CHAPTER II

TREATMENT OF LOVE

In the metaphysical poetry, one can find any and every mood of man in love with woman exposed memorably and vehemently. It has given to the readers the most beautiful lyric poetry in the language. Among the metaphysical poets, John Donne, Andrew Marvell and Thomas Carew and Abraham Cowley have written significant love poems.

According to Helen Gardner, the situations that Donne’s imagination dramatizes are bewilderingly varied. He has lost his mistress’s token, a gold chain and she demands that he buy another. His mistress has sent him a cheap favour, a jet ring- as he twirls it to put it on his finger he wonders what it signifies. His perfume has given him away to the father of a young girl he was clandestinely visiting. He is about to go abroad and his mistress has pleaded to be allowed to go with him as his page. He is about to go to the wars and gives her his picture, wondering whether he will look different when he returns; he is about to go abroad and, doubting his mistress’s constancy, he scratches his name on a pane of glass as a charm. A flea hops from him to his mistress while he is urging her to yield to him. He has been dreaming and just at the moment he dreams that she is his, she enters and wakes him; he is in bed watching his mistress undress and urges her to hurry; He and his mistress have been walking to and fro for three hours in the morning and now as they stand still it is high noon. A friend is reproaching him for sacrificing worldly advantages for love; he is alone and
unhappy in a spring garden because his mistress is too true to love him; he is alone at midnight in mid winter and more desolate than the season because his mistress is dead.

In English metaphysical poetry, all moods of passionate lovers could be seen. They delineate passionate endearment, sexual imagination and a kind of exciting tranquility. Anyhow, nature has been used rarely in love poems. All the moods of the passionate lover could be seen in the poems written by Donne. One can find the Infinite variety of feelings and emotions of the lovers in his poetry.

James Reeves detects the different moods experienced by the lovers who attain lofty intellectual rapture and delighted physical satisfaction. What the songs and sonnets give us is a day to day picture of a restless and demonstrative temperament experiencing all the moods of a passionate lovers, from a lofty intellectual rapture through delighted physical satisfaction down to a sated and almost morbid disgust. (116)

Andrew Marvell is a remarkable poet of love. His poetry was inspired both by human and divine love. But he is different from other Elizabethan poets in that there is a tough reasonableness in his poetry. In this regard, two of Marvel’s love poems, The Definition of Love and To His Coy Mistress show him most obviously as a poet in the metaphysical tradition. Each is an argument, pressing towards a conclusion by seemingly logical steps. To His Coy Mistress is undoubtedly a masterpiece of the love poems. Here passion is allowed to take its most natural path.
According to Jack Dalglish, “Thomas Carew is a careful and conscious artist. His work is characterized by a remarkable sense of form and structure, by lucidity and conciseness and control of feeling which expresses itself in a polished urbanity of love and attitude”. (151). His love poem ‘Ask Me No More’ is a coruscation of hyperboles.

Grierson feels that Donne’s poetry reveals the passions of lovers in different ways:

Not sensual nor sensuous but passionate is the note of the young Donne and his verse, an intense susceptibility to the fascination of sex, a fascination that at once allures and repels, enthralls and awakens a spirit of scornful rebellion. He ranges from the whole gamut of passion from its earth list to its most abstractly detached moods. (xviii)

The Tamil Akam poetry also explains vividly the different emotions and feelings of the lovers. One can find parallel themes in both the literatures. According to V.S.P. Manikam, ancient love poetry in Tamil describes universal emotion and passionate love:

Sexual passion or love is the subject matter of Ahattinai. It is but natural for a people whose ideal of life is firmly rooted in this world to choose an emotion so universal congenital and over poweri ng as passionate love which alone is capable of satisfying one’s heart, brain and senses alike the sovereign thrones in the human body as the best theme of Ahattinai. (TCL 80)
Halan Gardner opines that the imagination found in the love poems of John Donne could be compared with the imagination of Shakespeare:

The love poetry of Donne is, in its limited sphere, like the plays of Shakespeare in being ‘of imagination all compact’. As Shakespeare was stimulated by stories he read or plays he had seen to make a play, so Donne, I believe, was stimulated by situations, some literary, some imagined, some reflecting the circumstances of his own life, by things seen on the stage or read in the study, or said by friends in casual conversation, to make poems. (xviii)

In the poem entitled ‘The Canonization’, Donne asks his friend who tries to dissuade him from loving to hold his tongue and let him love. Just as it is useless for him to scold the poet for suffering from gout, palsy or baldness, so it is equally useless to try to dissuade him from love-making. He ridicules him for having wasted his wealth but it would have no effect on him. Therefore, it would be better for him to go away and improve his worldly position by earning wealth and his mind by acquiring knowledge. He may do whatever he likes, but he must not disturb him in his love-making.

None is injured by his love-making. His sighs do not drown any merchant ship and his tears do not cause any floods. The coldness of his sighs does not prolong the winter and delay the coming of spring and the heat of his passion does not cause plague which takes a heavy toll of life. Despite his love, the world goes on as usual.
He may call the poet and his beloved in different names. He may call the poet a fly and his beloved another fly which move round each other. They are both tapers also; for they burn themselves out for each other’s love. They are to each other like the eagle and the dove. The phoenix riddle can be explained easily by the example set by them. They are two separate personalities, but their love makes them one, and so they make a neutral sex like the phoenix. And the phoenix also is not one bird, but two birds- the male and female – forming a single, neutral whole. They die like the phoenix and experience the consummation seem mysterious, like the phoenix. If they cannot acquire immortality by their love, they can at least die by it. The story of their love may not be carved on tombs, and monuments may not be built in their memory and their story may not be recorded in books of history, but they will be remembered in sonnets and love- lyrics. Because of such lyrics, which would be hymns to their love, they would become immortal and people would then call them saints of love.

The Phoenix riddle hath more wit
By us, we two being one, are it.
So to one neutrall thing both sexes fit,
Wee die and rise the same, and prove
Mysterious by this love. **(OBSV 91)**

Louis martz asserts that one could find the immortality of love in the poems of John Donne:

Doone’s love poems take for their basic theme the problem of the place of human love in a physical world dominated by change and death. The
problem is broached in dozens of different ways, sometimes implicitly, sometimes explicitly, sometimes by asserting the immortality of love, sometimes by declaring the futility of love.(167)

According to Leo Spitzer, John Donne’s poem “The Extasie” speaks about the union of two souls:

Begins by describing the outward situation of two lovers, he reclining on a grassy, violet scented mound near a bank; against this background they experience mystic union of a neo-platonic order, without being diverted or disturbed by physical passion. The author evidently intends to offer, in poetic guise, an intellectual definition of the ecstatic state of two souls, which emerge from their bodies and blend so completely that they become one.(118)

When the influence of the heavenly bodies works on man, it first permeates the air, so a soul can penetrate another soul, but it is only through the medium of the body that one’s soul contacts another. As from one’s blood issue forth spirits which act as the instruments of the soul, and which bind together elements that go to the making of man, so the body and sense – organs and all that comes to men through the sense are in the service of the lovers’ souls, otherwise the soul cannot reveal itself.

Therefore, the lovers turn to their bodies, so that they may understand the mystery of love. Love ripens in the soul, but it is through the medium of the body the love is to be experienced. If some lover, such as they are, has heard this
discourse, let him still observe them, and he will notice no change when they go back to their bodies.

‘Loves mysteries in soules doe grow,
But yet the body is his book.
And if some lover, such as Wee,
Have heard this dialogue of one,
Let him still marke us, he shall see
Small change, when we’are to bodies gone. (OBSV 108)

In the poem ‘The Anniversarie’ Donne affirms the fact that love is eternal since the poet and his beloved first met each other. Kings and all their favorites have aged, the glory of honour, beauty and wit has passed away, and the sun itself, which measures time, as it passes, is older by a year. All other things are hastening to their decay but their love alone knows no decay. Neither tomorrow nor yesterday does affect their love. While it runs in its course, it never runs away from them. Their love never changes; it is the same as it was in the beginning and will continue to be the same till the end. Their love is eternal.

The graves must hide their corpses. If one grave might cover the two corpses, death would not separate them. The ears of the prince which were nourished with genuine oaths and their eyes which were nourished with sweet-bitter tears will be closed in death. But their souls, possessed entirely by love and admitting other thoughts only temporarily, shall then prove the constancy of their love. Their love will increase still more in heaven when after death the bodies sink into the grave and the souls ascend to heaven.
And in heaven they shall be thoroughly blest they shall be as much blest as other spirits. Here on earth they are both kings and subjects in their love. None can do treachery to them.

“Who is so safe as wee? Where none can doe

Treason to us, except one of us two.

Let us love nobly, and live, and adde againe

Yeares and years unto years, till we attaine

To write threescore: this is the second of our raigne.” (OBSV 98)

In the poem entitled ‘The Flea’ Donne asks his beloved to observe the flea carefully and mark that what she denies to him is not of much significance. The flea sucked her blood, and then sucked his and in this way in its body their respective bloods are mixed up. She must acknowledge that this mingling of their bloods in the body of the flea is neither sin, nor shame, nor loss of virginity. But the flea has enjoyed her without any wooing is courtship and its body is now swelled up with the joining of their respective bloods, which now mingle in its body. The poet regrets that such direct enjoyment and consummation is not possible for human beings.

The beloved must not kill the flea because in its body they are more than married, for in its body her blood and his blood are mingled. Therefore the body of the flea is not only their wedding temple, but it is also their bridal bed. Their bloods mingle in the body of the flea as they mingle the sex- act, despite the objections of her parents and her own objections. They have been isolated from the world and have met in privacy within the four walls which make up its body.
She should not kill the poor creature, for it would be triple murder. She would kill the flea, as well as the poet whose blood it has sucked. It will also be a self-murder which is prohibited by religion. The killing of the flea would be sin and sacrilege; it would be three murders in one.

As the beloved kills the flea, the lover calls her cruel and rash. She has purpled her nails with the blood of the innocent flea. The beloved is triumphant and says that neither she nor her lover is in any way weaker for having killed it. This is perfectly true. From this she should learn that her fears of losing her honour thoroughly yielding to the advance of her lover are false. Just as she lost little when the flea sucked her blood, she will lose no honour in yielding herself to him.

O stay, three lives in one flea spare,
Where we almost, Yea, more than married are.
This flea is You and I, and this
Our married bed, and marriage temple is.
Though parents grudge, and You, We’re met,
And cloister’d in these living walls of jet. (POJ 2)

In the poem entitled ‘The Funeral’ Donne writes about his grave. It is possible that some time in the future, his grave may be opened to take in some other body and then the grave-digger will discover, “a bracelet of bright hair” tied round his wrist-bone. This should certainly make him realize that it was the grave of some loving couple and the poet hopes that the grave-digger would leave them undisturbed in their grave. He should realize that the lovers, through this device,
tried to unite their souls even in death. They hoped that, in this way, their souls would meet at the grave on the Last day or the Day of Judgment and stay there for some time.

If this digging should happen in a time or land, some pagan religion rules, then possibly the grave-digger would take their remains to the Bishop or King, to make them relics; then she shall become Mary Magdalena, and thereby he would become something other than himself; all women shall adore them as saints. Since miracles would be expected of them as saints, he would have that age learn from this poem what miracles such innocent lovers wrought. First, they loved well and faithfully without knowing what they loved or why, difference of sex they knew no more, than their guardian angels do. Coming and going, perhaps, they used the ceremonial kiss, but they enjoyed no other liberties between those customary occasions. Their hands never touched the physical seals that social law imposes but nature allows. These miracles they did. But he should surpass all measure and all language, if he told what a miracle she was. The poet lacks words to describe the miracle of her being.

Through every can tie those parts,
And make me one of all,
Those hairs which upward grew,
And strength and art
Have from better brain, (POJ 62)

In his poem entitled ‘The Good-Morrow’, Donne expresses his astonishment. The lover expresses his wonder as to what he and his beloved did
before they fell in love with each other. He regards their former pleasures as childish and rustic and their former life as a long sleep in which they were as oblivious to the reality of life as the seven sleepers were during their long sleep of two hundred years duration. In comparison with their pleasure in the love of each other, all their previous pleasures seem unsubstantial and unreal. Other beautiful women whom he loved, and whose love he could get, now seem to him as mere visions or reflections of the beauty of his present beloved.

Their life in the past was but a dream and forgetfulness and now the night of oblivion is over and it is the morning of their love. They watch each other not out of suspicion or jealousy but out of their all absorbing love for each other. Love now reigns supreme, they no longer desire to see other scenes and sights, and each of them is a world to the other. Let sailors discover new worlds, let them make maps and charts of the worlds they have discovered, and thus give to others an idea of the widening horizons of the world. But the poet is content with the world of love; he desires no other world. Each of them is a separate world, and yet the two worlds of the two lovers are fused and united into a single world. Thus in the world of love there is unity in diversity.

Arnold Stein considers this a wittier poem:

The poem is a wittier poem, but the wit, I suggest, does not lie in any intellectual mischief or shocking outrageousness and details, it lies in the sustained imaginative power and imaginative consciousness we experience in the poem. The kind of structure we might expect from such a poem
ought not to depend too heavily on mere disproportions between elements
put into simple contrasting relationship. *(92)*

And now good morrow to our waking soules,
Which watch not one another out of feare;
For love, all love of other sights controules,
And makes one little roome, an every where.
Let sea- discoverers to new worlds have gone,
Let Maps to others, worlds on worlds have showne,
Let us possesse one world, each hath one, and is one. *(OBSV 91)*

In his poem entitled ‘The Sunne Rising’, Donne rebukes the Sun for disturbing the lovers. The poet addresses the sun as an interfering old fool and one who does not care for any rules and regulations. He is angry with the sun because it has been guilty of a breach of etiquette in peeping through the windows and curtains of his bed- room and in thus disturbing him in his love making. It must realize that lovers are not bound by the changes that are caused by its movements. The poet angrily calls it an affected old wretch and asks it to go away from their room. Instead of disturbing them, it should rebuke boys for being late to school and apprentices for being unwilling to work. It should tell the courtiers to get ready to go out with the king for hunting and asks the busy farmers to collect their harvest.

Busy old foole, unruly Sunne,Why dost thou thus,
Through windows, and through curtaines call on us?
Must to thy motions lovers’ seasons run?
Saucy pedantic wretch, go childe.

Late School boys and sour prentices,

Go tell court- huntsmen that the king will ride…

Love, all alike, no season knows nor clime,

Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time. (EMP 12)

In the poem entitled ‘A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning’ Donne compares the lovers to the twin compasses. Virtuous people are not afraid of death. They pass away quietly, and gently. Their souls depart from this world even though their friends are sad at their death, and want that they should live here for some time more. Others do not want them to die at all.

Like virtuous people, let them also bid good bye to each other without making any noise about it. Neither should they raise floods by their tears, nor storm by their sighs. It would be a vulgarization of their love, to mourn and weep and in this way tell the world of it. Their love is something sacred and they must not defile it.

Moving of the earth, as during an earth quake, causes harm gives rise to great fears. People calculate the damage the earth quake actually causes. But the movement of the spheres, though much greater, causes no damage, and people are not afraid of it, because they are unaware of it. Earthly lovers cannot endure the absence as it moves the physical self of the beloved on which their love is based.

But their love is so spiritual and refined that even they themselves do not understand its real nature. it is a mystery even to them. They are so sure of each other’s soul that physical self, eyes, ears, lips, hands, etc., does not matter at all to
them. Love has fused their two souls into one. Therefore, even if he has to go away, their souls would not be separated. His absence would not cause any breach in his love. Rather, his going away only means that their love would cover a larger area, just as gold, when beaten, does not break but expands wider and wider and becomes airy thin.

If their souls are two, they are two like the two feet of a compass, which appear to be separate but are in reality united at the top. The beloved, who stays at home, may be likened to its fixed foot, which does not seem to move, but which moves in reality, if the other foot moves.

The beloved is like the foot of the compass which remains fixed at the centre. But it leans and follows the other foot when it moves, and grows erect and unites with the moving foot when it returns to the starting point after completing their circle. Similarly, his going away would be like the moving of the foot of a compass, and they would be united when he returns home.

Garret concludes that Donne never uses natural imagery and that he uses only scientific one:

Donne displays a distaste and impatience towards the artifices of petrarchan convention. He writes poetry of the city rather than of an idealized Arcadian countryside. Sidney’s moon is looked at through an astronomer’s not a lovers eye, Donne has no interest at all in the boughs, the birds and the beauties of nature that proved such an endless source of inspiration to Shakespeare. Donne’s poetry is often called metaphysical, partly because of its scientific imagery and partly because of
his unusual linking of physical objects to abstract metaphysical concepts with which they have very little in common (such as the comparison of a set of compasses to the love between a man and his wife in A valediction forbidding mourning) (51).

The beloved has the same relation with the lover as the fixed foot of the compass has with the moving foot, which moves and draws circle. It is the firmness of the fixed foot which enables the moving foot to draw the circle correctly, and then return to the place from where it began. Similarly, it is her love and faithfulness which would enable to perform his journey successfully and then return home.

Our two soules therefore, which are one,

Though I must goe, endure not yet

A breach, but an expansion,

Like gold to aiery thinnesse beate.

If they be two, they are two so

As stifte twin compasses are two,

Thy soule the fixt foot, makes no show

To move, but doth, if the’ other doe. (POJ 51-52)

In the poem entitled ‘The Apparition’ Donne presents a dramatic monologue. The poet is angry with his beloved and says that she is no better than a murderess. When he is killed by her scornful rejection of his advances, she would consider herself free. She would then think that she would never again be
troubled with his love making. But she would soon realize her mistake, for his ghost will visit her in her bedroom.

The poet imagines that his ghost would find her in the arms of another man, much worse than he. All her claims to virginity were false because now she would be discovered sleeping with another man. At the time the candle in her room would be burning with a weak, flickering light. She would shake and pinch her lover in order to wake him. But he, already exhausted, would think that she wanted indulgence in sex and so he would pretend to be sleeping, and shrink away from her.

The result would be that she would be left trembling miserably, like an aspen leaf. She would lie there neglected by her lover. Her body would all be bathed in sweat, white and cold like mercury. Then she would look more like a ghost than he himself. He no longer loves her and, therefore, does not pity her. He wishes that she should suffer deep anguish and repent, rather than that he should merely hold out empty, harmless threats.

“And then poor Aspen wretch, neglected thou
Bathed in a cold quicksilver sweat wilt lye
A verier ghost than I
What I will say, I will not tell thee now,
Lest that preaerve thee; ans since my love is spent,” (OBSV 104)

In the poem entitled ‘Loves Growth’ Donne reveals his creativity. The poet does no longer believe his love to be so pure, and unmixed, as he had earlier supposed it to be, because now he discovers that his love is subject to seasonal
fluctuation and changes like the grass. Throughout the winter the poet lied when he swore that his love was infinite, because what is infinite cannot grow and increase. Now he finds that his love has grown with the spring. Spring has made some addition to it.

The love is like a medicine which cures by giving the patient more sorrow. Love is not a pure and unmixed essence which has sustaining and curative powers. It is rather a compound, a mixed stuff, made up of different elements or experiences, and hence it causes pain and suffering both to the soul and the senses. Like other mixed stuffs, love also gets an addition in its vigor and strength from the sun. Love is not as pure and unmixed as is supposed by those who have no other beloved expect their poetry. In fact, love is a mixture of different elements. That is why it is some time passive and at other times active. Sometimes it acts, and at other times it contemplates. It is an activity both of the mind and the body.

And yet his love is not made larger by the spring, but more prominent; as in the heaven stars are not enlarged, but revealed by the sun. Gentle love deeds, like blossom on a bough, bud out in spring from love’s awakened root.

If love takes such additions, as more circles are produced by one stirred in water, those, like so many spheres, make only one heaven, for they are all centered in her. And though each spring at new vigour to love, as princes levy new taxes in times of war, and do not remit them in peace no winter shall reduce the spring’s increase.

Thus love is not like grass, but more like heaven.

But if this medicine, love,
Which cures all sorrow,

With more, not only be no quintessence,

But mixt of all stuffes, paining soule, or sense,

And of the Sunne his working vigour borrow (POJ 43)

In the poem entitled ‘Love’s Alchemy,’ Donne refutes that the beloved is a paragon of virtue. Let those who have dug deeper into the mine of love say where the essential happiness of love lies. As far as the poet is concerned, he has loved, possessed his beloved and also told of his experiences to others. But even if he were to go on loving, enjoying the pleasures of love, and telling of his experiences to others all his life, he would never be able to explain the true nature of love. Love is so mysterious. None can claim to know its secrets and understand its nature. No alchemist has as yet succeeded in discovering the Elixir, but glorifies his pot full of a number of chemicals, and imagines that he has got the elixir whenever he comes across something fragrant and medicinal, the bye-product of his search for the Elixir. Similarly lovers dream of a rich and long delight in each other’s company, but get only a cold and short wintry night. Dreams of lovers are as futile as the dreams of Alchemists who failed to discover the Elixir even though they devoted their whole lives to the search.

Therefore, the lovers should not spend their savings, their corner their youth and vitality in indulgence in the pleasures of sex which are as vain and fleeting as the shadows cast by bubbles. Love does not mean mere physical indulgence in sex, for if it were so, his servant would be able to enjoy all the pleasures of sex once he has gone through the humiliating wedding ceremony in
the church. But love is not also purely spiritual. That miserable lover who swears that marriage is the union of minds and of bodies, and who finds his ‘beloved pure spirit’ like an angle, he will also swear that he hears the music of the spheres in the loud, coarse noise made by the band which place on the occasions of his wedding. In other words, an angelic woman is impossible. At their best, women have sweetness and wit. But when once they have been enjoyed they are found to be without mind or soul.

Some that have deeper digg’d

Love’s mine than I,

Say, where his centric

Happiness doth lie.

I have loved, and got and told,

But should I love, get, tell, till I

Were old,

I should not find that hidden

Mystery. *(POJ 41)*

In the poem entitled ‘The Blossome’, the poet addresses his beloved as poor flower, and says that he has been watching the growth of her youth and beauty for six or seven days, for some time past. He has seen the birth of her beauty, and how it continued to grow every day. To-day, she is triumphant like a beautiful flower, standing high on its stalk. She does not realize that her beauty is short lived. Time will soon destroy her beauty as a flower is killed by frost and
snow. Soon the poet will find her youth and beauty all fallen to pieces, as the petals of a full-grown flower fall to the ground, and all its beauty is no more.

The poet now addresses his heart and says that it is in vain for it to hover round his beloved, and in this way to try to secure a resting place in her love and affection. It will never succeed in its efforts, for she is both ‘A Forbidden’, and ‘A Forbidding tree’. She is a forbidden tree because she is the wife of another, and she is also a, forbidding tree, because she has rejected the advances of the poet. It is wrong to suppose that her stiffness, scorn and contempt can be overcome by long and patient love making. Tomorrow, before her, his sun is awake, the poet will start on his journey and his heart will have to go with him.

Even if the poet goes away, it does not make much difference to the poet’s heart. It is determined to stay behind and continue its love making. The poet permits his heart to stay behind and continue with his love making. But women require sexual gratification and merely spiritual love cannot gratify her. A woman can never recognize other parts, but she can never recognize heart. Therefore, the poet assures the heart that she would never realize that it is his heart and, therefore, it will be useless for it to stay behind. The poet’s lady love may not respond to his love, but his heart will continue to dote upon the unresponsive beloved:

Alas, if you must goe, what is that to mee?
Here lies my business, and here I will stay:
You goe to friends, whose love and meanes present
Various content
To your eyes, ears, and tongue and every part,

If then your body goe, what need your heart? (POJ 64)

In the poem entitled ‘To His Mistress Going to Bed’ the poet is troubled with intense sexual urge, and so exhorts his beloved to come to him in bed in absolute nakedness. Then he proceeds to give a number of arguments in support of his point of view. First, he tells her that his sexual urge is so powerful and insistence, that he can find no rest till it is satisfied through sexual intercourse. She must, therefore, quickly take of her clothes and come to him. She must take of her girdle which is bright and beautiful like a circle of stars, but which encloses the far more beautiful body of his object of love. She should also put off the ornamental covering over her breasts, which is designed to divert the attention of fools from the real charms of her body. She should be quick about her undressing, for the musical sound coming out of her watch tells him that it is time for her to go to bed. She should take off her gown, and this would fully reveal her beauty, just as the full beauty of a meadow full of flowers is revealed as the shade of the hill moves away and clear sunlight falls upon them. It is a beautiful, sensuous and picturesque image in which the body of the beloved has been likened to the meadow full of flowers. She should also remove her head-dress and show her long curly hair in their full glory. She should take off her shoes, and softly enter the bed to enjoy the pleasures of sex. The poet calls the bed sacred temple of love and his mistress an angel; clad all in white, bringing too him all the pleasures of paradise visualized by mystics. Both angels and evil spirits visit men with white dress, but they can easily be recognized one from the other. The evil spirits terrify
men and make their hair stand on end with fear. But angels like her cause erection of the male Sexual organ. This is a fine example of Donne’s wit. The word-play in the last line of the passage, “they set our hairs, but these the flesh upright”, and its sexual overtones are to be noted.

Presumably by now the beloved has joined the poet in bed. So he requests her to permit his hands to explore every part of her body. In one of his better known conceits, the poet compares her body to America, to a land newly discovered. She is equally mysterious to him, a land of romance, unknown and strange, and so he is eager to explore her body and know all it is charms. She is his empire, his kingdom, his mine full of precious charms. He alone rules over the kingdom of her body and alone enjoys its manifold beauties. The poet enjoys heavenly bliss in exploring her body. When the beloved embraces him and holds him in her arms, he feels really free, from the sexual urge which has constantly been torturing him. He has placed his hand on a particular part of the body, and it is there that he would also consummate his love through sexual intercourse.

The naked body is being compared to the bodiless soul, and pleasures of sex to heavenly bliss. The bringing together of opposites is the characteristic manner of Donne. Women wear gems and ornaments to divert the attention of men from their real self. Also he compared the lady to books with well decorated covers. The common people are lost in the contemplation of the beautiful cover and do not care to read the books. But the poet is not like them, he must read the real book itself. He must know her real charm in the entirety. She should come to him in absolute nakedness and show her charms freely to him, as she would to a
midwife. Therefore, there should be no concealment or hesitation. She should throw off her white dress which is entirely out of place and uncalled for. It is a simple of chastity or of penance. It is not needed where there is neither penance nor chastity, but only sexual pleasure. He himself is naked and she should follow his example. If she needs a covering he should soon cover her with his body by lying over her. It is one of those rare poems in which Donne talks directly of the beauty of the woman he loves.

Like pictures, or like books gay coverings made
For laymen, are all women thus array’d.
Themselves are only mystique books, which only we
Whom their imputed grace will dignify
Must see revealed. (POJ 149)

The poem entitled ‘song’ is one of the sweetest of love songs of the poet. The emotional situation is defined in the very beginning. The poet is going abroad, the beloved is heart-broken, and the poet advises her not to mourn. Then he proceeds to give arguments after arguments in support of his point of view. Thus in this theme this love-song has close-affinities with “A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning”. The poet assures his wife that he is not going out because he is tired of her.

He still loves her as much as ever before. He does not go out in search of a better object of love, for he is sure there is no better woman and a more beautiful one, in the world. She is the best for him. All must die, and he too will die one day. His death then would be a great shock to her. Therefore, she must prepare
herself for it. She must take his temporary departure as a mock – imitation of
death. Let it be taken as pretended death. When such pretensions are frequently
repeated, she would get used to separation, and death, when it comes, will not
cause such great pain and suffering. She would already be used to its pangs, the
pangs of separation.

Continuing with his arguments, the poet points out that the sun travels
across the sky, and returns soon the next day. His return is only a matter of
routine, for he has no desire and no feelings of love to spur of love to spur him on
to return quickly. His own journey is much shorter than that of the sun, and he
would return much sooner for he has the winds of the desire, and spur of love to
hasten his return. Their separation will be of a short duration and, therefore, there
is no occasion for grief.

Men are weak and helpless and they cannot lengthen or recall even one hour
of their happiness. The moments of happiness are precious and they must not be
wasted in thinking of future ills. By anticipating misfortunes, we increase both
their intensity and our suffering. Therefore, instead of thinking of future sorrows
and sufferings, one should enjoy whatever bliss is possible in the present.

The beloved must not sigh or shed tears, for she is the best part of his life,
and when she sighs away his own life, and when she weeps, she sheds his life
blood. By pining away in grief, she wastes away his life. The following lines
reveal the poets love and passion:

In the end, the poet advises the beloved not to think that misfortunes
would befall him during his journey. It is just possible that Goddess Fortune
may side with her and what she anticipates may actually come to happen. Therefore, she should wish him only good luck and not think of any possible harm. She should remember that true lovers are united spiritually. In order to drive his point home, the poet makes use of a telling and ingenious conceit. Lovers sleeping in the same bed are not separated when in sleep they turn towards each other. Similarly, his going abroad is no separation at all. It is just turning away in sleep for a moment. The poet ends his advice by pointing out that those who live in each other can never be parted by mere physical separation. Even when physically separated they are united spiritually.

When thou sighs, thou sighest not wind
But sighest my soul away
When thou weep’st, unkindly kinde,
My lifes blood doth decay.
It cannot bee
That thou lov’st mee, as thou say’st,
If in thine my life thou waste,
Thou art the best of mee. (OBSV 95)

In the poem entitled ‘The will’ contains a catalogue of the various items the poet bequeaths to different persons, as a dying person does through his will. However, in the case of a will the various articles bequeathed are the tangible and concrete property of dying person as property, lands, houses etc. but in the poem the various items bequeathed by the poet are entirely different and unusual. As a matter of fact, the poem has nothing serious about it. It shows Donne in a non-
serious playful mood. The poet’s satirical vein finds full play. Before he dies, he would like to bequeath some legacies to a number of persons, but the legacies are all made contrary-wise, thus bringing out the inconstancy and unfaithfulness of the beloved, and of womankind in general.

The poet makes certain gifts to those who do not need them, and can make no use of them. He has got two eyes which either can see or cannot see. If his eyes can see, he bequeaths them to Argus, a giant with a hundred eyes, who, therefore, has no need of them. If he is blind, then he bequeaths his eyes and the God of love, cupid, who himself is blind. In either case his gift would be useless. Similarly, he gives his tongue to Gossip, his ears to ambassadors and his tears either to women or the sea. In all these cases, the recipients have already enough of the item gifted to each of them. The poet does so because the God of Love has made him fall in love with a woman who already had a large number of lovers, and did not need her love.

He also bequeaths his constancy to planets which are constantly in motion, his truth to courtiers or lawyers who live by telling lies, his honesty and frankness to Jesuits who are known for their secrecy and cunning intrigues, his silence to those who have been abroad and who are given to much boasting, his money to monks who have renounced the world and have no use for money. Thus he makes all his gifts to such as do not have the capacity to use those gifts. He does so because the God of Love has made him love a woman who, by her very nature, is incapable of loving.
Further, the poet gifts his religious faith to Roman Catholics who are fanatics in religious matters, his good works to “Schismatics”, a class of people who pride themselves on their piety and goodness, his civility to the universities which claim to teach civility to those who come to them, his modesty to soldiers, and his patience to gamblers. Thus the gift is given to those who will regard their respective gifts as an insult to them.

He gives his hard work and watchfulness to his enemies, his skepticism to the hair-splitting medieval scholar, his sickness to his doctors or the excess of some ‘humour’ in his body, his poetic talent to Nature and his wit to society. Moreover he gives his books of medicine to a dying man, his books of moral advice, to mad people, his ancient brass coins to poor starving people in need of bread, and his knowledge of English language to those who have to live in foreign countries.

Finally the poet threatens to destroy all the three-himself, the God of Love and his beloved. He will do so by dying, with his death true love will also die from the world. No more true lovers will be left in the world.

Therefore I’ll give no more, but I’ll undo
The world by dying, because love dies too.
Then all your beauties will be no more worth
Than gold in mines, where none doth draw it forth;
And all your graces no more use shall have,
Than a sun dial In a grave. (POJ 61)

In the poem entitled ‘Elegies: On His Mistris’ Donne explains the emotional situation is defined in the very beginning. The lover is going abroad, and the
beloved, wants to go with him. She proposes that she will disguise herself as a boy-servant out of fear of the dangers in foreign countries. The poet is against any such disguise. He tells her that such a disguise would serve no purpose; she will be at once known to be a woman as she is graceful and charming she is. Therefore, he advises her to stay at home where she will be perfectly safe from all dangers. The advice has ironical overtones. Greek myth and legends, but here he refers to the story of the Greek maiden Orithia, who was destroyed by the God of the North-wind when she failed to respond to his love. He gives her a piece of general advice and points out that it is folly to court dangers unnecessarily. She should console herself with the thought that the physical separation is no separation for those who love each other truly. Their souls are still united.

She should not disguise herself as a boy. She should change neither her dress, nor her essentially feminine nature. She should not try to be a stranger to her own real self. The disguise will serve no useful purpose, for her face is so graceful and charming that all will recognize her to be a woman. Her blushes would at once reveal her to be a woman. Using two very vivid and concrete images he tells her that Moon remains the Moon even when eclipsed and that Apes remains Apes even when richly dressed. So, she would remain a woman and be recognized as such, even though disguised as a boy-servant.

During the course of his travels, he will go to France, Italy, Holland and other countries. Her honour will not be safe anywhere. The fashion-loving French who are immoral and so full of venereal diseases, and who inflame their passions in various ways, will at once recognize her and seduce her. Her honour will not be
safer either in Italy. The Italians are homosexuals, and they will try to seduce her, even if they do not recognize her to be a woman. The Dutch are drunk and disorderly, and she cannot be safe in the country also. Therefore, she should stay at home, and then she will not suffer any disgrace or dishonor she should live in England all her life, till king Death summons her to the other world. She should not think of any misfortunes or accidents befalling him:

Nor in bed fright thy nurse

With midnights startings, crying out, oh, oh,

Nurse, oh my love is slaine: I saw him goe,

Ore the white Aples alone: I saw him, I

Assayld, fight, taken, stabb’d, bleedde, fall, and dye. (POJ 141)

Donne advises her to think only of a good future, of success and happiness coming to him in foreign countries. She should not think of any misfortunes or accidents befalling him if she thinks of his meeting some harm, at night she would wake up with fear, frighten her companion, by crying out that her, lover is being attacked and stabbed, or that he is traveling all alone on the snow-covered alps. The passage is a fine rendering of the psychological state of women in love.

In the poem entitled ‘His picture’ Donne describes the use of his picture. He gives his beloved his picture, and assures her that her own picture is imprinted on her heart, which is also the place where his soul dwells. Her picture shall be effaced from his heart only when his soul leaves it. As long as he lives, she will also live in his heart.
The picture which he gives to her closely resembles him. It resembles him in life, but the resemblance will be close and more intimate in the case of his death in the battle. Then they would both be shadows. The picture is a shadow or imitation of reality; and he will be a shadow or ghost after his death. Therefore his picture will resemble him more closely the event of his death. It is a fine insistence of Donne’s wit. The pun on the word “shadow” is to be noted.

But it is possible that he may not die, but return to her after the battle. In that case too, the picture will serve a useful purpose. If he returns alive, he will be weather-beaten, coarse and deformed. His hands will be torn by the rough oars which he will have to use for rowing his ship. His skin will be scorched with the heat of the sun. His face and breast will be covered with long hair, and will be as rough and coarse as haircloth, a cheap, coarse wollen-cloth. Because of cares and worries, fears and anxieties, his bones would have turned white. His loves would be broken and crushed, and his skin covered with blue spots caused by gunpowder.

In that case his foolish enemies, rivals in love, shall ridicule her and criticize her for having loved such a foul, ugly and coarse man. She will then be able to point to the picture and tell them that when she first fell in love with him he was handsome and delicate as shown in the picture. She will be able to tell them that his injuries would not affect her love for him, and his worth and nobility suffers no loss in her eyes, simply because he has been injured in the war. By his picture, she will be able to justify her love for him and silence his enemies. They loved when he was bright and beautiful. Then their love was in its infancy, it was
tender and delicate, soft and pure as milk. But now their love has matured. It has
grown sturdy and strong and so it no longer depends on external appearances. In
short, true and mature minded –lovers, do not care for external appearances.
Their is a union of the souls unaffected by the beautiful or the foul.

Here take my picture; though I bid farewell,

Thine, in my heart, where my soule dwells, shall dwell.

‘Tis like me now, but I dead, ‘twill be more.

When wee are shadows both, than ‘twas before.

When weather-beaten I come backe; my hand, (OBSV 114)

According to Joan Bennett, John Donne had felt almost everything a man
could feel about a woman:

He had felt almost everything a man can feel about a woman, scorn, self-
contempt, anguish, sensual delight, and the peace and the peace and
security of mutual love. And he shapes such poems out of all this that we
are, as professor crofts say, ‘aware of the man speaking in a manner and to
a degree hardly to be paralleled in our reading of lyric poetry. Every word
is resonant with his voice; every line seems to bear the stamp of his
peculiar personality. Is this not enough to set him among the great love
poet.(xvii)

In Andrew Marvell’s poem entitled ‘To His Coy Mistress’ a lover addresses
his beloved who refuses to grant him sexual favours on account of her modesty
and her sense of honour. The lover says that her coyness or sexual reluctance
would have been justified if they had enough time and space at their disposal. If
they had enough space at their disposal, she could have occupied herself by searching for rubies on the banks of the Indian River, the Ganga, while he would complain about his unfulfilled love on the banks of river Humber in England. If they had enough time at their disposal, he would have started loving her ten years before the great flood while she could refuse to satisfy his desire till the judgment day when the Jews might agree to be converted to Christianity. If they really had enough time he would spend a hundred years in praising her eyes and gazing on her forehead; he would spend two hundred years in admiring each of her breasts; and he would spend thirty thousand years in praising the remaining parts of her body. The lover says that she really deserves so much praise and adoration.

Time is passing at a very fast pace, and eventually they have to face the deserts of vast eternity. After some years, her beauty will no longer be found on this earth. She will lie in her marble tomb, and he would no longer be there to sing his love song. There, in the grave, worms will attack her long-preserved virginity. All her nice sense of honour will then turn to dust, and all his desire to make love to her will then turn to ashes. The grave is a fine and private place, but nobody can enjoy the pleasure of love making there.

Therefore, it would be appropriate for both of them to enjoy the pleasures of love when there is still time, when her skin is still youthful and fresh, and when her responsive soul is still burning with a desire for love making. They should, like amorous birds of prey, devour the pleasure of love, which now time still permits them to enjoy, rather than that they should suffer the pangs of unsatisfied love. They should roll all their strength and all the sweetness into one.
An hunder years should go to praise

Thine Eyes, and on thy Forehead Gaze.

Two hundred to adore each Breast:

But thirty thousand to the rest.

An Age at least to every part (OBSV 744)

According to Robert Wilcher, poetry furnishes many examples of this brand of intellectual ingenuity from the conceit of the lover captivated by the voice of the lady in ‘Fair Singer’. (12)

This short poem, based on a series of conceits, describes the poet’s utter collapse before the charms of the lady who is beautiful to look at and who at the same time is an exquisite singer. The poet looks upon the fair singer as a “sweet enemy” who possesses two kinds of beauty which have combined together to defeat him. This lady has beautiful eyes which have cast a spell upon the poet’s heart, as she sings in such a sweet voice.

The poet feels that, if he had to deal with a woman who had possessed only one kind of beauty instead of both kinds, he could have escaped from her. In that case, his soul could have broken out of the thick web of her hair in which it would have got entangled. But in the case of this particular woman he cannot help becoming her slave because she has the skill to forge fetters for him from the very air which he breathes.

He finds all his resistance against her futile because she has a double advantage—the advantage of bright eyes and the advantage of a musical voice. He
is sure to be defeated in this contest because with her voice she can sweep him off
his feet, and with her eyes she can dazzle him.

In the poem entitled ‘The Definition of Love’ Marvell describes the nature
of the love which exists between the poet and his beloved. The poet regards this
love as being perfect and therefore unattainable.

First of all, the poet gives us the parentage of this love. This love, he says,
is of a rare birth. It is the offspring of the marriage of Despair and Impossibility.
Only resolute Despair could have produced such a divine love. In the case of a
love like this, Hope would prove to be utterly vain and futile because this love can
never be achieved.

The poet next tells us that it is the hostility of Fate which is responsible
for not permitting him and his beloved to be united. Fate is always jealous of
perfect lovers, and never allows them to be united. A union between two perfect
lovers would be a fatal blow to the power and authority of fate. Fate has placed
these two lovers as far apart from each other as the North Pole and the South Pole
are from each other. These lovers can never come together in spite of the fate that
they are the pivot round which the whole world of love revolves.

This love can be fulfilled only if the spinning spheres collapse and if the
earth is torn asunder by some violent convulsion. In order to bring these lovers
together, the whole world must be projected or flattened into a plan as only
oblique lines can meet each other in all geometrical angles, in the same way only
guilty or adulterous lovers can find the fulfillment of their passion. The love of the
poet and the love of his beloved are, however, like parallel lines which can never
meet even if they are stretched to infinity. Thus the love of the poet and hiseloved is only a meeting of the minds but can never take the form of a physical
union. This love may be defined as the conjunction of the mind and opposition of
the stars.

Therefore the Love which us doth bind,

But Fate so enviously debars,

Is the conjunction of the Mind,

And opposition of the Stars. (OBSV 748)

In the poem entitled ‘The Mower to the Glow Worms’ the poet describe
the uses of the light of Glow-worms. It is essentially a love poem. The Glow
worms remain as living lamps by the light of which the nightingale composes her
songs during the night. The glow worms are compared to comets. But while the
appearance of comet in the sky is generally taken as the sign of an impending
disaster like a war or a king’s death, the glow worms do not have any such evil
associations. The poem only provides the mower with the needful light to do his
work.

The usefulness of the glow worms to the mower who have lost their way
while going home in the darkness of the night is described. In the light provided
by the glow worms, such mowers can find their way home because otherwise they
might run after those foolish fires known as the “will-of-the-wisps”.

The speaker in the poem is himself a mower, and he is in love with a
woman called Juliana who, however, does not care for this admirer. He is feeling
distraught and frustrated because of her indifference to him. This mower can
therefore have no comfort, and no home. In his case therefore, the glow worms are
useless in showing him the way homeward because, even if he does find his home
in the sense of his dwelling, he would find no consolation or comfort there.

Your courteous Lights in vain you waste,

Since Juliana here is come,

For she my Mind hath so displac’d

That I shall never find my home. (OBSV 751)

Akam represents the ‘inner world’ of a man and a woman in their emotional
togetherness. The akam love is classified into seven types, viz., kaikkilai, kurunji, mullai, palai, marutam and neytal and peruntinai. The two types
kaikillai and peruntinai- are considered deviant and assigned to the lowly and the
base among men. The other five types which constitute the healthy, mutual love
between a man and a woman are taken for love proper and treated in akam poetry.

While mountain, forest, cultivated plain and seashore have their obvious
geographical identities, the arid desert tract is a non- descript area of hill and
jungle ‘run wild ‘,as they are subjected to the excessive heat of the rainless
summer sun.

Structurally, an Akam poem is constituted by three elements, viz.,
Mutalporul, Karupporul and uripporual. Mutalporul comprises aspects of space
and time; space is the given landscape, and time refers to the six seasons and the
divisions of the day. Karupporul indicates the characteristic regional features such
as the flora and the fauna, and the people of the given region. Uripporul is the
human love behaviour, the seven structured modes. Akattinai is then the love
behavior of the human world played in juxtaposition with mutualporual and karupporul. These two are a living matrix where the drama of human love is enacted.

The dramatic personae of akattinai are limited by convention to a small number: the hero, the heroine, the hero’s confidant, the confidante of the heroine, the foster-mother, the mistress, the messengers and the passers-by. The narrative design of akam love falls into two phases viz. kalavu and karpu. The hero and the heroine, the central dramatis personae, the idealized, archetypal young man and young woman in the bloom of their youth and loveliness, and well-matched in beauty, wealth, age, virtue, social standing, etc., have a chance meeting in the hilly terrain, where the heroine in the company of her play-mates comes for water sport in the fountains and waterfalls, or has been there doing the parentally assigned job of scaring away the birds from the grain-laden millet field, and where the hero comes chasing a wild game, or after an act of his manly quest. Their eyes exchanged their first glance, and both of them simultaneously feel in the very depth of their hearts a passion for each other. Poetic conventions term it iyarkaippunarcci, natural union, and describe it as the work of destiny, a law unto itself which neither the two nor their parents can unmake. Bound by the law of passion, as do the rain water and the red soil, they become lovers united for eternity. This union is both the union of hearts and physical one. The hero confesses that it is not cognizable even by the spirits, and that it is an outward sign of their inner communion.
After the union of destiny, the hero longs to meet her again, and it happens so. The hero is an utterly changed man after the experience, noticing which his confidant calls it an infatuation and rebukes the hero. However, realizing the genuineness and intensity of the passion, he offers his helping hand, goes to the specific place and reports the heroine’s presence there. The hero meets his love, and it is called pankarkuttam, the union through the services of the hero’s confidant. Thereafter, the heroine’s confidante comes in to the picture, and the meetings of passion go on in the thick of the hilly region unknown to the parents of the girl and the neighborhood. This character is the most complex and most cleverly realized structural instrument in akam poetry, who on most occasion moves on a psychological plan, providing remarkable insights into the working of the human mind. The principal structural devices of akam poetry –ullurai and iraicci- operate largely through her utterances. Out of the 882 verses dealing with the pre-marital phase of akattinai, 842, come under toliyirkuttam, the union through the aid of the confidante. On her shoulders rest the burden of not only aiding the unhindered flow of the love relationship between the hero and heroine but also the responsibility of arranging the marriage. She is the heroine’s unfailing link with the outside world- the hero, her foster mother and mother- as also the heroine’s eyes and ears vis-a-vis and all that happens around which has a bearing upon the vicissitudes of the heroine’s love-career. So intense and abiding is their intimacy that the hero is referred to as ‘our-lover’.

The role of the confidante of the heroine has been described vividly. She comprehends the love between the hero and the heroine, and learns that they are
destined to be man and love for all life and the life beyond too. She presses into
service all her resources of mind and heart and sees the successful meeting of the
lovers. But the time comes when she as well as her lady gives in to apprehension
that the hero is not really serious about taking the heroine’s hands in the formal
wedlock. Her main occupation now becomes devising ways to hasten marriage. At
first she arranges meetings between the lovers during day time when these
meetings become scarce as the millet corn ripens and the heroine’s watch is no
longer required, she arranges meetings by night. From now on she begins to exert
pressure on the hero to get him move toward wedded union: she dwells on the
dangers attendant on his coming through the woods for nocturnal trysting; sensing
his apparent unconcern, she refuses his gifts of leaf-foliage for the heroine; and as
his persistence in secret rendezvous continues, she refuses to arrange any more
meetings, and lets him know in subtle ways that only in wedded union lies the key
to his eternal happiness.

The hero, brought successfully around this reality, sets out in search of
wealth for the marriage, as well as to adequately provide for the material comforts
of his post-marital career. He promises to return by the winter or the early dewy
season, and the angst and the expectation of the heroine at the advent of this
season as also her anguish of passion during this brief parting find most
imaginatively contrived poetic expression.

As the confidante refuses to facilitate further clandestine meetings, the
hero caught in the grip of extreme frustration, may threaten to resort to riding a
horse made of palmyra stems on the streets of the heroine’s hamlet with a view to
proclaiming his passion and soliciting the sympathy of the elders for his cause. However, he shrinks from actually going through with this degrading act, as it would cast on irreparable slur on the passionately guarded feminine reserve of the heroine as well as manly dignity.

Meanwhile noticing the physical symptoms manifest in heroine, her parents, not knowing the real cause behind them, summon female diviner, who diagnoses it to be the ailment caused due to possession by a demon. Then Velan the priest of the hill God Murukan, is called in and he sets out to ‘exorcize’ the demon by dancing his frenzied dance. The crisis in the love course is further heightened by the gossip and the scandal about their love in the neighbourhood and consequent restrictions imposed on the movements of the heroine and the matrimonial offers from strangers. The confidante, who is well aware that for her lady chastity is more dear than life itself is left with no choice but to take the only virtuous course of revealing the secret love relationship between the hero and the heroine. This is a different phase. It consists in the confidante taking the consent of the heroine and breaking their clandestine love to the foster-mother, who in turn reveals it to the mother of the heroine, from whom it goes to father and brothers.

The secret love coming into public knowledge, the parents of the heroine agree to unite her with the hero in marriage, and they become man and wife. If it does not happen, the lovers resort to elopement. However elopement is ascribed to the heroine’s fear and anxiety that she may not get his hand, to her fear of revealing the secret to her parents and to the slander of the townsfolk. It thus seems that elopement follows the inability of the heroine and her confidante to
subject themselves to revelation with virtue rather than their failure to secure the parental consent.

Then begin the wedded course of the love–behaviour of the hero and the heroine, called karpu. That elopement and adherence to modes of virtue fall under the karpu phase indicates the sublime and the lofty conception of man–woman relationship by the ancient Tamil mind: the wedded state begins with the moment the secret love comes in to the knowledge of the society, or moment the lovers decide to elope, notwithstanding the fact that the very first natural union binds them for life, and beyond too. The other sub-phases of marital life are (i) the ecstasy and bliss of conjugal togetherness, (ii) the feigned love–quarrels, (iii) the mood of variance and aversion, (iv) The resolution of the love–quarrels and (v) separation. The poems depicting these situations of a promiscuous husband and a wife of unswerving conjugal fidelity envision a society where the rock-like fortitude and forbearance of womenfolk provide stability and meaning to the central human institution of marriage, who zealously guard it against attempts at sabotage by the mercurial, fickle-mindedness of the other sex.

Although akattinai reads poetry of human sexual love, V.Sp. Manickam would describe it with a sense of irrepressible conviction that it seems to be concerned with the whole of human personality. Sex is not viewed as the be-all and end-all of life. There is a natural balance between the affections of the heart and the will of the mind. The Kurunci poems are passionately and possessively concerned with the fulfillment of the emotional needs of man. The kurunci world is a world of a men who dance in blessed servitude to the dictates of the of their
“phallus”, and the *kurunci* hero takes it as a mark of his greatness to journey to his love’s place at the dead of night braving the vagaries of nature and man. He is willing to get the fire of his male strength and will subdued in the waters of female passion and tenderness. He would not mind even death after his passion centers renewed just once in the soft and tender springs of female flesh. And hence the akam hero leaves on his quest away from home knowing full well that his lady would fall in to death —like anguish and emotional starvation, that his separation would become thin her bamboo like shoulders and rotund forearms.

This precisely seems to be the meaning of the *palai* poems. Man is the lord, the hero, the doer, and no poem in the *akam* corpus says that he is deterred by the difficulties of his journey. He does postpone his ‘journey, but that is to prepare the mind fully for separation after consoling the heroine. His determination certainly wavers when his love tries to prevent him with threats of dying in lonesome distress, or when her confidante argues in favour of eternal conjugal bliss. But, his male self triumphs, and he leaves on his mission. Moreover the lady too recognizes the need for the fulfillment of her man’s material self, and she reflects that feminine virtue lies in not putting obstacles in his way. Such is the meaning and message of the conceptual foundations of theme of the separation in *akam* poetry.

Donne stresses the greatness of love in one of his poems. One can find the tide of genuine passion in Donne’s poetry where he describes the raptures of contented love. The greatness of love is also asserted here:

All other things to their destruction draw;
Only our love hath no decay;

This, no tomorrow hath, nor yesterday,

Running, it never runs from us away,

But truly keeps his first, least everlasting day. (POJ 150)

The ladylove feels that her love is greater than the earth and sky. It is also deeper than the depth of the ocean.

Nilattinum perite vanimum uyarntanru

Nirinum aralavinre caral

Karunkol kurincip pukkontu

Perunten ilaikkum natanotu natpe. (CI -76)

In **kurunthokai**, a lady considers her relationship with her lover to be firm one and no one could untie the relationship.

Turaivanotu

Yattem yattanru natpe

Avilttar karitatu mutnitamain tanre (CI-112)

The metaphysical poet Donne also expresses the fact that true lovers can never at all be parted in spirit. Even though they are separated, the separation is like the beaten gold.

“But we by a love, so much refined
That ourselves know not what it is’
Inter assured of the mind,
Carelesse, eyes, lips and hands to misse’
Our two soules therefore, which are one,
Though I must goe, endure not yet
A breach, but an expansion,
Like gold ayery thinnesse beate.” *(POJ 51.52)*

In another poem Donne asserts that the lovers could never at all be parted.

Even if there is any temporary separation it will never injure the lovers.

‘’Let not thy divining heart
Fore think me any ill,
Destiny may take thy part,
And may thy fears fulfil;
But think that we
Are but turn’d aside to sleep;
They who one another keep
Alive never parted be.” *(POJ 18)*

In *kurunthokai*, a lady says that she is not separated from her lover even though he dwells in a far off country, as he is nearer to her heart.

*Netuncenatta rayinum*

*Nencirkaniyar tankatanatte* *(CI-102)*

Both the cankam poetry and English metaphysical poetry try to analyse the nature of love. John Donne defines romantic love as some lovely glorious nothing.

Still when, to where thou wert,

I came, some lovely glorious nothing I did see. *(POJ 21-22)*

A young man expresses that love is false in a cynical mood.
In the poem ‘loves Progress’ Donne holds the opinion that a lover should always have the right true end of love in mind.

“Who ever loves, if he do not propose
The right true end of love, he’s one that goes
To sea for nothing but to make him sick……”\textbf{(POJ 144-148)}

According to Valluvar, love is tenderer than the tender flower. Only a very few people could unravel it properly.

\textit{Malarinum mellitu Kamam; cilar}

\textit{Atan cevvi talaippatuvar (kural 1289)}

In a poem from \textit{Kurunthokai} the nature of love has been described by the poet Milai Perun Kanthanar. He explains that the concept of love is not a ghost or a kind of disease. When the lover sees the beloved, there is an increase in the feelings of love.

\textit{Kamam kamam enpa kamam}

\textit{Anankum Piniyumanre nunankik}

\textit{Katuttalum tanitalu minreyanai}

\textit{Kulaku menrae matam polap}

\textit{Paniyu mutaittatu Kanunarp Perine (CI-90)}

The lovers have been compared to the mythological birds in the metaphysical poetry. In the \textit{cankam} poetry also lovers are compared to a rare kind of birds. John Donne compares the lovers to the rarest phoenix birds which are born once is several thousand years and consume themselves death in flames of fire. The phoenix riddle has acquired greater mystery by the lovers. For though the
lovers be two, in love they are actually one of almost neutral sex like that of the phoenix.

“The phoenix riddle hath more wit
By us, wee two being one, are it,
So, to one neutrall thing both sexes fit.
Wee dye and raise the same, and prove
Mysterious by this love.” (POJ 12-13)

In Kuruntokai, a lady wants to live together with her lover like the ‘makanril’ birds which used to live together always. Moreover, she wishes to die together. Her ambition is to live together with her husband in their next birth also.

Puvitaip patinumyantu kalintanna
Nirurai Makanrir punarcci polap
Pirivari takiya tantak kamamotu
Utanuyir pokuka tilla katanarin
Tiruve makiya ulakat
Toruve makiya punmaina muyarke. (CI -82)

In ainkuru nuru also one can find the same idea of comparing the lovers to the makanril birds:

Karunkal makanril anna

Utan punar kolkai katalore (CI-83)

Love acts as a super power. It mixes two souls in love and unifies them. Yet they may preserve their individual identities. By the working of love the two
souls become qualitatively indistinguishable. Because they consist of precisely the same mixture of elements. The new soul is compared to a violet transplanted.

‘A single violet transplant,
The strength, the colour, and the size,
(All which before was poor, and scant)
Redoubles still, and multiplies.’ (POJ 55)

The third soul concocted by love’s alchemy is vital. It is productive, fruitful, and capable of multiplying itself like a transplanted violet plant. A similar theme is found in a Tamil poem. The souls of the lover and the beloved had joined together like the rain water mixing with the red soil. Here afterwards they could not be parted.

Yayu nayum yara kiyaro
Entaiyu nuntaiyu memuraik kelir
Yanu niyumevvali yaritum
Cempulap peyanir pola
Anputai nencan tank alantanave. (CI-80)

In the English metaphysical poetry, the combination of two souls is compared to transplanted violet. In the caskam poetry the combination of the souls is compared to the red soil.

Donne is perplexed to think what he and his beloved did before they had a chance to love each other. They had been deprived of real pleasure till then. They had been indulging in ordinary pleasures like children. Then they were not aware of the higher and more intense pleasures available to them. They were
asleep in the traditional den of seven sleepers. IN the poem ‘The Good Morrow’
Donne writes as follows:

I wonder by my troth, what thou, and I
Did, Till we loved? Where we not weaned till then?
But suck’d on country pleasures, childishly?
Or snorted we in the seven sleeper’s den? (OBSV 90)

In cankam poetry, the description of the travel of two lovers to a distant
place has been described. On the way they were met by some people. Those
people were reminded of the nature of the lovers before they fell in love with
each other. For they used to fight with each other in their childhood days. Now
they became husband and wife. The onlookers were greatly surprised on looking
at them.

Ivaniva laimpal parravumivaliven
Punralai yori vanku nal pariyavum
Katar ceviliyar taviṟṟavum tavra
Tetil ciru ceruvurupa manno
Nallaiman ramma pale melliyar
Runai malarp pinaiya lanna vivar
Manamakiliyarkai katti yoye (CI-108)

John Donne feels that falling in love is a foolish act. Yet he also writes
love poems. His poems are set to music by somebody. The passions of a poet are
re-awakened when he hears his song. Therefore the poet calls himself the ‘Triple
Foole’
“I am two fooles, I know,
For loving and for saying so.
In whining poetry.” (POJ 14)

Similar idea is found in a Tamil poem. The friend of a lover advises him not to make love. For making love is a foolish act when it is not responded by the lady.

Notakkanre kamam yavatum
Nanrena Unarar mattum
Cenre nirkum perum petaimaitte (CI-84)

John Donne states that he becomes a wise man when the lady love responds to his love.

“But where’s that wiseman, that would not be I,
If she would not deny?” (POJ 81)

According to Grierson, Donne contrasts the reign of love and the reign of lust on the body, and frankly declares for the latter.’

“For every houre that thou wilt spare me now,
I will allow,
Usurious God of Love, twenty to thee,
When with my browne, my gray haires equal bee.”

Thus Donne bargains with the God of Love. (POJ 11)

In a Tamil poem, the lover wants to satisfy his carnal desires with his lady love atleast for one day. He will not thereafter desire to live even for half a day.

Kurumakal cirumellakam
Orunal punarap punarin

Arainal valkkaiyum ventalenyane (CI 331)

In his poem ‘The Will’, Donne says that he will destroy the whole world by dying. For when he dies the whole world also does not exist from him. As he commits suicide, the world and love also die for him. And then the beauties of the beloved lying decayed in the grave will be as worthless as the gold in the undiscovered mines. Her graces will be of no use as the sundial in a grave.

“But I’ll undoe

The world by dying; because love dies too.

Then all your beauties will bee no more worth

Than gold in mines, where none doth draw it forth;

And all your graces no more use shall have

Than a sun dyall in a grave.” (POJ 60)

But in a Tamil poem, the condition of the ladies separated from their lovers is described. The ladies deserted by their husbands would resemble the deserted towns. They would also resemble the used up flowers. The cup made out of a leaf could not be used more than once. The deserted ladies resemble such once used ‘leaf-cups.’

“Tonalamuntu turakkappattor

Venirunta kutaiyorannar

Nalkunar purintu Nalanunnappattor

Alkunar pokiya urorannar

Kutinar purintu kunanunappattorke
John Donne in his poem ‘the Undertaking’ asserts that love of woman is virtue itself and the real love of woman is spiritual rather than carnal. Virtue lies only in the woman one loves. The salvation for the human soul lies in the love of woman.

‘ ‘For he who colour loves, and skinne,
Loves but their oldest clothes.
If, as I have, you also doe
Virtueattri’dinwomensee,
and dare love that, and say so too,
And forget the Hee and Shee……’’ (POJ 7)

The same poet talks about the women’s inconstancy also.

‘No where
Lives a woman true and faire
If thou finds one, let meet know,
Such a pilgrimage were sweet;
Yet doe not, I would not goe,
Though at next doore we might meet,
Though she were true, when you met her,
And last, till you write your letter,
Yet shee
Will bee
False, ere I come, to two, or three. (POJ 41)
Yet in Tamil poems we come across the inconstancy of men only. Bathing incessantly in river water will turn the eyes red. If we drink honey continuously it will not be sweet in taste. Similarly the lover has parted company with the lady love and seeks the company of another lady.

“Nir Nitatir Kannum Civakkum
Arntor Vayir renum pulikkum (CI 117)

But the ladies prefer to live with the same lover even in the next life.

“Immai mari marumai yayinum
Niya kiyaren kanavanai
Yana kiyar nin nencu neravale”. (CI 81)

The beloved is not afraid of death. But she is afraid of forgetting her lover in the next life.

“Catal ancen; ancuval cavi
Pirappup piritakuva tayin
Marakkuven kollen katalan enave” (CI 81)

Donne says that body is the book in which love’s mysteries are written. Anyhow the mysteries grow in souls.

“Love’s mysteries in soules do grow
But yet the body is his booke.”(POJ 97)

In ‘The Extasie’ the poet gives an open air setting to the dominant mood of the poem. The setting is a swelled up bank of a river with a violet resting upon it. Then the complete union of the lover’s bodies is described.

“Where like a pillow on a bed
A pregnant banke swel’d up, to rest

The violets reclining head,

Sat we two, one another’s best

Our hands were firmly cemented

With a fast balme, which thence did spring?

Our eye-beams twisted, and did thred

Our eyes, upon one double string.” (POJ 56)

We can find a similar setting in a Tamil poem also. Here also we come across the swelled up bank of a river under the shade of a tree. If the lover returns from his travel, he will have the physical union with his beloved at such place.

Vampu virittanna ponku manar kanyarrup
Patucinai talnta payilinar ekkar
Meypuku vanna kaikavar muyakkam
Avarum perukuvar. (CI 214)

According to Grierson, Carew’s ‘Ask Me No More’ is a coruscation of hyperboles: “The poet also compares the beauty of the woman to the different aspects of nature. Thomas Carew compares the eyes of his beloved to the Sun and her brow to the clear crystal in the poem entitled ‘To a lady that desired I would love her’

I’ll make your eyes like morning Suns appear,

As mild, and fair;

Your brow as Crystall smooth, and clear,

And your dishevell’d hair
Shall flow like a calm region of the Air.

Rich Nature’s store,(which is the poet’s Treasure)

I’ll spend, to dress

Your beauties, if your mine of pleasure

In equall thankfulness

You but unlock, so we each other bless. (OBSV 403)

He also states in his poem entitled ‘Song’, nightingale remains in the throat of his lady love during winter; stars in her eyes during night; and the phoenix bird beholds her next in her bosom.

Ask me no more if East or West’

The Phenix builds her spicy nest:

For unto you at last she flyes,

And in your fragrant bosome dies. (OBSV 405)

Patumarattu Mosi Korranat also compares the beauty of the woman to the natural aspects. The lady love would be cold like the sandal trees during summer season. She would be warm like the lotus flower during the winter season.

Curutai atukkattu aram katuppa

Venilane tanniyal; paniye

Vankukatir tokuppak kumpi aiyane

Alanku veyil potinta tamarai

Ullakattanna ciru vemmai yo le (CI 120)

In Donne’s poetry, according to James Vinson, ‘Human love is enlarged, intensified and dignified by its cosmic context, as it echoes and is echoed by the
activity of sun and moon, seas and floods, tempest and earthquake, the very air itself.”(115) This statement is applicable even to Cankam poetry.

According to Joan Bennett, John Donne had felt almost everything a man can feel about a woman, scorn, self contempt, anguish, sensual delight and the peace and security of mutual love. (155)

To sum up, one can find a huge number of dramatic monologues written in both the languages so as to indicate the intensified and dignified role of love. Moreover the poets in general have utilized the psychoanalytic approach in depicting the situation of love and characters. The lovers make use of argument which is conducted in almost syllogistic form. But they are sometimes playful and sometimes serious. In short, the lovers woo by false syllogisms at times. Some of the poems in both the languages open with startling phrases. The infinite variety of emotions and feelings of the lovers could be found both in Cankam poetry and metaphysical poetry. The poets not only insist on the union of two souls but they have also craved for the fulfillment of carnal desires. In short, human love is enlarged, intensified and dignified by its cosmic context, as it echoes and is echoed by the activity of the Sun and the moon, seas and floods, tempest and earthquake, the very air itself.