences. Each female poet is introduced by one or more distinguishable traits: Sappho by the word 'fragments,' since her earliest poems have survived as such, and E. B. Browning by her marital position, which was later contrasted with Emily Dickinson's 'spinster' status. Through a sequence of thoughts related to their biographical notes and poetical traits, Lowell connects these three legendary 'others,' viewing her forebears in the same manner that future generations would perceive her. (Munich & Bradshaw, 2004).

Elizabeth Browning, an English poet, is frequently referred to as 'Mrs. Browning' in announcements. She appears to have 'unity' because of her marriage position, which is a trait derived from the Victorian ideal of women. However, Lowell soon highlights Mrs Browning's distinction between body and mind:

"... Mrs Browning's heart

Was squeezed into stiff conventions. So she lay

Stretched out upon a sofa, reading Greek

And speculating, as I suppose,

In just this way on Sapho; all the need,

The huge, imperious need of loving, crushed

Within the body she believed so sick" (Lowell et al., 2002)

Browning's writings before and following her marriage to Robert Browning, as well as her experiences as a mother, likewise exhibit this distinction. The only piece of work that is freely displayed with its title is Lowell's quotation from Browning's Sonnets from the Portuguese. Since a poet, in Lowell's opinion, embodies both physicality and intelligence, she senses the impact of the separation on her poetry and her love. (Munich & Bradshaw, 2004)

These lines highlight the poet's chance:

"Suppose there hadn't been a Robert Browning,

No 'Sonnets from the Portuguese' would have been written.

They are the first of all her poems to be,

One might say, fertilized … " (Lowell et al., 2002)

Lowell is adamant about placing Browning in a stuffy Victorian setting, in 'need of sofas,' with her body in pain and ill, in 'pieces,' and, most importantly, in opposition to the open area where Sappho was displayed. Her realisation that 'speaking souls must always want to speak' and then that 'Sappho was dead', which she was attempting to discuss with her, came quickly. The poem now includes a brief pause that is apparent in the rest of the text. Lowell employs this pause to inform her reader of the new plan to see another female poet and to get them ready for the upcoming alteration.

"But I go dreaming on,

In love with these my spiritual relations.

I rather think I see myself walk up

A flight of wooden steps and ring a bell" (Lowell et al., 2002)

Lowell insists on Browning's conventional expression of gender with the employing of nomenclature: 'And Mrs Browning, as I said before,/ Was very, very woman. Well, there are two/ Of us, and vastly unlike that's for certain.' There are two of us, and we are definitely very different from one another. Lowell herself shows her lack of patience when the anxiety approaches a particular aspect:

"Convention again, and how it chafes my nerves,

For we are such a little family

Of singing sisters, and as if I didn't know

What those years felt like tied down to the sofa" (Lowell et al., 2002)

Together with Lowell, the reader learns that the significant weight that female poets bear, both in terms of their artistic expressions and their responsibilities to society, is known as

'convention.' In the lines that follow, Lowell enumerates and then criticises all of these 'conventions' in the shape of societal norms as well as the sexual, religious, and political fixations that ensnared women in those days. (Munich & Bradshaw, 2004). Lowell imagines what she knows about her sister poet Sappho:

"There's Sapho1, now I wonder what was Sappho.

I know a slender thing about her:

That, loving, she was like a burning birch tree

All tall and glittering fire, and that she wrote

Like the same fire caught up to Heaven and held there,

A frozen blaze before it broke and fell" (Lowell et al., 2002)

These lyrics reference Sappho's well-known explanation of the contradictory consequences of love. Sappho's arrogance is alluded to in Lowell's imagery of a "frozen blaze," which describes Sappho's capacity to encapsulate the emotions of love.

In her poem "The Sisters," Amy Lowell presents women in a rich and complex way. It portrays women as a collective force that embodies beauty and strength, with an underlying complexity that goes beyond conventional gender stereotypes, rather than as isolated, passive characters. Lowell examines themes of intimacy, power, and emotional depth through the portrayal of two sisters, which forms the basis of the poem. The sisters' imagery reflects the emotional terrain of women's lives and can be interpreted as both beautiful and sinister. The sisters are shown as strong yet frail individuals, and there is a conflict between their outward beauty and their inner complexity. Furthermore, it is possible to interpret Lowell's depiction of women in "The Sisters" as a manifestation of the multifaceted roles that women play in society, ranging from being symbols of passion and sensuality to resilience and wisdom. The poem depicts a variety of characteristics, feelings, and experiences of women rather than reducing them to a single facet of femininity. The conventional, one-dimensional representation of women in literature is challenged by the complex portrayal. All things considered, "The Sisters" presents women as strong and enigmatic, possessing nuance and a range of emotions that defy preconceptions.

The poem's multiple layers of interpretation demonstrate Lowell's professionalism at this stage of her creative work, which began just ten years before the poem's publication. They can no longer be used as models for her in terms of navigating the world as a woman or her poetic endeavours because the world in which she was writing, at the turn of the twentieth century in America and at the beginning of the women's rights movement, was very different from any society that the 'sisters' lived in. Particularly after World War I, Lowell's nation was solidifying its position as a major player in the world. She contributed both intellectually and emotionally to the creation of the new country, as evidenced by her critical work, *Tendencies of Modern American Poetry* which was the product of a series of lectures she gave at the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences at the beginning of 1917. Lowell admits in the book's introduction that the war has given rise to a more sensitive sense of national

identity. “We are no longer colonies of this or that other land, but ourselves, different from all other peoples whatsoever,” she affirms, a sentiment politicians and artists widely held in her era. (Lowell, 1917) In conclusion, Lowell’s poem explores the particular difficulties that women poets encounter, which stem from both cultural expectations and an inner need for artistic expression. It highlights how uncommon women poets are, how complicated their social responsibilities are, and how strong they must be to balance those roles with their creative impulses. The poem sheds light on the mental and emotional work required to write and live as a woman in a patriarchal culture through striking metaphors and thought-provoking issues. (Blain et al., 1990).

The poem “The Taxi” by Lowell, which was published in *Sword Blades and Poppy Seed,* her collection (1914), is a small poem with much of its striking imagery. They convey the poet’s feelings. In twelve short lines, readers are given a sense of the suffering of the poem’s speaker as she departs from her lover’s side. Even so, the title makes no mention of the taxi. The poem opens with a picture of a taxi pulling up. The impact of “The Taxi” is largely dependent on the speaker’s perspective. Poetry’s use of imagery was significant to Lowell, who had the Imagist movement as a major influence, which was growing throughout Europe during her early introduction to the realm of poetry. Lowell loved the free verse style in addition to employing strong imagery in her poems. Lowell doesn’t employ a rigid, traditional metre or a rhyme structure in “The Taxi.” Because free verse was thought to be more like prose than poetry, she was frequently criticised during her career for not adopting traditional literary structures. (Constantakis, 2009). “The Taxi” is entirely about taxis, but it has nothing to do with them. The reader is taken through the speaker’s ideas and sights as the cab takes her away through the streets of an unnamed city; the word “The Taxi” is not used once in the text. The poem’s vehicle is indicated in the title, while the taxi’s direction is shown in the first three lines. The speaker informs the reader that she is the one in the taxi by using the first-person singular pronoun:

“When I go away from you

The world beats dead

Like a slackened drum.

I call out for you against the jutted stars” (Lowell et al., 2002)

She is the one who is leaving. Additionally, the speaker announces that she is leaving someone alone and moving from one place to another, using the pronoun ‘you.’ The speaker is more concerned with what she has been ripped away from than with where she is or where she is heading. She is missing something that she can’t carry with her. The environment around her has changed because of her inability to bring someone along. The world feels lifeless now, although it was extremely vibrant when she was with this person she is leaving. The speaker starts by expressing how much she misses the person she loves. She uniquely expresses her suffering through strange images of wind and stars. She can depict images of sharpness to convey her agony without explicitly stating the extent of her pain. As she screams for her beloved, the speaker hears her voice reflected by the stars that emerge from the night sky.

"And shout into the ridges of the wind.

Streets coming fast,

One after the other,

Wedge you away from me,

And the lamps of the city prick my eyes

So that I can no longer see your face." (Lowell et al., 2002)

As the speaker keeps calling out to the person she loves, the wind seems to snare her cries in its folds or catch them on its jagged edges. She is being dragged away and is yearning for this unidentified individual. However, the pictures of the far-off stars and the shapeless wind are not consoling. The wind and stars are unable to understand her needs. While being taken away in the taxi, she feels as though the city's streets are speeding up and swiftly going by her instead of her body moving through space. As a result, she appears to be motionless while the ground underneath her shifts. The speaker's feelings are revealed in this assertion, in addition to the visual it conveys. Although she is forced to leave her partner for an undisclosed reason, she is upset since she does not want to. "Why should I leave you,/ To wound myself upon the sharp edges of the night? Given how much suffering parting creates," the speaker questions why she should break up with her partner. Once more, the speaker uses a stark visual to highlight the agony she experiences each time she departs from the final queue. She attributes the rough edges of the night to where she was wounded. Lowell's poem illustrates a solitary woman brimming with fervour. In this instance, the passion is the affection that the speaker feels for the beloved whom she is either departing from or envisioning herself departing from. Love, as an emotion, is an intangible notion; rather than discussing love, Lowell employs striking imagery to convey it. Lowell's poetry is celebrated for depicting a solitary woman brimming with passion and for the poet's ability to reveal her feelings without rendering the poem overly sentimental or overly emotional. Lowell's enthusiasm is profound. The images she employs to convey her passion are neither trivial nor foolish. The speaker's response to the circumstance doesn't appear excessively theatrical due to the intensity and strength of the imagery. The speaker's fervor bursts forth from her as if something vital is being stripped away. She feels disoriented and powerless to resist the forces that are drawing her away. Her efforts to stop the process not only fail but also cause her greater pain. (Constantakis, 2009)

Opening the first section of *Men, Women and Ghosts*, the acclaimed poem "Patterns" was originally published to great reception in the August 1915 issue of *The Little Review*. (Damon & Lowell, 1935) It is a lengthy narrative poem centred on a protagonist trapped in a painful conflict; however, in this instance, a female speaker directly recounts her own story. By situating the narrative in the seventeenth century amid the War in Flanders, Lowell provided the piece with a historical backdrop, contributing to its widespread popularity as an influential anti-war poem of the era. Lowell is such a person. Even if someone else supported them, some of her poems would undoubtedly endure: for instance, a few lines are skilfully crafted around an idea of heartbreaking sadness, and patterns use beauty and intense emotion

to communicate a truthful thing that is dear to people's lives and hearts. However, supported by her immense power, these are certain to endure and sufficient for others to finish the picture for the following era. Whether or not it supports her argument for poetic writing, *Can Grande's Castle* (1918) will convey to the fullest its author's powerful wit and love of color and drama, allowing readers to feel the sweep and luxury of her brilliant passage through a sober world and stay in touch with it by employing its vivid colors.

Lowell blends two powerful themes: women's limitations and war. The latter represents the path she walked in relation to her awareness of and claim to freedom. The first portion, *Figurines in Old Saxe*, begins with "Patterns", which is divided into seven strophes of varying lengths. The lines are kept together by frequent internal rhymes, a lot of assonance and repetition, and the same words (garden, pattern) and their sounds (down, gown) (Damon & Lowell, 1935). The title conveyed the poem's main idea or dominant image: 'Patterns'. There were multiple levels of feeling and significance to this main idea. The woman in the stiff brocaded gown was depicted going up and down the formal garden's patterned layout. Lowell establishes the setting in an enclosed space: a picturesque garden abundant with blooming flowers, where the female character strolls. Her dress, which was socially acceptable and structured according to her social standing, was

an example of the pattern of her life:

"*I walk down the garden paths,*

And all the daffodils

Are blowing, and the bright blue squills.

I walk down the patterned garden paths

In my stiff, brocaded gown." (Lowell et al., 2002)

The recurrence of her behaviours underscores her state of waiting, whereas her 'stiff' dress symbolises the physical limitations she experiences. Lowell underscores the flowering of the daffodils as a visual representation of liberty, contrasting the lady's emotions of restriction, induced by her dress, with the vibrant life observed in the garden, which alters her attitude. The lady, who is sitting beneath a lime tree, reacts passionately to the budding of the tree and breaks down in tears when 'one small flower has dropped upon my bosom'. Her tears blend with the ceaseless 'waterdrops' of a marble fountain in the words that follow. Her fantasies take a sensuous turn as the 'dripping' highlights her sensual desire: "The dripping never stops./ Underneath my stiffened gown/ Is the softness of a woman bathing in a marble basin," and her fantasy takes a sensual path. "I would be the pink and silver as I ran along the paths,/ And he would stumble after,/Bewildered by my laughter" suggests that the garden, with its greenery and life, evokes strong feelings in the lady and captures her in fantasies of her and her partner. (Munich & Bradshaw, 2004)

Her passion, her love, her dreams of fulfilment, her desire to break the pattern, were the difference. However, war, a more powerful pattern, had crushed her goal and her longing and forced an even harsher way of living on her. The poem's impact stems from the pattern's fundamental image, which transcends the personal to the universal. Lowell has skilfully

picked colors, light and shadow to heighten the mood based on her pattern motif. The woman in the poem, plainly titled Lady, is clothed in a finely figured, rigid gown:

"The symbolists sought to communicate an eternal' meaning and used the symbol among other devices, to heighten the mystery of the inexpressible; Miss Lowell dealt with the expressible, or with a tension very simple in nature, her poem expresses a state of consciousness, but it is an elementary making no claim to reproduction quality of consciousness itself and her symbols are turned in the direction of making the expressible more concrete."(Coffman, 1951)

Conversely, sunlight had a significant symbolic role in the main idea. A pattern exists: "With the shadows of the leaves and the sundrops... For the sun sifts through the shade." She had dreamed of her passion being fulfilled, her love spilling out, and the pattern being broken in this shadow and shade beneath the lime tree; instead, it was in the 'white morning sunlight' that she read the letter informing her of Lord Hartwell's passing. The morning's white sunlight was the realization of the truth, of her fate, unrelieved by any softness of the shade.

Here, the poem reaches its peak, and the lady is ultimately confronted with truth in the form of a letter confirming her lover's passing: "Madam, we regret to inform you that Lord Hartwell/ Died in action Thursday se'nnight." The first strophe's sequence is repeated in the letter's formal tone, which continues the scene as the woman resumes her walk: "And I walked into the garden,/ Up and down the patterned paths,/ In my stiff, correct brocade." The conclusion is excellent; the phrase 'up and down' is used repeatedly to convey the degree of the woman's disturbance and to build anticipation for her next action. In the final scene, the woman's imagination is once more at work as she imagines her lonely future, the changing of the seasons, and her walking in her 'stiff, brocaded gown.' Because "the man who should loose me is dead,/ Fighting with the Duke in Flanders,/ In a pattern called war." The woman's wail, complete with enquiries and condemnations, suddenly erupts at this point: 'Christ! What are patterns for?' By emphasising the formal letter's coolness with this statement, Lowell gives her personality life, intimacy, and readability for her readers. Unlike the characters of the previous poems considered here, the lady acts; her howl is more powerful than the actions taken by any of the previous characters. The poem does not reveal whether the lady's future will be as she predicts in the last strophe, and the omission raises doubts about the 'pattern' in general and the patterned life of women in particular. Her cries, however, confront the world beyond the lovely garden. Here, a lady takes a stand—she challenges the norms, in contrast to the other beginning narrative poems in Lowell's books, where the characters she creates are still stuck and excluded by the world (because they gave in to it and can't move on). Lowell emphasises this notion by highlighting the woman's bodily posture as she considers her destiny after reading the letter. She observes the flowering season once more and draws a comparison between herself and the 'blue and yellow flowers' that 'stood up proudly in the sun,' coming to the following conclusion: "I stood upright too, Held rigid to the pattern/ By the stiffness of my gown."

Lowell proficiently employs adjectives and adverbs to emphasise the distinction between a 'free' will and a constrained one: the lady's place is determined by the rigidity of her dress, which limits her options and controls her motions, whereas the flowers stand proudly and are open to the sun's energising and constructive impact. She purposefully draws attention to the

constraints and restrictions of the woman's position by using the clothing as a metaphor. The woman's prideful challenge is indicated by her prominent status, which is further supported by her cry. The female character in "Patterns" does not stand in front of a temple; instead, her last howl conveys her abrupt and fresh realisation that the pattern may not be hers and that she most likely did not choose it voluntarily or help create it. Lowell again leaves it up to her reader-listeners to choose if the circumstances her female character faces are typical of all women, but she has raised enough questions. Lowell's subjectivity and acceptance of the inclination to detach her literary world from those sentiments of 'victims of love' that characterised female literature and led to their widespread acceptance by critics as well as readers are evident in this work and others already covered. (Munich & Bradshaw, 2004)

Lowell's poem 'A Lady' showcases her striking imagery; she crafts a narrative, imparting dramatic progression through her visuals. Here, she uses her method of reflecting one image within another image. The pictures emerge individually as they are placed alongside the different actions executed on the stage. One image is created based on another image. This type of kinaesthetic expression is very typical of this poem. It is a type of image processing. An image is suggested within another image, differing in type but representing two distinct kinds, as follows:

"You are beautiful and faded

Like an old opera tune

Played upon a harpsichord;

Or like the sun flooded silks

Of an eighteenth-century boudoir.

In your eyes

Smoulder the fallen roses of out-lived minutes,

And the perfume of your soul

Is vague and suffusing,

With the pungence of sealed spice-jars.

Your half-tones delight me,

And l grow mad with gazing

At your blent colours.

My vigour is a new minted penny,

Which l cast at your feet

Gather it up from the 'ctust,

That its sparkles may amuse you." (Lowell et al., 2002)

In these lines, Lowell quietly portrays a lovely woman and her pleading suitor. The picture captures the intense, instinctual feelings of the lover, which immediately inspired him to convey them through a handful of arranged images that simply occurred to him. The 'old opera' melody performed on a harpsichord signifies a thrilling moment that may have existed in the persona's past within the poem. However, over time, it diminished into a blurred and unsettling recollection, accompanied by a fervent enthusiasm from the spokesperson's side. The timeless opera melody consistently offers a thrilling experience that originates from history and envelops the current moment. Thus, determining the specific cause of the current thrilling experience is challenging, partly due to its foundation in an ongoing experience and partly due to the practical impossibility of fully recalling all aspects of it into the present moment. The darling standing before the protagonist is likened to those indistinct, nostalgic operatic musical encounters. Just as it is challenging to solidify the nostalgic operatic experience of the past into a clear present-day experience, similarly, her beauty is a tantalizingly provoking phenomenon in the protagonist's mind. Consequently, he likens her beauty to that somewhat forgotten melody. This somewhat overlooked operatic musical chord is contrasted with 'the sun-flooded silks of an eighteenth-century boudoir.'The silks from the eighteenth century are once more an antique asset on which the sunlight's flooding consistency produces a dazzling shimmer, causing the sight to become obscured and the silk itself to stay unseen. Her fairness resembles that unseen silk, with its shine only accessible to the hero, not the silk itself. Exactly, her attractiveness is mysteriously enchanting. This concept is eminently showcased by contrasting one musical picture with another visual one. Both are shaped into images that dramatically contribute to the substance. Both pictures are charming, intricate, and thrilling, involving a vast abundance of emotional experimentation. The thrill transforms into an intimate gathering where her eyes are likened to the wilted roses of past moments, and the essence of her spirit is equated to the strong scent of the sealed 'spice-jars.' Yet he eventually becomes insane from staring at her 'blent colours.' In the poem, all four images presented as comparisons for her loveliness significantly enhance each other's occurrence within the verses. In other words, they coherently influence one another, causing the champion to descend into madness: 'I grow mad.' However, the poet maintains that his insanity was caused by her beauty. Only it couldn't have driven him insane if he hadn't kept in mind the kinds of thrilling memories he preferred to use to contrast her attractiveness to previous exciting experiences.

Nonetheless, the poem's four juxtaposed, nostalgic images allude to something limited to the protagonist's prior expertise. However, her beauty is a significant experience nowadays. Except if and until a kind of deep connection is made between her loveliness and what was once an entire moment in her past—excitation isn't a lovely thing, most likely—and is entirely transformed into a frightening memory in this moment. Every picture that is presented as a comparison to her attractiveness is a remnant of an experience that is no longer there. The truth is that Amy Lowell has a feminine sensibility of slight exaggeration and an inflated emotional bent of thoughts, making her an instant judge of perceptions. As a result, even though her images' shape and structure are created from some objective perspectives, they nevertheless have a natural purity and conciseness that are suitable for her. A prolonged and exaggerated process of internalising the pictures. Her poetry captures the precise emotive way in which the visuals are imprinted in her head throughout her enthusiastic period.(Heymann, 1980).

Conclusion:

In conclusion, Lowell's status as a female poet allows her to see how her female predecessors and peers discussed the intellectual internal design of the female mind in her poems "The Sisters," "The Taxi," "Patterns," and "A Lady." As a woman and a poet, Amy Lowell's distinct viewpoint is influenced by the struggles that women face daily. In other words, Amy Lowell has made a lasting impact on the literary world through her works in Imagist poetry, her exploration of Eastern aesthetics, and her support for feminism. Her influence continues to inspire and shape modern poetry, providing a complex web of concepts and perspectives that deepen our understanding of both the past and the present. Lowell's life and work serve as a potent reminder of the transformational power of art and the ongoing significance of cross-cultural interaction. She was a contemporary woman who disregarded norms and tenaciously followed her passions. A woman needs a supportive atmosphere and a particular aspect of life to be a successful woman in society. Through literary methods, she focuses on the challenges of feminine identity. She examines literary history and the psychological and physical pressures associated with limiting creativity in a patriarchal culture. This allows for a feminist reading of remarginalizing female identity through binary imagery of day and night, joy and grief, and a sense of uniqueness and community. Like her modern poets, Amy Lowell works to create a first-hand, female literary history; she makes a substantial contribution to the study of women and literature by

reflecting on the ideas of authorship and femininity. Her writing is open and full of expression, and although her male contemporaries criticised her for lacking tradition, she captures the spirit of art in her pieces. Finally, this paper was to connect Amy Lowell to the range of women's identification struggles. Additionally, it recommended and prompted additional research directions, such as an analysis of Lowell’s impact on her contemporaries (both male and female) and, more specifically, on poets of today.

References

Badan, R. M. (2026). Frequency Analysis of Complex Sentence Structure in English Written Texts: A Corpus-Based Study Using Brown and LOB Corpora. *Journal of College of Education*, *Vol62*(Iss1.4737).

Blain, V., Clements, P., & Grundy, I. (1990). *The Feminist Companion to Literature in English: Women Writers from the Middle Ages to the Present*. Batsford. https://books.google.iq/books?id=A4MjAQAAIAAJ

Butler, J., & Trouble, G. (1990). Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. *Gender Trouble*, *3*(1), 3–17.

Coffman, S. K. (1951). *Imagism. A Chapter for the History of Modern Poetry*.

Constantakis, S. (2009). *Poetry for Students*. Gale, Cengage Learning.

Damon, S. F., & Lowell, A. (1935). Amy Lowell: a chronicle with extracts from her correspondence. *(No Title)*.

Derebek, G. (2022). The Female Identity from The Margins: Amy Lowell's "A Fixed Idea," "The Lamp of Life", and "The Sisters." *International Journal of Humanities, Art and Social Studies [IJHASS]*, *3*(4), 2.

Fletcher, J. G. (1915). Miss Lowell's Discovery: Polyphonic Prose. *Poetry*, *6*(1), 32–36.

Galens, D. (2002). *Literary Movements for Students: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Literary Movements* (Number ١ مجلد). Gale. https://books.google.iq/books?id=OWwHAQAAMAAJ

Gregory, H. (1969). *Amy Lowell: Portrait of the Poet in Her Time*. Books for Libraries Press.

Heymann, C. D. (1980). *American aristocracy: the lives and times of James Russell, Amy, and Robert Lowell*.

Lowell, A. (1917). *Tendencies in Modern American Poetry*. Houghton Mifflin. https://books.google.iq/books?id=Wa0QAAAAYAAJ

Lowell, A., Bradshaw, M., & Munich, A. (2002). *Selected Poems of Amy Lowell*. Rutgers University Press. https://books.google.iq/books?id=DZ6PaIzi84YC

Munich, A., & Bradshaw, M. (2004). *Amy Lowell, American Modern*. Rutgers University Press. https://books.google.iq/books?id=u5AXdTOuGy4C

Pallathadka, L. K., Pallathadka, H., Devi, T. K., & Devi, T. B. (2021). A Review On Imagist Movement In English Literature. *Int. J. of Aquatic Science*, *12*(3), 3068–3078.

Snodgrass, M. E. (2000). *American Poets of the 20th Century*. IDG Books Worldwide, Inc.

https://doi.org/: https://doi.org/10.31185/eduj.Vol62.Iss1.4737. Rafah Mazban Badan. (2026). Frequency Analysis of Complex Sentence Structure in English Written Texts: A Corpus-Based Study Using Brown and LOB Corpora. ISSN: 1994-4217 (Print), 2518-5586(online), Journal of College of Education. Available online at: https://eduj.uowasit.edu.iq.