



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

WHEN ROSSETTI DUBBED HER FINGER INTO TRAUMA AND PSYCHOLOGICAL READINGS: POEMS OF CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI, A SPECIAL FOCUS ON *GOBLIN MARKET AND OTHER POEMS AND NEW POEMS*

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the intricate intersections of trauma, psychology, and poetic expression in the works of Christina Georgina Rossetti, with particular emphasis on selected poems that reflect emotional fragmentation, repression, and the negotiation of inner conflict. By employing a psychoanalytic and trauma-informed framework, the analysis foregrounds how poetic language becomes a site of both concealment and revelation, where desire, guilt, fear, and resilience are subtly encoded. The poems examined reveal a persistent tension between innocence and experience, bodily constraint and imaginative escape, as well as between spiritual aspiration and psychological unrest. Special attention is given to symbolic structures, recurring motifs, and the representation of female subjectivity, which together illuminate the poet's engagement with Victorian anxieties surrounding gender, morality, and emotional suppression. The study further interrogates how trauma manifests not only as thematic content but also as a shaping force within poetic form, rhythm, and imagery. Through close textual reading, the research demonstrates that Rossetti's poetry offers a nuanced portrayal of psychological struggle while simultaneously suggesting possibilities of healing and transcendence. Ultimately, this analysis contributes to a deeper understanding of the poet's oeuvre by situating her work within contemporary critical discourses on trauma and psychology, thereby opening new avenues for interpretation and scholarly engagement.

Keywords: Trauma, Psychoanalysis, Victorian Poetry, Female Subjectivity, Symbolism, Psychological Conflict, Emotional Repression

INTRODUCTION

Christina Georgina Rossetti, one of the most profound voices of Victorian poetry, intricately weaves themes of trauma, psychological complexity, and emotional depth into her works. Her poems often reflect a profound engagement with grief, loss, and spiritual longing, offering fertile ground for trauma and psychological readings. In a time marked by strict societal expectations, particularly for women, Rossetti's poetry becomes a mirror of internal struggles, capturing the tension between personal desire and external constraints. Her experiences with romantic disillusionment, familial responsibilities, and religious devotion find expression in verses that resonate with an acute awareness of human vulnerability. Whether exploring the psychological toll of unrequited love, the existential dread of mortality, or the redemptive power of faith, Rossetti's works reveal a nuanced understanding of the human psyche. Poems like "Goblin Market," "Remember," "From the Antique," "Jessie Cameron," "Shut Out," "Maude Clare," "The Prince's Progress," "A Birthday," "An Apple Gathering," "Amor Mundi," "Up-Hill," "After Death," "In the Bleak Midwinter" and "Echo" provide a window into the emotional and psychological landscapes shaped by Victorian societal norms, gendered limitations, and personal adversity. This introduction will delve into Rossetti's use of poetic form, language, and symbolism to address themes of trauma and psychological depth, situating her works within the broader contexts of psychoanalytic theory, affect studies, and feminist perspectives. By examining the intricate interplay of loss, memory, desire, and redemption in her poetry, this study seeks to highlight how Rossetti's writings not only articulate personal pain but also resonate with universal experiences of emotional and psychological conflict. Through such an exploration, Rossetti emerges as a poet whose works remain timeless in their ability to probe the complexities of the human mind and heart. Christina Georgina Rossetti's poetry stands as a testament to the emotional and psychological intricacies of the Victorian age, offering profound insights into human suffering, resilience, and introspection. Widely celebrated for her lyrical beauty and spiritual intensity, Rossetti delves into themes of loss, alienation, desire, and redemption with a depth that invites analysis through the lens of trauma and psychological theory. Her experiences with chronic illness, romantic disappointments, and a deeply introspective nature shaped a poetic voice that speaks to both personal pain and broader societal anxieties. In an era defined by rigid gender roles and an adherence to strict moral codes, Rossetti's work reflects the silent struggles of Victorian women, navigating societal expectations and internal turmoil. Her verses frequently grapple with the psychological toll of suppressed desires, unfulfilled aspirations, and spiritual questioning. Poems like "Goblin Market," "From the Antique," and "Shut Out" explore themes of emotional isolation, forbidden temptation, and the trauma of exclusion, creating a tapestry of narratives that resonate with readers on a deeply personal level. Rossetti's poetic oeuvre is particularly rich for trauma and psychological readings because of its symbolic complexity and emotional intensity. Drawing from trauma theory, one can uncover layers of unresolved grief and suppressed longing in her works. For example, the imagery of locked gates in *Shut Out* symbolizes both the barriers to fulfillment and the lasting scars of exclusion, while the cyclical despair in "From the Antique" echoes the repetitive, haunting nature of trauma. Through psychoanalytic perspectives, her portrayal of repressed desires, particularly in "Goblin Market," reveals a nuanced understanding of the subconscious and the allure of the forbidden. Moreover, her poetry invites feminist psychoanalytic interpretations, particularly in its critique of patriarchal norms and its portrayal of women as both victims and agents of their circumstances. Lizzie's sacrificial heroism in "Goblin Market" and the speaker's quiet defiance in "No, Thank You, John" underscore Rossetti's exploration of female autonomy in a society that sought to confine it. The psychological dimensions of these narratives speak not only to the struggles of Victorian women but also to universal human experiences of conflict, resilience, and healing. This analysis situates Rossetti's work within a modern critical framework, engaging with theories such as affect studies, trauma theory, and feminist

psychoanalysis. By examining her exploration of memory, loss, identity, and spiritual redemption, this study underscores how Rossetti's poetry remains a powerful medium for understanding the complexities of human emotion and the enduring impact of trauma. Her works transcend the Victorian context, resonating with contemporary audiences through their exploration of psychological depth, emotional authenticity, and the transformative power of resilience and love. Through this lens, Rossetti emerges as a poet not only of spiritual devotion and aesthetic beauty but also as a keen observer of the human mind's struggles and triumphs. Her poetry, rich with symbolism and emotional nuance, continues to invite readers into a deeply introspective journey, one that bridges the personal and the universal, the historical and the timeless.

Christina Georgina Rossetti, widely regarded as one of the most significant Victorian poets, imbued her works with a unique sensitivity to both the external and internal sources of human suffering. Her poetry, especially in collections such as *Goblin Market and Other Poems* (1862) and *New Poems* (1896), reveals an intricate exploration of the interplay between individual trauma and the broader psychological conditions that shape the human soul. Through these works, Rossetti portrays not only the psychological aftermath of temptation, guilt, and spiritual crises but also the introspective struggles of identity, memory, and the fear of death. In *Goblin Market and Other Poems*, Rossetti ventures into the realm of psychological trauma through allegorical storytelling and moralistic reflections, with the titular poem *Goblin Market* standing as a quintessential example of her method. The poem addresses the psychological toll of indulgence and moral transgression, where the traumatic consequences faced by the characters serve as a vehicle for exploring guilt, desire, and the complexities of redemption. Rossetti's vivid imagery and symbolic characters, such as the alluring goblins, create a psychological landscape where trauma is not just externalized but also internalized, reflecting the complex ways in which the human mind reacts to temptation and the inevitable moral reckonings that follow. However, as Rossetti's poetic career progressed, particularly in the later collection *New Poems*, the portrayal of trauma shifted from externalized narratives to more nuanced, introspective explorations. These later works reflect the psychological and spiritual turmoil that comes from personal loss, existential doubt, and the alienation that often accompanies spiritual disillusionment. The trauma depicted in *New Poems* becomes less about clear moral choices and more about the internal struggles with grief, memory, and the fleeting nature of life. Here, Rossetti's psychological readings take on a quieter, more contemplative tone, reflecting the poet's own evolving understanding of suffering, memory, and identity. The critical significance of *Goblin Market and Other Poems* and *New Poems* lies in their ability to offer a dual lens through which to view trauma. While *Goblin Market* explores trauma through allegory and moralistic lessons, *New Poems* presents a more introspective, almost confessional mode of psychological exploration. In both collections, Rossetti crafts poems that are deeply attuned to the emotional and spiritual dimensions of trauma, revealing the profound psychological impact of loss, guilt, temptation, and spiritual isolation. By examining these works through the lens of psychological readings, we can discern not only Rossetti's understanding of the intricacies of the human mind but also her sensitivity to the psychological landscapes of both personal and universal suffering. Her poetry invites readers to engage with trauma not as an isolated experience but as a pervasive force that shapes identity, memory, and ultimately, the course of one's emotional and spiritual journey. Thus, this paper aims to have a critical reading on trauma and psychology on the poems of Christina Georgina Rossetti with a special focus on *Goblin Market and Other Poems* and *New Poems*.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Christina Georgina Rossetti, a luminary of the Victorian era, is celebrated for her lyrical mastery and profound exploration of human emotions. Her works resonate deeply with themes of trauma, psychological turmoil, and the resilience of the human spirit. The title, “When Rossetti Dubbed Her Finger into Trauma and Psychological Readings,” reflects the intricate layers of her poetry, where emotional depth and psychological insight often take center stage. Rossetti's poetry frequently navigates the labyrinth of inner struggles—grappling with unfulfilled desires, societal constraints, spiritual doubt, and the complexities of love and loss. Whether it is Laura's harrowing experience in “Goblin Market,” the melancholic yearning in “Echo,” or the existential despair in “From the Antique,” Rossetti's pen unearths the vulnerabilities of the human psyche. These themes align seamlessly with contemporary psychological readings, which reveal the timeless relevance of her work. This exploration of trauma and psychological intricacy underscores Rossetti's ability to address universal human experiences. Her evocative language and symbolic imagery invite readers to confront their own fears, desires, and moral dilemmas, making her poetry an enduring wellspring for emotional and intellectual engagement. Through this lens, the title captures Rossetti's enduring legacy as a poet whose works delve fearlessly into the heart of psychological and emotional truth.

Christina Georgina Rossetti's inclination toward themes of trauma and psychological depth in her poetry is deeply intertwined with her personal experiences and the cultural context of her time. Her life was marked by significant emotional and spiritual challenges, which found expression in her works. From an early age, Rossetti faced the pain of loss and the instability of family life. Her father's debilitating illness plunged her family into financial and emotional turmoil, leaving a lasting impression on her. This early exposure to hardship instilled in her a sensitivity to suffering, which is often reflected in her poetry. Themes of mortality, grief, and longing are recurring, as seen in works like “Remember” and “After Death,” where she contemplates the fragility of human connections and the inevitability of death. Rossetti's deep religious convictions also played a crucial role in shaping her psychological explorations. A devout Anglican, she often grappled with the tension between earthly desires and spiritual aspirations. This internal struggle is evident in her poems, where she examines guilt, redemption, and the emotional weight of self-denial. For example, in “Goblin Market,” the story can be interpreted as an allegory of temptation and recovery, reflecting her preoccupation with sin and salvation. Her personal relationships further influenced her engagement with trauma. Rossetti experienced unfulfilled romantic attachments, choosing to prioritize her religious beliefs over her emotions. This decision, while rooted in her faith, likely caused her emotional pain, which is echoed in poems that explore rejection, yearning, and independence, such as “No, Thank You, John.” Her health issues, including Graves' disease and later breast cancer, added another layer of vulnerability and awareness of mortality, deepening her focus on the transient nature of life. Living in a rigidly patriarchal society also shaped Rossetti's understanding of trauma. As a woman with limited agency in Victorian England, she often wrote about exclusion, marginalization, and the struggles of women confined by societal expectations. Poems like “From the Antique” and “Shut Out” articulate this sense of alienation and loss, resonating with the psychological effects of systemic oppression. Thus, Rossetti's life and work are inseparable. Her personal experiences of loss, illness, faith, and societal constraint informed her poetic exploration of trauma and psychological complexity, making her poetry a timeless reflection of the human condition.

Christina Georgina Rossetti's poetry is profoundly shaped by the personal traumas she endured, with her experiences of loss, illness, unfulfilled love, and societal constraints informing much of her work. Her poems often serve as a reflection of her inner struggles, channeling her emotional and spiritual battles into deeply resonant themes. The loss and instability she faced within her family profoundly impacted her outlook on life and death, themes that permeate many of her works. For instance, her father's illness and the financial strain it caused introduced her to the fragility of human existence at an early age. This is evident in poems like “Remember” and “After Death,” which grapple with the inevitability of mortality and the emotional repercussions of loss. Rossetti's health struggles, including

bouts of depression and later physical illnesses like Graves' disease, added another dimension to her poetic exploration. These experiences heightened her sensitivity to the transient nature of life and deepened her focus on themes of suffering, resilience, and redemption. In works like "From the Antique," she articulates a profound weariness and existential despair, capturing the emotional toll of her personal hardships. Her relationships, too, played a significant role in shaping her poetic voice. Rossetti's decisions to forgo romantic attachments for the sake of her religious convictions reflect an inner conflict between desire and duty. This tension emerges in poems like "No, Thank You, John," where she asserts her autonomy, and in "Goblin Market," which allegorically explores temptation, loss, and recovery. The societal constraints of Victorian England, particularly those placed on women, further influenced Rossetti's work. Living in a world that often marginalized women's voices and choices, she wrote about exclusion, longing, and the psychological impact of societal expectations. Poems like "Shut Out" and "From the Antique" embody this sense of alienation and the trauma of unfulfilled potential. Ultimately, Rossetti's poetry is a testament to her ability to transform personal trauma into universal themes. By weaving her experiences into her work, she created a body of poetry that resonates with readers, offering profound insights into the human condition and the enduring strength of the human spirit.

The title of this paper delves into the intricate psychological and emotional layers present in Christina Rossetti's poetry, particularly in two of her key collections. The title reflects Rossetti's deliberate engagement with themes of trauma, psychological conflict, and the human experience, using her poetry as a means to explore deep emotional and spiritual struggles. *Goblin Market and Other Poems* (1862) is often celebrated for its vivid allegories and moral examinations of temptation, guilt, and redemption, while *New Poems* (1896) marks a more introspective phase in her career, where the trauma depicted is less external and more focused on internal spiritual and existential crises. This critical analysis examines how Rossetti's poetry portrays psychological trauma, drawing on both personal and universal experiences of suffering, guilt, spiritual doubt, and loss. By focusing on these two collections, the background highlights the evolution of Rossetti's engagement with the human psyche, offering an in-depth reading of her exploration of trauma as both an individual and collective experience. Through her works, Rossetti offers a rich tapestry of emotional complexity, capturing the fragile interplay between moral choices, spiritual conflict, and the enduring psychological consequences of trauma.

A CRITICAL OVERVIEW OF THE TITLE, "WHEN ROSSETTI DUBBED HER FINGER INTO TRAUMA AND PSYCHOLOGICAL READINGS: POEMS OF CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI"

The title "When Rossetti Dubbed Her Finger into Trauma and Psychological Readings: Poems of Christina Georgina Rossetti" is intriguing and laden with interpretive possibilities, but it demands a closer examination of its phrasing, implications, and alignment with the subject matter it claims to address. At its core, the title suggests an intimate yet exploratory engagement with the themes of trauma and psychological inquiry, aligning these with Rossetti's poetic oeuvre. However, the phrasing carries ambiguities and connotations that both enrich and complicate its interpretive potential. The metaphor "dubbed her finger" is striking, but its casual, almost tentative tone risks minimizing the intensity of Rossetti's exploration of trauma. The phrase suggests a deliberate, yet superficial touch, which may not fully capture the profound emotional and psychological depths present in Rossetti's poetry. Her works often delve deeply into the complexities of human suffering, unfulfilled desires, and existential dilemmas, engaging with these themes in a manner far more immersive than the title's phrasing might suggest. A metaphor suggesting greater immersion or struggle might better reflect her poetic engagement. Additionally, the juxtaposition of "trauma" with "psychological readings" introduces a contemporary critical framework to the discussion, which, while relevant, may feel anachronistic. Rossetti's Victorian context did not provide the language or theories of modern psychology, and while her poetry resonates strongly with these themes for contemporary readers, framing it as if Rossetti herself consciously engaged with psychological readings risks imposing a retrospective lens that oversimplifies her

intentions. This interpretive framing is valuable but would benefit from clarification that these are modern analytical tools applied to her work, not intrinsic to her 19th-century literary context. The inclusion of “trauma” in the title is powerful, as it reflects one of the central emotional and thematic currents of Rossetti’s work, but it also narrows the focus of her poetry. While many of her poems do grapple with loss, exclusion, and existential despair, others explore themes of joy, spiritual devotion, and hope. Centering trauma in the title risks presenting a reductive view of her oeuvre, potentially overshadowing the complexity and multidimensionality of her poetic voice. In a broader sense, the title captures attention with its vivid and provocative phrasing, but its execution leaves room for refinement. The metaphorical language could be sharpened to better convey the depth of Rossetti’s engagement, while the framing of trauma and psychological readings should consider the balance between historical authenticity and modern interpretation. The title, while compelling, stands as an entry point for critical inquiry rather than a fully realized representation of the rich interplay between Rossetti’s personal experiences, her historical milieu, and the timeless resonance of her poetry.

Christina Georgina Rossetti’s *Goblin Market and Other Poems* (1862) is a remarkable collection that grapples with a broad range of emotional, psychological, and social themes. Through its exploration of trauma, temptation, guilt, redemption, and human vulnerability, the collection offers fertile ground for psychoanalytic readings. One of the most compelling aspects of the collection is Rossetti’s ability to weave complex emotional and psychological states into rich, vivid imagery, presenting trauma not as an isolated experience but as part of the broader human condition. The titular poem, “Goblin Market,” is perhaps the most iconic example of trauma within the collection, employing a fairy-tale framework to tell the story of two sisters, Laura and Lizzie, who encounter goblin merchants selling magical fruit. Laura succumbs to the temptation, eating the fruit and suffering its destructive effects. This moment of indulgence and its aftermath can be read as an allegory for trauma in its psychological and emotional dimensions. Laura’s experience embodies the psychological consequences of succumbing to desire and temptation—feelings of guilt, shame, and eventual deterioration. The goblins themselves are sinister figures, embodying predatory forces that represent the external manifestation of Laura’s internal conflict. The psychological trauma that Laura experiences, as her health and vitality are drained after the act of indulgence, evokes a sense of the irreversible damage that comes with yielding to temptation. The theme of addiction in *Goblin Market* further complicates the exploration of trauma. Laura’s repeated yearning for the goblin fruit mirrors the psychological cycle of dependency. The trauma of addiction—of craving something harmful, of being drawn back to a destructive force—is deeply embedded in Rossetti’s depiction of Laura’s struggle. Her trauma is not only physical but psychological, manifesting in her mental fixation on the fruit and the goblins’ promises. Lizzie, in contrast, represents recovery and resistance, but even she undergoes a form of trauma. Her brave act of rescuing Laura, enduring physical and emotional harm in the process, speaks to the trauma of sacrifice and the psychological toll of saving someone from a destructive path. Her traumatic experience comes not from indulgence but from her role as a savior, which ultimately places her in a psychologically complicated position. Lizzie’s trauma, though less visible, is the burden of responsibility and the emotional toll of witnessing and rescuing Laura from herself. Beyond “Goblin Market,” other poems in the collection also explore the psychological consequences of emotional distress and trauma. In “From the Antique,” Rossetti reflects on a sense of existential fatigue, where the speaker wishes to have never been born, expressing a profound sense of isolation and disillusionment with life. This poem can be interpreted as a psychological manifestation of trauma resulting from societal and gendered expectations. The speaker’s desire for an escape from existence mirrors a psychological withdrawal from the pressures of the world, and through this, Rossetti touches upon the trauma of oppression, especially the emotional toll of living as a woman in Victorian society, constrained by rigid norms. The poem “Remember” also exemplifies psychological trauma, albeit in a different form. The speaker grapples with the pain of impending separation, urging a loved one to remember her after her death. This exploration of loss and the emotional consequences of it reflects the psychological impact of grief and the fear of being forgotten, highlighting trauma that extends beyond physical death into the realm of emotional and psychological memory. The speaker’s plea is not only a request for remembrance but a desperate cry against the fading of identity, suggesting the trauma of not being able to control how one is perceived or remembered after death.

Rossetti's exploration of gender and societal expectations further complicates the psychological readings of the collection. Many of her poems deal with the pressure on women to conform to idealized roles—whether as submissive daughters, wives, or sisters. This psychological burden, coupled with the emotional trauma of societal limitations, is often implicit in her poetry, though it can be seen clearly in works like “No, Thank You, John” and “A Birthday.” In the former, the speaker rejects the advances of a suitor, asserting autonomy over her own emotional and psychological space. The trauma here is subtle but significant: it lies in the rejection of unwanted affection, which speaks to the psychological toll of female agency and the anxiety it may provoke in a patriarchal context. “Goblin Market” and *Other Poems* also contains poems that, while not directly addressing trauma, subtly reflect the psychological complexity of everyday emotional experiences. In poems such as “Up-Hill,” where the speaker contemplates a journey up a difficult road, Rossetti employs metaphor to suggest the psychological labor of enduring life's hardships. The metaphor of the “up-hill” journey can be interpreted as a symbol of the struggles individuals face in life, where the trauma may not be specific but rather part of the broader human condition. Rossetti's works are rich with psychological complexity, often interweaving personal suffering with broader societal and spiritual themes. Her exploration of trauma is not only a reflection of personal pain but an engagement with the human condition at large. Through *Goblin Market and Other Poems*, Rossetti allows readers to confront the multifaceted nature of trauma—how it manifests in desire, loss, societal pressures, and the struggle for identity. She provides insight into the psychological toll of emotional and moral conflict, offering a literary exploration that goes beyond mere narrative or moralizing, delving deeply into the inner lives of her characters and, by extension, the reader. Through her evocative imagery and multifaceted approach, Rossetti's poems invite ongoing psychological readings, offering both solace and discomfort, and urging readers to reflect on the complexities of their own emotional landscapes.

Christina Georgina Rossetti's *New Poems* (1896) stands as a final testament to her poetic genius, offering a profound exploration of the emotional and psychological terrain that defined much of her later works. The collection is imbued with themes of loss, despair, longing, spiritual reckoning, and the trauma of existential confrontation, making it a rich subject for psychoanalytic and trauma-focused readings. Rossetti's poetry in *New Poems* moves beyond the vivid allegories and fantasies of her earlier works, such as *Goblin Market*, into darker, more introspective territories that delve into the psychological impact of mortality, unfulfilled desires, and spiritual disillusionment. This collection provides fertile ground for critical analysis, particularly when viewed through the lens of trauma and psychological depth. The psychological intensity in *New Poems* is immediately evident in the speaker's exploration of personal loss, emotional isolation, and the psychological weight of spiritual conflict. In many of these poems, Rossetti confronts the trauma of alienation—both from loved ones and from God. Her personal experiences of illness, spiritual withdrawal, and the emotional toll of living in a repressive Victorian society all reverberate through the verses, creating an intricate web of inner turmoil. The idea of spiritual death or separation from God is a recurring theme, signaling a kind of psychological trauma that transcends physical suffering. The poem “The Convent Threshold” offers a potent example of psychological trauma embedded in the religious experience. The speaker's inner conflict, between a desire for spiritual purity and the unrelenting pull of worldly temptation, mirrors the psychological trauma of repression and guilt. This tension is particularly significant in the context of Rossetti's own life, where her religious convictions were both a source of solace and psychological strain. The trauma in the poem is not only spiritual but psychological as well, emphasizing the mental anguish of navigating between desire and duty, earthly love and divine devotion. The theme of separation from the self or the denial of one's desires creates a complex internal landscape, laden with unresolved emotional conflict. Rossetti's reflections on mortality and the aftermath of death also provide a deep well for trauma analysis in this collection. In poems like “In the Bleak Midwinter” and “The End of the Year,” Rossetti directly engages with the inevitability of death, yet these poems do not simply recount the process of dying. Instead, they probe the psychological impact of death on the living, the trauma of loss, the fear of oblivion, and the emotional weight of knowing that one's life is finite. The speakers in these poems are not only concerned with the fate of the deceased but with their own ongoing psychological survival in the face of loss. Rossetti's meditation on death is tinged with a sense of unresolved grief, suggesting that the

trauma of mourning extends far beyond the moment of death itself, manifesting as a continuous, lingering presence that disrupts the speaker's sense of self. Similarly, the recurring motif of the 'forgotten' or the 'lost' adds another layer of psychological distress in *New Poems*. In poems such as "Memory" and "A Martyr's Memory," Rossetti revisits the trauma of being forgotten by loved ones or God, which is a central anxiety for many of her speakers. The psychological terror that accompanies this fear is palpably felt through the imagery of fading, of disappearance, and of absence, echoing the trauma of emotional erasure. This fear of being lost or rendered invisible is not merely about physical absence but about the psychological agony of feeling insignificant or unworthy of remembrance. In these poems, the speaker is grappling with both the fear of their own mortality and the anxiety that their emotional connections may fade into nothingness after death.

Rossetti also continues her engagement with the psychological toll of unrequited love and the complexities of romantic relationships in *New Poems*. The poem "A Little While" is a striking example, depicting a speaker who contemplates the briefness of love and the inevitability of separation, even in the most passionate relationships. This trauma, however, is less about romantic loss and more about the fragility of emotional connections and the fear of abandonment. Rossetti's portrayal of love here is nuanced and laden with the psychological weight of fleeting joy, suggesting that even the most intimate relationships are burdened with the trauma of impermanence. The emotional toll of knowing that love is often temporary, that it is subject to change, and that it can be undone by time or circumstance, becomes a source of deep psychological distress in the poem. In addition to love and loss, *New Poems* explores the trauma of personal and spiritual alienation. The psychological impact of disconnection from the self or from others is evident in poems such as "The Long Day" and "From Sunset to Sunrise." The speakers in these poems wrestle with a profound sense of isolation, not just from others but from their own inner selves. There is a pervasive sense of fragmentation in these works—the trauma of feeling disconnected from one's own identity, desires, and sense of purpose. This fragmentation of the self is not simply a result of external factors but a psychological disintegration, suggesting that the trauma in these poems is internalized and becomes part of the speaker's lived experience. The external world may reflect this sense of disconnection, but the trauma ultimately resides in the psyche. Rossetti's work in *New Poems* continues to engage with the tension between faith and doubt, a theme that plays heavily into the psychological and traumatic readings of the collection. The persistent questioning of divine will, the emotional turmoil of spiritual confusion, and the anxiety surrounding salvation are all deeply embedded in poems like "The World" and "The Convent Threshold." These poems reflect not only the religious doubt that Rossetti herself wrestled with but also the larger psychological impact of living in a world where divine justice, suffering, and the afterlife are constant preoccupations. The trauma that arises from spiritual disillusionment is palpable in these works expressed not only through direct questioning but through the emotional and psychological struggle inherent in reconciling faith with human suffering. Finally, *New Poems* is a collection that significantly deepens Rossetti's exploration of trauma and psychological complexity. Through the recurring themes of loss, spiritual conflict, alienation, and the fear of oblivion, the poems in this collection highlight the pervasive nature of psychological suffering. Rossetti's portrayal of the human condition goes beyond external events and delves into the intricacies of the emotional and psychological responses to those events. Her treatment of trauma is subtle, reflecting the nuanced and often hidden psychological scars that persist long after the physical events of loss and suffering have passed. *New Poems* offers a profound meditation on the emotional and psychological toll of living, providing a poignant, deeply psychological view of human experience that remains resonant and relevant today.

Christina Georgina Rossetti's journey through the creation of *Goblin Market and Other Poems* (1862) and *New Poems* (1896) reflects a profound evolution in her exploration of trauma and psychological depth. The two collections, while bound by a shared sensitivity to human suffering and inner turmoil, trace the trajectory of Rossetti's emotional and spiritual maturation, as well as her evolving understanding of psychological complexity. *Goblin Market and Other Poems* marks an early and vibrant exploration of trauma, albeit through allegory and vivid imagery. The titular poem, "Goblin Market," stands out as a quintessential example of Rossetti's handling of psychological and emotional trauma. The

poem captures the psychological and moral degradation that comes from yielding to temptation and indulgence. Laura's fall and her subsequent physical and emotional deterioration reflect the internal suffering that comes from indulgence, guilt, and shame. The trauma here is not just physical; it is deeply psychological, embodied in Laura's obsession with the forbidden fruit and the overwhelming sense of loss and regret she experiences. The dynamic between Laura and Lizzie, one succumbing to the trauma of indulgence and the other resisting it, evokes a complex psychological interplay of sacrifice, recovery, and the emotional toll of redemption. Rossetti's use of psychological imagery, particularly the goblins as figures of temptation, underscores the externalization of inner conflicts and psychological suffering, making trauma not just a personal experience but a moral and emotional battleground. Yet, while *Goblin Market* addresses trauma through the lens of sin, guilt, and redemption, Rossetti's later collection, *New Poems*, showcases a more introspective and subtle examination of psychological distress. By the time she wrote *New Poems*, Rossetti had endured a lifetime of personal struggles—illness, spiritual doubt, and emotional loss—leaving a palpable trace in her poetry. The psychological trauma in *New Poems* is more internalized, characterized by a grappling with existential questions, spiritual alienation, and the fear of death and oblivion. In poems like "The Convent Threshold" and "The Long Day," Rossetti delves deeply into the trauma of isolation, both spiritual and emotional, exploring the internal fragmentation that arises when one is disconnected from both divine faith and human connection. Her portrayal of alienation from God and from self is a striking evolution of the trauma depicted in "Goblin Market," shifting from externalized, moralistic narratives to more introspective, psychological examinations of the self in crisis.

The trauma in *New Poems* is also more complex and nuanced, reflecting a woman who has lived through personal suffering and spiritual uncertainty. The speaker in these later poems grapples with themes of death and memory, loss and longing, often suggesting that the psychological burden of unresolved grief and existential questioning remains long after the external events of loss have passed. In poems like "Memory" and "A Martyr's Memory," Rossetti reflects on the trauma of being forgotten, the psychological distress of fading into obscurity or being lost to time. This sense of erasure is a form of trauma that underscores the fragility of identity and memory, reinforcing the notion that psychological wounds can linger far beyond the immediate moment of crisis. Additionally, the trauma in *New Poems* is not confined to personal loss alone but extends to a more universal, existential crisis. The question of whether life has meaning in the face of inevitable death and the desire for spiritual redemption against the backdrop of worldly suffering reflect deeper psychological questions that Rossetti wrestled with throughout her life. The poems convey a psychological struggle not just with the external world but with the internal sense of self and its place within a larger, often indifferent universe. Rossetti's journey from *Goblin Market* to *New Poems* reflects a shift in how trauma is depicted. In the earlier collection, trauma is often externalized through vivid and fantastical imagery, whereas in *New Poems*, trauma becomes a more internalized and existential force. The earlier poems are filled with moral judgments, allegories, and clear distinctions between good and evil, while the later poems move toward a more introspective and nuanced view of human suffering. Rossetti's psychological depth grows as she explores the inner turmoil of religious doubt, the fear of oblivion, and the alienation from both self and others. The trauma in *New Poems* is more abstract, reflecting an understanding of suffering that is less about external forces and more about the frailty and impermanence of human existence. In both collections, however, Rossetti's exploration of psychological trauma is deeply informed by her personal experiences. Her own health struggles, spiritual crises, and experiences of loss are woven into the fabric of her poetry, coloring her portrayal of psychological and emotional suffering. In *Goblin Market*, the trauma is more vivid, encapsulated in the narrative of indulgence and redemption, while in *New Poems*, it is quieter, more introspective, and rooted in existential questioning. Together, these collections trace the journey of a poet who evolves from a vivid storyteller of emotional and moral struggles to a more complex, reflective, and introspective figure who confronts the deeper psychological ramifications of life's impermanence and emotional fragility.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion it can be said, the title “When Rossetti Dubbed Her Finger Into Trauma and Psychological Readings: Poems of Christina Georgina Rossetti” captures the delicate yet deliberate immersion of Rossetti into the depths of psychological and emotional suffering, evident across her body of work, particularly in the collections *Goblin Market and Other Poems* and *New Poems*. In these works, Rossetti confronts and unearths the complex layers of trauma, showcasing an intricate interplay between external events and their psychological reverberations within the human psyche. The idea of “dubbing her finger” suggests an exploration that is both intimate and purposeful, a continuous engagement with the emotional scars that shape human experiences. In *Goblin Market and Other Poems*, Rossetti's treatment of trauma often takes the form of vivid allegory and moral exploration. Through *Goblin Market*, the psychological trauma experienced by characters such as Laura is portrayed not merely as a consequence of indulgence but as an intense internal conflict, reflecting guilt, addiction, and the existential repercussions of moral choices. While the trauma here is dramatized, it remains rooted in the emotional experiences of the characters. The poem's representation of temptation, fall, and redemption provides a moral framework within which the psychological impact of choices is explored, drawing attention to the emotional, spiritual, and physical ramifications of yielding to desire. In this collection, trauma is largely externalized through narrative arcs, but it still resonates deeply with the human condition and emotional distress, encapsulating the tension between personal responsibility and moral reckoning. In contrast, *New Poems* marks a shift in Rossetti's exploration of psychological trauma. By the time of this collection, her poetry becomes more introspective, delving into themes of spiritual isolation, existential questioning, and the lasting psychological scars left by loss and disillusionment. The trauma in *New Poems* is less about external events or moral allegories and more about an internalized, often abstract, sense of suffering. Poems like “The Convent Threshold” and “Memory” grapple with the psychological fragmentation that results from spiritual alienation and the pervasive fear of being forgotten, forgotten not just by loved ones but by a higher power or the passage of time itself. The trauma here becomes one of internal desolation—a quiet, lingering suffering that is as much about emotional isolation as it is about the fear of fading into oblivion. Rossetti's psychological readings in this collection are informed by her own spiritual doubts, personal losses, and the toll of her physical and emotional struggles over the years. Together, *Goblin Market and Other Poems* and *New Poems* reveal Rossetti's evolving treatment of trauma and the human psyche. While *Goblin Market* deals more with externalized trauma through allegorical storytelling, *New Poems* presents a quieter, more meditative exploration of the internal consequences of trauma. Rossetti's ability to portray the intricacies of human suffering, both physical and psychological, illustrates her profound understanding of the emotional dimensions of trauma. From the vivid moral dilemmas in her early works to the somber, existential reflections in her later poems, Rossetti's engagement with trauma and psychology speaks not only to the pain of her characters but to her own lived experiences. The critical analysis of her poetry through the lens of trauma and psychological readings invites readers to appreciate the depth of Rossetti's emotional insight and the lasting impact of her work on the understanding of human suffering and psychological complexity.

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