CHAPTER III

RELIGIOUS FERVOUR

A religion is an organized approach to human spirituality which usually encompasses a set of narratives, symbols, beliefs and practices, often with a supernatural or transcendent or quality, that give meaning to the practitioner’s beliefs and practices of life through reference to a higher power, God or Gods, or ultimate truth. It may be expressed through prayer, ritual, meditation, music and art, among other things. It may focus on specific supernatural, metaphysical, and moral claims about reality (the cosmos and human nature) which may yield a set of religion laws, ethics, and a particular lifestyle. Religion also encompasses ancestral or culture traditions, writings, history, and mythology, as well as personal faith and religious experience.

The term “religion” refers to both the personal practices related to communal faith and to group rituals and communication stemming from shared conviction. “Religion” is sometimes used interchangeably with “faith” or “belief system”, but it is more socially defined than personal convictions, and it entails specific behaviours, respectively.

In the frame of western religious thought, religion presents a common quality, the “hallmark of patriarchal religious thought”: the division of the world in two comprehensive domains, one sacred, the other profane. Religion is often described as a communal system for the coherence of belief focusing on a system of thought, unseen being, or object, that is considered to be supernatural, sacred,
divine, or of the highest truth. Moral codes, practices, values, institutions, tradition, rituals, and scriptures are often traditionally associated with the core belief, and these may have some overlap with concepts in secular philosophy. Religion is also often described as a “way of life” or a life stance.

Religion has been defined in a wide variety of ways. Most definitions attempts to find a balance somewhere between overly sharp definition and meaningless generalities. Some sources have tried to use formalistic, doctrinal definitions while other have emphasized experiential, emotive, intuitive, valuational and ethical factors. Definitions mostly include:

A notion of the transcendent, in the form of theism.
A culture or behavioural aspects of ritual, and organized worship, often involving a priesthood, and societal norms of morality (ethos) and virtue
A set of myths or sacred truths held in reverence or believed by adherents

Christianity is centered on the life and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth as presented in the Gospels and the writings of the apostle Paul. The Christian faith is essentially faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, and as Savior and Lord. As the religion of Western Europe during the time of colonization, Christianity has been propagated throughout the world. Hinduism is a term introduced by British scholar to describe the similar philosophies of Vaishnavism, Shaivam, and related group.

Mysticism is frequently defined as an experience of direct communion with God, or union with the Absolute, but definitions of mysticism (a relatively modern term) are often imprecise and usually rely on the presupposition of the
modern study of mysticism—namely, that mystical experience involve a set of intense and usually individual and private psychological states. While figures such as Teresa of Avila, Bernard of Clairvaux, and John of the Cross are seen to be paradigmatic mystics of the Christian tradition, no ‘mystics’ would have defined themselves as such before the twentieth century. Furthermore, mysticism is a phenomenon said to be found in all major religious traditions—though the common assumption that all mystical experiences, whatever their context, are the same cannot, of course, be demonstrated.

Mysticism involves the practice of contemplation both in the philosophical sense of the contemplation of truth and the ‘Supernatural’ sense of having knowledge of God via a life of prayer. Nevertheless, the ‘mystic way’ is primarily practical, not theoretical, and is something in which the whole self is engaged; the great Christian mystics have spoken of how they acted rather than how they speculated. Sharing the mental and physical suffering of Christ, in the meeting of the spirit with evil, is described by some mystics as central to their experience.

Mysticism has many meanings in the study of the history of religions. In general it refers to a type of faith that emphasizes the direct experience of unity with the Divine. Theologically, mystical faiths tend to stress the divine immanence, and they often identify God with the structure of beings. In the United States mystical forms of faith can be seen as a protest against the dominant religious tradition.
There are two general tendencies in the speculation of mystics- to regard God as outside the soul, which rises to its God by successive stages, or to regard God as dwelling within the soul and to be found by delving deeper into one’s own reality. The idea of transcendence, as held most firmly by mystics, is the kernel of the ancient mystical system.

Visions, voices, ecstasies may accompany any or none of the states of contemplation before the final union. It is because of these external and nonessential manifestations that the erroneous idea has arisen that all enthusiastic and nonintellectual religious movements are necessarily mystical. The positive convictions of the mystic arise from the fact they are based on what he or she must regard as objective reality directly perceived.

Paripatal, a literary work of the Cankam period enumerates the great qualities and greatness of god. It also portrays the appearance of God. Stories from mythology have been aptly used to extol the greatness of God.

An anonymous poet has written an invocation to Lord Thirumal. He states that thousand hooded serpent Aticetan is the canopy for the lord Goddess Lakshmi resides in His chest. He is also lord Baladeva with the elephant- flag and plough-share as the weapon. He is dark complexioned and He wears a gem in his chest. His mantle is of bright cloth of gold. As he defeated all his enemies, he is the vanquisher of all his foes; his glory is beyond the ken of the great seers. As the Lord is everything, he is worshipped by Brahmins and devotees. He punishes evil-doers and reforms them by his power. He is the sun and the moon and the five-headed Iswara and the God of destruction. He is the God and the Vedas.
Moreover he is the cloud, the sky, the earth and lofty Himalayas. None can find a peer to the lord or to render justice to his great glory. He is the lord of all life and he can be compared only to Himself.

The poet praises his magnificent glory, His Garuda flag, His conch, his all-destroying Discus, His sapphire-gem and His beautiful chest. He concludes by praying that he and his kinsfolk may be blessed to dwell at his divine feet for ever. (PP 1)

Kirantaiyar has written a poem praising Tirumal. After the great dissolution of earth and heaven, along with the Sun and the Moon, came the deluge of Space, of Wind, of Fire, of Water and then of Land. Lord Tirumal, in the form of a great boar, lifted up the submerged earth from the bottom of the ocean.

Tirumal has performed a number of great feats. By birth Tirumal, is younger to Baladeva but elder in greatness to the Lord of the Palmyrah-flag and dark vestments. The Vedas reveal that He is immanent in all lives. The jewels on his chest are bright, like the rainbow. He wears a pendent of pearls bright as the moon. His conch fulminates like thunder, deafening the demons’ ears. His Discus like very Death itself, destroys the lives of the demons, severing their heads like bunches of palmyrah – fruit. His eyes resemble twin lotuses. He is as great as the earth and as grace as the clouds. The Bhramins see him in the radiant fire of sacrifice. Devas got nectar from him. The poet prays to Him by prostrating again and again at the divine feet. (PP 5)
Katuvan Ilaveyinanar states that the feet of Tirumal destroy the cycle of birth. Everything in the universe, the five elements, the Sun and the Moon, the planets five, the eight Vacus, the eleven Rudras, the Asvin twins, the God of Death and His messenger, the triple-seven worlds and all living beings-are but the manifestations of the Lord. The feet of the Lord measured the nether-worlds in a single step. In the form of a great boar, he lifted up on his tusks the earth from under the ocean at the end of the aeon. He again dried up with the beat of his mighty wings as he took the form of a giant cob-swan the torrential flood poured by the clouds. He was the destroyer of the demon. He has countless hands.

He is the Lord of Vedas, beyond the ken of the akamas, of all intellect or awareness. Chief of the Devas and also the overlord of the demons. He is the lord of eternity who quelled the arrogance of all things in existence. He is both everything and the essential quality of everything. There is no birth he has not taken with grace. He takes care of the universe. The lord is in his fourfold Vyuha form as the red eyed Vacudeva, the dark eyed Sankarsana, ruddy-complexioned Pratyumna and green-hued Aniruddha, The poet prays to God to protect the world. (PP17)

In another poem Ilaveyinanar has sung the various glories of the Lord. His dark complexion resembles sapphire, the blue sea and the rain-cloud. For the sake of Prahlad, He came out of a pillar as Narasimha to punish Hiranya. It was He who lifted up on his powerful neck the submerged earth from the flood. He resembles the sun in his heat, the Moon in coolness, the rain in bounty, the earth in forbearance. He resembles Kaya flower in fragrance.
The Lord shows His wrath to evil-doers and grace towards devotees. He is beyond Good and Evil. He has neither friends nor foes. His eyes are lovely like the lotus engendered in his navel. His feet are greater than the Lord Himself. Only the Upanishads can speak of his greatness. His favourite seats are the banyan, the katampu and the hills. He is all pervading. He is easily accessible to his loyal devotees. He is the protector and savior of all.\textbf{(PP 31)}

In yet another poem, Ilaveyinanar writes about Lord Murukan, who destroyed demon the Curapanma in the form of a giant mango tree in the ocean. He is the mighty son of the great God of destruction at the end of the aeon. The poet narrates the genesis of Murukan. After the destruction of the cities of the demons, Lord Civa mated with His consort Goddess Uma. Indra, afraid of the power of the offspring of this divine union, prayed to the great God who mutilated the divine embryo into pieces with his axe. The sages seven, took these pieces and gave them to their chaste wives after purifying them in the sacrificial fire. The Karttikai matrons, carried the same in their wombs and in time the divine babes were born in six lotuses in a Himalayan pool. When Indra came to attack them, he was defeated by Murukan.

The Gods then gave to the child – God Murukan, their unified Murukan. Evil –doers and the unrighteous can never hope to attain His feet. Only virtuous men will attain his grace. The poet implores the Lord to grant him, not wealth or gold or sensory pleasure or the means of enjoyment, but only grace, love and righteousness. \textbf{(PP41)}
The poet Nallantuvanar hails Lord Murukan enshrined in Tirupparankunram. To the hill came Lord Tirumal, Lord civa, Lord Brahma, the twelve Atityas the Asvin twins, the eight vacus, the eleven Rudras and the Regents of the eight directions, besides the Devas and the divine seers, the demons to adore the Lord. In consequence, the hill looked like Himavant and the pool there in.

Carrying sandal, incense, lamps, flowers, drums and hand-bells, pious women went to Parankunram to implore various boons of the lord. Some wanted their husbands to prosper in their enterprises; some other prayed for their victory in battle; yet other prayed for offspring. After sporting in the pool, young men and women, seated with good food and drink and passionate love-passages, took rest. The poet prays to the holy hill that it must ever be well-watered and prosperous for the benefit of the devotees of lord Murukan. (PP51)

The poet Kunram putanan writes about the rivalry between the two wives of Murukan. Lord Murukan redolent of sandal paste, goes to meet Goddess Tevacenai who, jealous of her rival, refuses to entertain him. The Lord begs her pardon, and so, she embraces him. Goddess Valli, growing angry at this, beats her Lord with her garlands, whereupon a battle royal ensues between the companions of the two rival queens. They fight like furious elephants and horses in a battle field. Tevacenai’s companions encircle Murukan like bees and peacocks and Kuyils besides the pool. In Parankunram one could see spirited contests between singers, dancers and gamblers, making it a busy and boisterous place. Lord kumaran is hailed by the bard as the well beloved spouse of the two chaste wives.
He implores the Grace of the Lord so that he and his kinsfolk may be blessed to
dwell happily forever at His divine feet.(PP93)

The poet Nalleluniyar describes the glory and the greatness of the power of
Lord Tirumal adorned with a lovely cloth of gold, a crown and the Garuda flag.
Like a dark cloud with the sun and moon on either side, the hands of the Lord hold
the Discus and the conch. To those who worship Him and His divine chest,
Vaikundam becomes attainable.

The lord is the five sensory organs. He is the five elements known through
the senses, in all the triple seven worlds; all creations are contained in Him. Lord
Visnu is He, who is in conscious slumber on his serpent bed of the thousand-
headed Adi sesha. His complexion resembles the Kaya flower, the sea, darkness
sapphire and the cloud. His speech is like the Vedic chant and the sound of the
right-whorled conch. He is the lord beyond all divisions of time. His feet, eyes and
lips resembles lotus flowers. His armlet, navel and the elbow-rings, his nape, feet
and shoulders are large. Subtle are his knowledge, virtue and learning. He loves
sacrifices. Red are His eyes even without anger. He is armed with the dreaded
discus. The poet believes that his merit in his previous births alone has earned for
him the blessing of adoring the feet of the God.(PP 143)

The poet Kesavanar praises Lord Murukan in his poem. Because of the
rain, there is water in the pools and flowers bloomed there in. The buzzing of bees
haunting the flowers resembled musical modes. Bamboos grew round like the
arms of women. Peacocks called to each other happily. They appeared to be
calling out for the absent lovers to return to their waiting women. The rocks
covered by Venkai blooms, appeared as the tigers. The cassia bloomed yellow on the branches, while the glory-lily blossomed red. With all these parankunram wore a colorful look in the rainy season.

Lord Murukan is hailed by the poet as the great God who destroyed Curapanman with all his hosts. He is the Lord with six faces and twelve arms, the young God who loved valli. At his birth, Indra grew afraid of his might. He is the Lord of the righteous and venerable Brahmins. The poet declares that he will adore His feet for all these reasons. He prays that he may be blessed evermore with the privilege of offering worship to the God.(PP 151)

The poet Ilamperuvaluthiär asks people to meditate on the glorious presence of the two Gods, the one dark like night and the other bright like the young Sun. The hill Irunkunram looks like Lord Mayaon as it is covered by Acoka and venkai trees in flower, its pools bright with blue lilies. The very sight of the famous hill roots out the delusion of the mind. Echoes of peacocks calling and Kuyils warbling, are constantly heard in the hillside. The poet asks the devotees, with their parents, wives and children, and kinsfolk to raise their hands in prayer in the direction of the hill. For it is the Lord with Lotus eyes and complexion dark as cloud and sapphire, the lord who manifests in all creation and relieves the misery of living things, Lord Tirumal , who is enshrined therein.

The poet Nallaccutanar describes the God’s appearance, his mount and his weapons. He rides on the tusker adorned with a fiery red forehead-piece; the sandals adorning his Lotus feet are made of fine leather, bright with peacocks ocelli. The spear in his hand is the weapon which destroyed the demon curan in
the form of a mango trees. His hills is covered with cataracts rolling down, is like his elephant adorned with caparisons and forehead piece. The poet prays that he may be blessed with the same favour of dwelling at the foot-hills in succeeding births also.

The bird hails Murukan as the Sun God riding on the swift peacock with his victorious spear. The cloud-capped peaks bright with streaks of lightning, resembled a war-elephant with golden forehead-piece. The art gallery in the temple was like the armoury of the God of Love. The groves and the pools covered by flowers looked like the love- God’s quiver of arrows.(PP 157)

The poet Nappannar adores Lords Murukan who wedded the Kurava maiden Valli. His spear and his ruddy frame resembled the burning flame. His face is like the young Sun. He is the God who vanquished Curan disguised as a mango tree. He is the God whose spear cut asunder the hostile Kraunca hill.

(PP 119)

In Thirumurukarrupadai the poet Nakkirar writes about the natural scenery surrounding Thirupparankundram. He also describes the battle that took place between Murukan and Curan. In the second part he writes about the six faces and twelve hands of Murukan. In the third part he describes the greatness of the saints who worshiped Murukan and also the nature of woman visiting palani. The fourth part describes the worshippers at Thiruverakam. In the fifth part he describes about the ways with which the hill people dance and worship Murukan. In the final part Nakkirar describes the places where Murukan is worshipped.
Usually religious poems deal mainly with the concept of union of soul with God, the triumph of good over evil, joy of unswerving faith in God, divine love and vision of hell and heaven. In the religious poem one could find the praise of glory and grace of God. But Donne’s religious poems contain distinctive characteristic when compared with other metaphysical poets. His poems are quite different from universal valid attributes of religious poems. The themes of his religious poems do not describe, the glory of God, in his poems, one could detect his personal experiences arising out of his conversion to the faith of the Anglican church. Donne never accepts things for granted and he could not take even the church of his adoption for granted.

It is clear from his poems that his soul was riddle with doubts, suspicions and questionings. Moreover he gave expression to this turbulent mood of his soul in his religious poems. Because of this his religious poems have a deeper human appeal. His poems dramatize the human dilemma between the eternal and the temporal, Spirit and flesh, God and man.

Donne has introduced variety in his religious poems. He has written long descriptive, narrative poems such as “The Progress of Soul” and “The Anniversarie”. These poems are considered to be philosophical in nature.

In his religious poems entitled ‘Holy Sonnets’. He uses the themes of penitence and death which give rise to variety of feelings and attitudes. While he writes about penitence he feels that it is never complete and final. He finds a sense of torture at the inevitable decay of flesh. And his willingness to reject it is never the total rejection. While describing the theme of death he realizes a sense pity of
for the lose of body, a sense of fear that he may not receive God’s grace, and the
agony of the anticipated condemnation to hell. These conflicting and apposing
feelings cling to Donne’s religious experience till the end of the poetic career.
Donne was aware of the human dilemmas and he was a humanist. He could not go
beyond this level to become a mystic. A visionary or a mystic realizes his own self
in isolation from the world and human company. Donne, on the other hand, could
not get away from the living human company. Even when he came to contemplate
on devotional themes, he did so by imagining a relationship between himself and
God in different dramatic situations. He speaks like an ordinary man, tortured by
an awareness of his sins and fear of damnation.

In his celebrated holy sonnet entitled ‘Batter My Heart’ Donne makes an
appeal to the father, the holy ghost, and the son, the trinity, to deal harshly with
him. For he is such a diehard sinner that he would not be affected by kind,
merciful, persuasions. The fact that he asks God to employ all his power to ‘Batter
his heart is a confession of the past sin and of the apprehension that he may not be
able still to detach from it easily. The words ‘knocke, breath, shine and seeke to
mend ‘describe the gentle’, imperceptible working of God’s grace to influence the
sinner to accept the way of God. Donne requests God to make him new. He offers
himself into God’s hands to be destroyed and made a new creature; this would at
least protect him from the eternal damnation into hell.

Donne elaborates his relationship to God through the analogy of the
conquest. He describes himself as a town which, though originally was God’s
territory, has now been forcibly conquered by sin. Although he is not reconciled to
the new ruler, and would happily admit the right of the former, but he cannot openly admit his true allegiance. The faculty of reason in him, the former viceroy of the usurped town could have helped him to build up a resistance and over throw the usurper; but reason itself is a prisoner of the new ruler, that is sin. It has become ‘weak as a result of long period of imprisonment and even begun to change the allegiance.

Although grammatically there is no break from the movement of the octave to that of sestet, and even the sense has a continuity. But the metaphor changes. The usurped town now becomes a usurped wife; though she continues to love God, sin has married her by force. From this flows a spate of marital and sensual metaphors, the poet requests God to take him back to him by force by destroying the unreal bond of the forced marriage. That is the only way she could get back to the man she loves, and God could get back his spouse. Here is a frivolous woman, modeled after the poet’s memory of his many mistresses, loving God and yet married to his enemy. The woman’s craving to go back to God throws a challenge to his power and might which will be used to over throw the rival, sin. Freed from the artificial bond, the woman will regain her liberty by submitting herself entirely to God’s love. Then she shall be chaste too and she will be married to the man she really loves. In this poem one could find a typical illustration of the strange blend of the sensual and the divine in Donne’s religious poetry. The image of God-man relationship as lover-beloved is not rare in religious poetry. (OBSV 142)
In the sonnet “This is My Playes Last Scene”, the central situation is equally dramatic and rich in the suggestions of the sensual elements. The poem is dramatically conceived and executed, and uses the simile of the last scene of a dramatic performance. As a veteran theatre-goer of his time, Donne must have been aware of Shakespeare’s famous elaborate simile of the various stages of man’s life compared to a whole dramatic performance with exits and entrances and changing scenes. The reader, as through, watches the performance of the last scene of the poet’s, or for that matter, any body’s life. The protagonist lies on the death-bed. He has led a busy life which is suggested by allusion to the race, span and time, and the impression of life’s finality reinforced by the repetition of the word ‘last’. The protagonist is breathing his last, and death comes and takes his soul away. At this point the soul remembers that it will have to face God on the Day of Judgment and the thought makes him shake with fear. The reader ‘sees’ the body interned, and hears the poet soliloquizing: May his sins buried with the body, since out of it if they were born. Thus, the poem meticulously presents the vivid details of the scene of death and the funeral.

Fear of damnation is, of course, the central theme of the poem; he is not at sure that God will forgive him for all his sins, because his sins are too many and too foul to be forgiven. That is why the dying soul of the poet imagines the face of God in the seat of judgment.

This terrible fear, however, makes him think of some way out of the damnation, and simple logic comes to his rescue like a raft to the drowning man. Since, he argues, the flesh is the breeding-ground of sins, and this is buried under
the graves, all the sins too should be buried along with it. Thus the soul, which will go separate from the body, should be deemed as free from sins, since it has withdrawn all attachments from the flesh.

But the withdrawal is reluctant: Donne’s attachment to flesh and the life of the worlds becomes clear in the repetition of the adjective last; it suggests anguish, and at the same times a painful longing for the earlier scenes of his life’s drama. These hesitations, fears, anxieties, uncertainties and yearnings always conflicting with his faith in religion make his holy sonnets utterly human and realistic. They have acquired a kind of realism which is found in his best of the love poems: one sees the poet struggling with his faith in God, arguing, reasoning and imploring the divine power to somehow absolve of his sins. But the poet knows that forgiveness for his sins is impossible, though he also knows that God is full of grace.

The recurrence of the theme of the Day of Judgment also suggests Donne’s ambivalent attitude towards flesh. On the one hand, its persistence in one or the other form in his holy sonnets suggests his yearning for the life of flesh; on the other, it indicates his obsessive fear of punishment for sins. (OBSV 138)

“At the Round Earth Imagine’d Corners” is a blend of the new knowledge and the old speculation about the physical shape of the earth. As usual, the opening lines have a dramatic nature: it is a direct speech made to the angels. The trumpet is implied to have been blown. An invocation is made directly to the souls to rise from death.
The piling of causes of death suggests exhilaration, for finally all those calamities are overcome; the torture and pain have come to an end. The calamities make allusions to contemporary events. Donne knew himself and was familiar to the people of his time. But they have a universal validity as well; for the causes of death enumerated here are to be found everywhere in the world. The lines celebrated the victory of resurrection over the factors of death, and the implied triumph of flesh to which the soul returns finally, and there will be no more death;

The idea that on the day of judgment God will punish each soul in proportion to sins committed by it dampens the joyous heart of the poet. He even becomes frightened; because he is sure he has committed numerous sins and that he has not sufficiently repented for them. One sense could be that his sins are too numerous to be observed. Secondly his repentance is not also a genuine one.

True repentance is the surest way to reach God. The poet implores God to teach him true repentance for it would as much guarantee his salvation as did Christ crucifixion. Christ crucified himself to absolve the sinners of their sin; and repentance was a kind of spiritual participation in the act of crucifixion. The poet is aware of all these implications; he knows which way lies his salvation, and yet he does not know how to repent. It may be that he has never felt the true urge of repentance because he has not actually felt the necessity of it.

The sonnet ‘At the Round Earths Imagined Corners’ not only deals most dramatically with three leading themes of Donne’s sermons and devotional poetry. It is also Donne’s nearest approach to mysticism. On the one hand, it is true that Donne’s conception of God is in terms of the wrathful God.
And even in this relationship, there is a kind of personal bond between the poet and God which is the core of the mystical attitude. On the other hand, there is sufficient indication in the sermons and other devotional verse of Donne of the latter’s recognition of a personal relationship with God. Despite his fear of God’s judgment, Donne does not approach Him as the other being separate from his own world.

It will be readily seen that in the sonnet. ‘At the Round Earths Imagined Corners’ the fear of God is almost cancelled by the poet’s intimate appeal to God to teach him repentance which discloses his confidence in the loving, grace-abounding God. (OBSV 139)

The sonnet entitled ‘Since She Whome I Loved’ indicates a link between human and divine love. His dead wife’s soul was so good that heaven took her away for its own pleasure. As she is gone to heaven, so the mind of the poet is now constantly set on heaven too. This clearly suggests that her death, or his memory of her life, is the cause of the poet’s devotion to God. Even when she was alive, it was she who acted as a medium for the poet to God.

His love of her, in moments of extreme passion, did transcend the material and almost sought God: she was thus the instrument, or the origin of his devotion towards God. The image of thirsts is born of ‘whett’ and ‘streams’ in the previous lines and is highly sensuous for the purpose here. The poet asserts that he has found God and that He has slaked his thirst, but he is yet thirsty. It may be a disease with him now, ‘dropsy’ when the body gets swollen with excess of water formed inside it. His disease is that despite the adequate, rather too much of divine
love given to him; he wants more. The implication may be that mere divine 
through the human, and now the human medium having disappeared, his thirst is 
ever completely satisfied.

Here again, as in the sonnet, ‘Batter my heart’ God has been conceived 
as a jealous lover challenging His rivals and guarding his beloved, the poet’s soul 
from all harm. It should be noticed how the theme of the sensual love as the 
instrument of the divine is also suggested through the consistently maintained 
image of the lover or the husband and the beloved or the wife. In the octave it is 
evidently the image on the human level, in the sestet it takes upon the mystical 
aspects of God as the jealous lover or gallant husband and the poet’s soul as the 
love-sick maiden or wife. There is thus a remarkable affinity between theme and 
its poetic treatment. The sensuality of the marriage-relationship turns in the sets 
into the passion of divine relationship, passion which its equivalents in the sensual 
acts.

The main significance of the sonnet, ‘Show me Deare Christs’ lies in 
its revelation of Donne’s spiritual uncertainty even to the end of his life. The poet 
is believed to have written the poem many years after his conversion into 
Anglican faith, yet it shows no signs that he has attained a religious repose. To the 
end of his life, even through his performance of duties as an Anglican priest, he 
was all the time torn by his doubts. He was not definite about the whole truth of 
God. He was not also sure whether he would get salvation in the Anglican church, 
though he was born as a catholic.
Donne also built up his whole argument on the basis of the husband-wife relationship and plays upon its rich variety of aspects. The church is the wife, and God the husband jealously guarding her against the view of the common man. She must be ‘so bright and clear’ because that is why God, her husband, is so particular about keeping her from the general sight. The poet makes an appeal to God to show her to him just once for a moment and he will be happy.

The image of the wife continues: now she is ‘rob’d and tore’ that is shorn of her riches and splendours. This refers to the simple and bare religious practices of the Protestant church. ‘Laments and mournes’ beautifully evoke the picture of the crying women because she has been divested of her riches and decorations. The name of the country, Germany, is significant: it was in Germany under the leadership of Luther that the reformation had started.

God’s wife has perplexing and very teasing manners; she would not reveal her true identity, her full face, clearly to the common view. She takes peculiar delight in jilting the people. The poet wonders if ever in the past or in the present she did or does appear in her full bloom walking on the hills or again will she ever in future do so. Next movement the poet surmises that she probably lives with the people invisibly: or, again, she is like the lady of the romantic tales and she would submit only to those adventuring knights who would care to undergo adventurous trials and tribulations in order to attain her.

The last four lines built up a paradox in that they make an appeal to God to ‘betray’ his wife to sights of the common men, for she would be more pleasing to him when she is approached and admired by them. Apparently this is a paradox;
but this is based upon the truth of psychological facts. A wife who is the cynosure of many amorous eyes is likely to be loved by her husband more than the one who keeps herself always confined to the gaze of her husband. It is not a question of faithlessness or of betrayal; but of romance and gaiety; a geniality, which makes a wife popular in a gathering. Like a gallant knight, Donne offers to woo the shy and withdrawn, dove-like wife of God, bring her into the open society, and make her free with men. Then alone her faithfulness will be known, and then she will become infinitely more pleasing to her husband, God. It is remarkable how consistently Donne develops the central dramatic image to its utmost possibility. Each of these sonnets could be interpreted and analyzed as a marvel of metaphysical conceits; for in each they confront one another and hold the outcome in a state of animated suspension.

But the important point about this sonnet, show me Deare Christ is the anguished heart of the poet still struggling to attain a spiritual repose which is born of unswerving religious faith. (POJ 159)

This holy sonnet entitled ‘As Due by Many Titles’ dramatises the eternal conflict between good and evil in the soul of man in an intensely personal manner. There are, says the poet, many reasons why he should resign himself completely to God. ‘God first made Adam for his Son, Jesus Christ to be scarified and bought with blood man’s redemption from fall. Likewise, says Done, he is God’s son with light of God, in him, with ample material reward for his pains, till like Adam, he fell from His Grace, he was “a temple of thy spirit divine.”
The sestet presents the conflict and concludes on a note of showing the responsibility of God. Since the poet’s betrayal of himself, like Adam, God has forsaken the poet who has always been God’s faithful servant, with the result that Satan is taking possession of him. Satan is stealing what in God’s, ravishing what belongs to God by right. Then, if God himself does not fight Satan to protect His right, his servant, Satan is sure to win. This will fill the poet soon with despair, for, while he knows God loves all mankind and that is why He sent his Son to redeem mankind through blood, he alone has been abandoned to the devil, who hates him and yet is keen to possess his soul. The last two lines state sharply the central dilemma and give a poignant expression to the mood of despair. They make a fervent appeal to God to ensure the salvation of the poet. Donne thus suggests that man alone, by himself, is weak against Satan unless God grace him, and it is in His interest that God does not abandon him to Satan. (POJ 160)

In the holy sonnet entitled ‘Oh my Blacke soul’ Donne meditates on the dilemma of his soul now confronted with death and a resolution of it in sincere repentance. The treatment of the theme is in terms of miraculous paradoxes and riddles. He calls his soul “black”, because it is the colour of sin: his soul has turned black through committing sins. It is now fallen sick which may be prelude to death which puts it in a state of painful dilemma. Its plight is like that of a traveller in foreign land where he has committed acts of treason against the government of his own land and, therefore, cannot return to his own country. He must forever suffer the agony of being an exile. Or if he chooses to return, he must be prepared to undergo the suffering of punishment. Donne’s soul is the traveller
from Heaven to earth where it has committed acts of sin, treason against Heaven, and is, therefore mortally afraid of returning to God. Or, his soul is like the thief who, while facing the trial and waiting for the sentence, wishes to be free from the prison; but, on hearing the sentence of capital punishment, wishes he were imprisoned of a longer period. The person, in this case, is the body and the sentence of death as the sickness leading to death. The poet’s soul has in pursuit of pleasures always wanted to be free from the body; but, now seeing that death is there at the corner, it wishes it were better imprisoned in the body so that it might escape God’s punishment. Donne gives to these colours opposite symbolical significance: black, the colour of mourning, mourning for the sin committed; red, the colour of blood, that is, of sacrifice; and white, of course, as the colour of purity. This sonnet stresses the miraculous power of repentance and of God’s grace attained through symbolic participation in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

(OBSV 138)

The sonnet entitled ‘Poysonous Mineralls’ begins in a mood of exasperation, which establishes immediately a relationship of intimate friendship between the poet and God. In despair he exhorts God to reply to his question why minerals, the apple tree that provided forbidden fruit to Adam, the lecherous goats and serpents black with envy cannot be damned. Donne’s question raises fundamental metaphysical question relating to the nature of relationship between God and Satan, good and evil. But the content of the question is not relevant to the metaphysical issue involved, though it makes the question intensely human. The exasperation of the poet’s is born of despair and helplessness and also,
paradoxically, out of the poet’s deep faith in God. Donne argues that if his sins, otherwise equal to the deadly sins of the poisonous minerals, apple tree, lecherous goats and envious serpents, are worse than their’s because of his having reason or free will, and asks why should it be so. Reason or free will, was granted to man for his good. And, again, if God is merciful and kind to mankind and the poet, begin one of mankind, why should He threaten him with punishment in hell after his death.

The sestet, as usual, resolves the dilemma. The poet realizes his own insignificance before God. He prays to God if he could forget the sins of the poet and forgive him, now that he has sincerely reputed for them. Let the tears of his repentance blend with the sacrificial blood of Jesus Christ, Donne implores God, and let his sins be drowned in the flood of blood and tears. And God is all merciful. Some think man must suffer for his sins, as the debtor must repay his debt under all circumstance to the creditor. But God is not a cruel creditor. God is glorious in his grace and mercy. Thus, the sestet asserts strongly the poet’s abiding, deep, faith in all merciful God. (**OBSV 140**)

‘A Hymne to God the Father’ is distinguished by a charming simplicity not of experience but of design and expression. The words could not be simpler, all drawn from the commonest speech, most of them being monosyllabic, none having more than two syllables except two or three which only add to the monosyllabic effect. And yet the experience is dramatic in that it derives from the conflict between the yearning for salvation and the fear of being denied God’s grace.
The first two lines state the magnitude of the poet’s sins; they are endless; it is impossible to trace their beginning. In the next two lines, he asks God if He will forgive the poet’s those sins which he still lives through and commits every day. The words ‘though still I doe deplore’ bring in an utterly human note: it suggests most intimately the two elements: evil and good which constitute man. It is only the martyr, once in several thousand years who is able to conquer it. Man, the average, ordinary man, cannot get rid of it, however he may repent later on. The last two lines with pun upon ‘Donne’ and ‘done’ are the simplest but most effective.

The lines do affirm the poet’s faith in the abounding grace of God but it is confronted by his own awareness of his far more abounding sins. The suggestion is that of a challenge thrown of God’s grace to prove equal to the poet’s inexhaustible sins. For even if the sins enumerated in the first stanza are forgiven, the poet has more of them.

The sins are those that the poet lured or prompted others to commit. The lines reveal his acute sense of sin: he holds himself responsible for sins not only committed by him but by others who knowing imitated his sinful actions or who were led to commit them because of the poet’s company or as a result of his advice. On the one hand, the poet thus is aware of his numerous sins; on the other hand, he is aware of the forgiving power of God’s grace: the tension between the two is the life of this Hyme. At the end of the stanza, the poet believes God will be able to forgive these sins too.
Fear is one of the seven deadly sins, and the poet finds himself guilty of it even after eight years of his clerical life in the Anglican church. And the fear is that he at the last moment he may be denied God’s grace. This fear is born of a feeling which on the one hand stems from the poet’s awareness of his other sins and on the other from a doubt in the grace of God. That is why he asks God to swear ‘by thy self’ that on his death His grace will continue to shine upon his soul as it appears to be shining to him now. There is, again, a pun on ‘thy sunne’ which might be taken to mean as thy sonne’ both symbolically associated with light, warmth and light. If God could forgive this deadly sin, the poet will have no more sins left to be forgiven. With this fear eliminated, the poet will then be sure of attaining God’s grace. Hymns are Donne’s last poems. Most of them were written on his death-bed. They are therefore, haunted by fear of hell and hope of heaven after death, and have an undercurrent of anguish leaving the body of flesh and blood. (OBSV 148)

This “Hymn to God” was written, eight days before Donne’s death. One could see the vivid picture of the poet lying in death-bed with his thoughts clinging to hell and heaven and a number of physicians attending to him.

The poem is an address to “God, my god” imploring Him to be merciful to the poet after his death, and preparing himself to be acceptable to God. Since he is now going to the “Holy roome” of God, where a “quire of saints” keep chanting praise as the extreme East on a flat map. Thereby Donne fancies that his moment of death will not be far from the moment of resurrection. He elaborates the map image. Paradise is said to have been located in the farthest East.
He makes a passionate plea to the Lord to accept the poet in heaven, or for bringing him close to the other “crown”, the glory of purification, which God’s grace will offer to him. He has always preached to other the sermon which he must preach to himself too: God inflicts pain and misery so that he may, later on, raise the afflicted soul to heaven.

The Hymn presents the miracle of God’s grace through human conflicts and agony which suggests that suffering is an inescapable way to salvation. In fact, suffering and joy are one and the same. (OBSV 147)

The use of imagery derived from music is, of course, very common in the literature of the Renaissance. Yet Herbert's fertile imagination transformed such imagery into a novelty. His frequent boldness is noteworthy, as when he says about Christ:

His stretched sinews taught all strings, what key
Is best to celebrate this most high day (OBSV 361)

This image is a forceful reminder that Christ has not merely taught us to sound the appropriate music but provided the instrument as well, the instrument being Christ himself. Often, too, a musical image marks a transition in the tone. In the sonnet Prayer I, for example, the initial elaborate efforts to understand the nature of prayer give way to a musical reference which at once affects the rhythm:

A kind of tune which all things hear and fear;
Softness, and peace, and joy, and love, and
Bliss, Exalted Manna……… (TPWGH 62)
In the poem called ‘Sunday’, on the other hand, the joyful rhythm reflects the exuberance not of a child as of the man reborn into the kingdom of Christ;

O let me take at the bound,
Leaping with thee from seven to seven
Till that we both, being tossed from earth,
fly hand in hand to heaven! (OBSV 369)

In the poem entitled ‘The Agonie’ Herbert emphasizes the importance of understanding the nature of two vast and spacious things, namely sin and love. Philosophers have measured mountains and oceans; and they have measured countries and kingdoms; but there are few who have tried to measure or gauge sin and love.

He who wishes to understand sin should go to the Mount of Olives where he will witness the Passion or agony of Christ who took upon himself the sins of mankind and who underwent terrible suffering as a consequence. Sin holds a man in its tight grip and squeezes him with such force that the victim experiences acute pain through every vein in is body.

He who wishes to know the nature of (divine) love should try to taste the blood which flowed from the body of Christ at the time of the Crucifixion. It was his love for mankind that made Christ a martyr. Love is such sweet liquor and of such a divine quality that while God believes it to be blood, the poet regards it as a tonic wine. By tasting Christ's blood one can taste the nature of Christ's love for mankind.
Thus it is through an understanding of Christ's experiences (his passion or agony and his Crucifixion) that one can know the nature of both sin and love. To understand sin and love (evil and good) is more important than acquiring the knowledge that the philosopher or the scientist has to offer to this material world.

*(TPWGH 43)*

The poem, entitled “Redemption” conveys the idea through a parable. The idea is that Crucifixion of Christ is a means of the poet's own redemption. It was to redeem mankind that Christ took upon himself all the sins of mankind and died on the Cross, and so the poet too has been redeemed through Christ's martyrdom.

The poet imagines himself to be a tenant on the farm of a rich landlord. Not having able to make much profit, he decides to approach the landlord of heaven and seek a revision of the terms of the lease. Not finding the landlord, the poet returns to earth and looks for him in various high places but discovers him at last in the midst of a crowd of thieves and murderers. The landlord on seeing the poet said: "your request is granted." After saying these words, the landlord died.

Thus Herbert dramatizes the Crucifixion, using Christ's martyrdom on the Cross as a sign of Christ's mercy. Christ himself dies but before dying he grants a petitioner's request.

I straight return’d and knowing his great birth,

Sought him accordingly in great resorts;

In cities, theatres, gardens, parks, and courts:

At length I heard a ragged noise and mirth

Of theieves and murderers: there I him espied,
Who straight, Your suit is granted, said, and died. (OBSV 361)

This poem entitled “Easter-Wings”, celebrates Christ's Resurrection: that is, his coming back to life on the third day after his martyrdom. At the same time the poem expresses the writer's fervent aspiration to fly upwards like a lark, to a higher state. On this Easter Sunday the poet would like to sing a song celebrating Christ's victory symbolized by his Resurrection.

The poet refers to the sorrows of his early life and to his sickness and humiliation afterwards, but his sufferings only increased his devotion to Christ. He would, on this Easter Sunday the poet would like to sing a song celebrating Christ's victory symbolized by his Resurrection.

If Christ were to engraft new feathers in the poet's damaged wings, the poet would regain his strength and would be able to rise upwards like a lark. In other words, with Christ's help the poet would feel spiritually uplifted. (OBSV 362)

In the poem entitled "Affliction". The poet’s here give us first an account of his sufferings, physical and mental; and then express in the final stanza his feelings of submission and humility towards God.

When the poet first felt the urge to devote his life to God by becoming a priest, he thought it to be noble mission. He imagined that, through his devotion to God, he would be blessed with many Joys.

Finding the church and the sacred church-property to be very attractive, the poet's desire to serve God was further strengthened. The poet felt that many spiritual treasures were in store for him and that both heaven and earth would reward him for his services to God.
At first the poet was blessed by God with all kinds of delights and joys. But, with the passing of time, he was afflicted by misfortunes and found he miserable. Sickness attacked the poet's body, and wasting fevers and diseases made a home for themselves in every vein of his body. He groaned with every breath he took and he could hardly believe that he was alive.

Other misfortunes also befell him. Many of his friends and well-wishers died, and he lost his zest for life. He felt that he had become even more useless than a blunted knife.

The poet at this stage felt that, in view of his aristocratic birth and breeding, he should have taken up a courtier's career in London but that, under God's influence, he had wrongly decided to become a priest.

As a priest the poet often became rebellious and felt like giving up his priestly life. However, God managed to drive away his rebelliousness by bribing him with academic honors which the world bestowed upon him.

God then inflicted some more diseases on the poet to prevent him from changing his mind. Instead of letting the poet carry out his purpose in accordance with his own original intention, God directed the poet's footsteps along a different path, forcing him to continue as a priest. Now the poet does not know what God intends to do with him. The poet is feeling disillusioned with his vocation of a priest.

Despite God's unkindness, however, the poet feels that he must remain submissive to God. Though he thinks that he should give up the life of a priest and should serve under some master other than God, the poet cannot really decide to
leave God. The poet still loves God, even though God has forgotten him. In spite of all his affliction or distress the poet feels an inner compulsion to continue loving God.

Yet, though thou troublest me, I must be meek;
In weaknesse must be stout.
Well, I will change the service, and go seek
Some other master out
Ah my deare God! Though I am clean forget,
Let me not love thee, if I love thee not.\textit{(OBSV 363)}

In the poem entitled “Prayer I” the poet describes the nature of the prayers by the poet his view of a prayer.

According to the poet, when a man offers a prayer to God inside a church, it is as if he were holding a banquet in honor of the church. A prayer is something that has existed in the world from time immemorial and is as old as the angels. In offering a prayer, man makes use of the power of speech which God had originally bestowed upon man. A prayer is an expression in words of the inmost feelings of a soul. Offering a prayer means a man's sending his heart on a sacred journey to God. Through a prayer, a Christian tries to understand the mysteries of heaven and earth.

A prayer acts as weapon forcing God to grant man the favours which man seeks. Prayer is a refuge for sinners from their sense of guilt. Prayer has the force of thunder, but this thunder travels in the reverse direction, from the earth to the sky. Prayer is like a spear which pierces the side of Christ, compelling Christ to
grant a petitioner's request. By offering a prayer for an hour or so, a man can equal the achievement of God who created the universe in six days. Prayer is a kind of musical tune which is heard and feared by all things.

A prayer gives rise to feelings of gentleness, peace, joy, love, and happiness in a man. It is like heavenly food which, however, is sent from the Heaven. Prayer also represents man in his best clothes. Prayer is glorious like the Milky Way and exquisitely beautiful like the bird of Paradise. In fact, prayer is something which cannot be described precisely and fully; therefore it may be regarded as something understood.

Softnesse, and peace, and joy, and love, and blisse,

Exalted Manna, gladnesse of the best,

Heaven in ordinarie, man well drest,

The milkie way, the bird of paradise,

Church- bels beyond the stares heard, the souls bloud,

The land of spices; something understood. (TPWGH 62)

In the poem entitled ‘Temper I’, Herbert describes the temper or the state of mind of a Christian in his relations with God. Herbert, of course, speaks here for himself, but his feelings have also a general validity.

If the poet's soul were to feel the same elation all the time, he would express his love for God in unforgettable words. His poems in praise of God would then have a permanent quality like words engraved on steel.

Unfortunately the poet does not experience the same spiritual feeling all the time. Sometimes he feels that he stands above all the forty heavens or so;
sometimes he feels that he has, with difficulty, climbed above only twenty of the heavens; and sometimes he feels he has fallen below them all and descended to hell.

The poet appeals to God not to torture him by sometimes allowing him to rise so high and sometimes letting him fall downwards so low. Such long distances are meant for God, and cannot even be conceived by the poet. The world may be too little for God's tent, but it is too big for the poet.

The poet asks if God wants to match arms with man when He stretches a crumb of dust like the poet from heaven to hell. God does not want to measure Himself with a wretched fellow like the poet. God does not want the poet to measure God's dimensions.

The poet appeals to God to let his soul remain on the top of all the heavens. If that is done, God will get rid of one sinner, while the poet will become free from hope and fear.

Yet it is for God to decide what should be done with the poet. God's way of doing things is surely the best way. Let God stretch or contract the poet just as God pleases. God will in this way be only tuning the poet's heart in order to make the music better.

Yet take thy way; for sure thy way is best:

Stretch or contract me, thy poore debter:

This is but tuning of my breast,

To make the musick better.
Whether I flie with angels, fall with dust,
Thy hands made both, and I am there:
Thy power and love, my love and trust
Make one place ev’ry where. (OBSV 365)

In the poem entitled “Jordan I”, Herbert asserts that he would not like to
write his poems in a style which puzzles and bewilders the readers. He would not
mind pastoral poets writing in their own artificial style. But he would be satisfied
in writing religious poetry.

Shepherds are honest people; let them sing:
Riddle who list, for me, and pull for prime:
I envie no mans nightingale or spring:
Nor let them punish me with losse of rime,
Who plainly say, My God, My King. (TPWGH 68)

In the poem entitled “Vanitie”, Herberts emphasizes the importance of
spiritual enlightenment. He observes the positions of the stars and their rhythmic
to bodies on the secret language in which they communicate with each other.

The quick-moving diver dives into the sea and obtains the costly pearl at
a great risk to his life. This pearl will be worn by some proud woman to whom it
can prove fatal. The sharp-minded chemist studies various substances in his
laboratory and discovers the principles of those substances. He then formulates
those principles for the benefit of ordinary seekers of knowledge.

Man seeks everything and finds it too. But he does not seek God who has
enshrined His glorious law in our bosoms. It is a pity that man should search for
material and scientific knowledge which cannot protect him from death, and that he should ignore God who can grant him an everlasting life.

Thus the poem draws the reader's attention to the need of seeking spiritual enlightenment and not devoting all his energies to the pursuit of material and scientific knowledge.

What hath not man sought out and found,
But his deare God? Who yet his glorious law
Embosomes in us, mellowing the ground
With showres and frosts, with love and aw,
So that we need not say, where’s this command?
Poore man, thou searchest round
To finde out death, but missest life at hand.(TPWGH 108)

The poem entitled “Vertue”, teaches that virtue is supreme and sweet day is cool, peaceful and bright. It represents the union of earth and sky. But by the time of night-fall, the day will come to an end. The sweet rose which, with its splendid crimson co lour, bids the rash onlooker wipe his eye, must fade away and perish.

The season of spring is full of lovely days and beautiful flowers. It is like a box full of sweet perfumes. It has its cadences too. But it too must come to an end and with it all its beauties. Only a virtuous soul has an eternal life. The whole world may burn to ashes, but the virtuous soul will still glow with life.

My musick shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.
Onely a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like season’d timber, never gives;
But though the whole world turn to coal’
Then chiefly lives. (EMP 40)

Herbert has written a poem entitled ‘Pearl’. The word "Pearl" symbolizes the priestly vocation which Herbert had chosen at the sacrifice of his worldly ambitions. The service of God became in his eyes the most valuable kind of activity and therefore a pearl. The poem tells us what Herbert gave up in order to obtain this pearl, namely the opportunity to serve God both as a priest and as a poet.

The poet claims that he knows the ways of Learning. He knows what reason has borrowed from the observation of Nature or, like a good housewife, spun out of itself into laws and policy. He knows the secrets of the stars and he knows what the alchemist has discovered. He knows both the old knowledge and the new voyages. In spite of all this knowledge, he loves God.

He also claims that he knows the ways of Honour or preferment. He knows what continues the quick profits of courtesy and wit; he knows which party gains in contests of favours; he knows how much courage is needed to sell himself to his enemies. In spite of all this knowledge he loves God.

The poet then claims to know the ways of Pleasure, the sweet taste and flavours of it. He knows the proposals of passion and thought; he knows the meaning of mirth and music; he knows what love and fancy have produced during the last two thousand years or more; he knows the schemes of ungoverned wealth.
He is made of flesh, he says, not of brass; his senses are alive and he knows the cravings of sensual desire. Yet he loves God.

Finally, the poet says that, having all this knowledge at his disposal, he has yet decided to serve God. To get out of his spiritual perplexities he will receive God's help and guidance, and he will then know how to climb to God. That is the pearl he seeks.

I flie to thee, and fully understand

Both the main sale, and the commodities;
And at what rate and price I have thy love;;
Will all the circumstance that may move:
Yet through these labyrinths, not my groveling wit.
But thy silk twist let down from heav’n to me,
Did both conduct and teach me, how by it

To climbe to thee. (TPWGH 112)

The poem entitled “Life” conveys a moral. Life is short and man should therefore put it to a good use through noble deeds. The poet made a bouquet of flowers and decided to spend the rest of his days in the company of these sweet-smelling flowers. However, the flowers faded away in a few hours and by noon their existence was at an end.

This rapid decline and death of the flowers had a sad message for the poet, even though the message had come to him in a sweetened manner. The message was that the poet's own life would also soon end.
During their short existence the flowers had given out a sweet smell; and even after their death the flowers were not useless because withered flowers serve certain medicinal purposes. The poet too would not mind the shortness of his life provided he can make his short life useful in some way.

Farewell deare flowers, sweetly yourtime ye spent,

Fit, while ye liv’d, for smell or ornament,

And after death for cures.

I follow straight without complaints or grief,

Since if my scent be good, I care not if

It be as short as yours. (OBSV 374)

As Herbert used the natural objects for explaining the mortality of human beings, Cankam poets have also expressed the same idea. Saranga pani in his book entitled Canka Tamil Valam states that the Cankam poets explained the concept of mortality using objects of nature. (50). In purananuru it is stated that the life of the human beings is very short like that of the flies.

Nunpala citalai aritu muyenretuta

Cempurriyal pola

Oru pakal valkkaiku ulamaru vore (CI 440)

In another poem the waxing and waning of the moon is used to indicate the mortality of human beings.

Teytal unmaiyum perukal unmaiyum

Maithal unmaiyum piratal unmaiyum

Ariyatoraiyum ariya katti
In the poem entitled “Mortification”, Herbert again conveys to us the sad idea of the shortness of human life. But this idea is made even gloomier by the pessimistic view that at every stage of human life there is something to remind us of this idea. The poem ends with an appeal to God to enable human beings to live a worthy and noble life.

The swaddling-clothes of bodies are like little winding sheets which remind us of death. When boys go to bed and fall asleep, their very sleep is like death except for the fact that they are breathing. The music which a young man listens to is like the sound of the death-bell which announces a death. The mature man's very house is like a silent enclosure which reminds us of a coffin. And, finally, the old man's chair is suggestive of the bier or the hearse in which he will be conveyed to the grave-yard. Thus the whole life of man is a kind of solemn ceremony which prepares him for death. The poet entreats God to teach human beings to live nobly and to die nobly.

Man, ere he is aware,

Hath put together a solemnitie,

And drest his herse, while he has breath

As yet to spare:

Yet Lord, instruct us so to die,

That all these dyings may be life in death. (TPWGHHRH 78)

In the poem entitled “Dialogue”, the conversation that takes place between the poet and God is described. The poet hesitates to offer his soul to God
because he thinks that his soul is not worth God's having it. The poet tells God that his sinfulness makes his soul unfit for God's acceptance of it. God, in reply, says that it is not for man to judge his own worth. Man belongs to God, and only Christ is competent to judge the worth of any soul. But Christ transferred all the accounts to God, and so God is the judge.

The poet thereupon withdraws his objection though he still insists that he has no merit in him worthy of God's notice. The poet now resigns himself to God's will. God is glad that the poet has surrendered himself to God's will, in this way following the example set by God Himself through the person of Christ who renounced all earthly rewards and earthly glory in accordance with God's design. The poet feels overwhelmed by God's generosity and benevolence.

That is all, if that I could
Get without repining;
And my clay, my creature, would
Follow my resigning:
That as I did freely part
With my glorie and desert, left all joyes to feel all smart
Ah! No more: thou break'st my heart. (OBSV 376)

This poem entitled “The Collar” contains an account of the rebellious feelings that arose in Herbert's heart against his priestly vocation, and his victory over those feelings. The life of a priest means a renunciation of all worldly interests and pleasures. Having become a priest, Herbert found that he had
sacrificed all worldly ambition and the pleasures of life, and he therefore felt restless and discontented.

In a rebellious mood the poet declares that he will tolerate this life of self-denial no more. He wants to be free like a road, irresponsible like the wind, and independent of all restraints. He does not want to lead a life of servitude to the Church and to God. He wanted to reap the harvest of pleasure instead of allowing himself to be pierced by thorns, and bleeding. There is still time for him to enjoy the pleasures he has renounced. He can make up for the lost time. He should no longer get entangled in considerations of what is right and what is wrong. He must get out of the cage in which he has been living. He should no longer subject himself rigorously to the laws of conduct. He should discard all fears and throw off all restraints.

As the poet was thus arguing and getting more angry, the voice of God greatly rebuked him for this rebelliousness, saying; "My child, do not be rash." The poet at once responded to this voice and, becoming humble and submissive, said;

"My Lord, I am still your servant."

Away; take heed:

I will abroad.

Call in thy deaths head there: tie up thy fears.

He that forbears

To suit and serve his need,

Deserves his load.
But I rav’d and grew more fierce and wilde
At every word,
Me thought I heard one calling, child!
And I reply’d, my Lord. (OBSV 377)

In the poem entitled “The Pulley”, Herbert writes about God’s plan. When God created man, he proceeded to bestow all His blessings upon this creature. Accordingly, the various blessings began coming out of the glass which contained them, and God went on bestowing each of these upon man.

First strength came out of the container; then beauty; then wisdom, honour, and pleasure. All these were conferred upon man. But at this point God stopped on finding that only one more blessing, namely rest, remained in the glass.

It occurred to God that, if this final blessing were also bestowed upon man, he would adore all the gifts in his possession and that man would then pay no attention to the giver of those gifts. In that way both God and man would be losers.

So God decided to withhold this one blessing from man. Without this blessing, man might find himself rich but he would also experience restlessness and fatigue. Therefore he would feel compelled by his restlessness to think of God. The want of rest would in this way serve as a pulley to hoist man upwards to God.

Yet let him keep the rest’

But keep them with repining restlenesse:

Let him be rich and wearie, that at least,
If goodnesse leade him not, yet wearinesse

May tosse him to my breast. (OBSV 379)

In the poem entitled “The Flower”, the poet firsts expresses his gratitude to God for the enormous grace which God showers upon the world He has created. The grief of a man, says the poet, melts away as snow melts in the month of May. The poet could not have imagined that his shriveled heart would one day recover its spiritual and creative powers. He heart had died as a flower dies, but like a flower it has come back to life. God has a wonderful power and can both kill and bring back to life.

The poet then wishes that he were beyond change and that he could dwell in Paradise where no flower ever fades away. Often he had tried to soar upwards to heaven and often had he shed tears of repentance over his sins. But God's anger always brought him down. The anger of God has the power to burn everything and to cause a fire even in the icy- cold Polar Regions.

The poet's faculties are blossoming once again even though he is now old. He has suffered the eclipse of his spiritual and creative powers many times but now once again he is experiencing a new vitality inside him. He can once again enjoy the beauty of Nature and can once again find pleasure in writing poetry. He cannot believe that he is the same man who was once the target of God's anger.

God has infinite love for all His Creation. He can make human beings realize that their lives are as short as the life of a flower. But God also enables human beings to have an idea of the Paradise which He maintains for them. Man
should be content with the thought of that Paradise. If anyone seeks anything more than this, he will forfeit that Paradise on account of his pride.

These are thy wonders, Lord of love,
To make us see we are but flowers that glide:
Which when we once can finde and prove,
Thou hast a garden for us, where to bide.
Who would be more,
Swelling through store,
Forfeit their paradise by their pride. (OBSV 379)

In the poem entitled “Aaron” Herbert shows Aaron as a type of the ideal priest and aspires to emulate Aaron's example.

According to the Biblical account, the priestly garments were as follows; on the head, a miter (or cap) with a gold plate engraved with the words "Holiness to the Lord"; on the breast, a pouch bearing the Urim and Thummim signifying Light and perfections; and below, pomegranates of blue, of purple, and of scarlet, and bells of gold between them.

After recalling Aaron's priestly garments in the opening lines, Herbert confesses his own shortcomings. On his head, says Herbert, is unholiness: in his breast are defects and darkness; and below is the discord of passions While Aaron could lead the dead to life and rest, Herbert can only lead people to a place where there is no rest. Herbert is thus an inferior priest.

But Herbert then realizes that he too can equal Aaron. Herbert can derive holiness, light, and perfections from Christ, and Herbert can derive divine music
from Christ to tune his priestly teaching. Thus equipped with divine qualities by
the grace of God, Herbert can invite people to come to him because he is another
Aaron (that is, an ideal priest).

So, holy in my head,

Perfect and light in my deare breast,

My doctrine tun’d by Christ, (who is not dead,

But lives in me while I do rest)

Come people; Aaron’s drest. (OBSV 381)

In this poem entitled “The Forerunner” Herbert compares the white hairs
of his head to the harbingers-messengers who used to be sent in advance to make
arrangements for the accommodation of the royal party wherever it had to stay in
the course of the King’s journey. Herbert's white hairs are messengers informing
him that old age is about to overtake the poet.

Herbert asks if his old age will mean decline and decay of this poetic and
creative power. Whatever the effects of old age the poet feels confident that he
will be able to utter the words; "Thou art still my God."

Herbert then reconciles himself to the loss of his ability to use sweet
phrases and lovely metaphors. Let fine language forsake him; he would not mind
the loss because the can always say; "Thou art still my God." As long as he
remains devoted to God and can express that devotion, even if he expresses in
ordinary and plain words, he would be content. If the heart remains reverent
towards God, the loss of fine language does not matter. 

Beautie and beauteous words should go together.
Yet if you go, I passé not; take your way:
For, Thou art still my God, is all that ye
Perhaps with more embellishment can say.
Go birds of springs: let winter have his fee;
Let a bleak palenesses chalk the doore,
So all within be livelier than before.\textit{(TPWGH 115)}

The poem entitled “Discipline” is an appeal from the poet to God to deal with human beings gently, not sternly. The poet entreats God to throw away the rod of punishment, to throw away His wrath and to adopt a mild attitude towards human beings.

The poet would like to adjust his desires and his aspirations wholly in accordance with God's wishes. The poet would like every word and every look of his to be governed by the law of God. Although the poet feels ineffective and sheds tears of disappointment, yet he strives to advance, howsoever slowly, towards God's throne where God's grace awaits him.

The poet reiterates his appeal to God to give up His wrath and make use of love in order to reform human beings. Love can soften the hardest of hearts. Love is a mighty power which never fails to bring about the desired results. If love could soften God's own heart, it cannot fail to reform the poet. Man has his weaknesses, but God is perfect and should therefore not make use of the weapon of punishment against human beings.

Who can escape his bow?
That which wrought on thee,
Brought thee low,
Needs must work on me.
Throw away thy rod;
Though man frailties hath,
Thou art God
Throw away thy wrath. (OBSV 383)

In his poem entitled “Death”, Herbert describes the change that took place in the attitude of human beings towards death as a result of the Crucifixion of Christ. There was a time when people found death to be ugly and hideous. A dead man was nothing but a skeleton with its mouth open but incapable of singing. Death then meant the flesh of a human being reduced to dust and his bones being reduced to sticks. At that time people never looked beyond the grave, and they regarded a dead body as an empty shell from which the soul had departed.

But after the Crucifixion of Christ, people's view of death underwent a change. Now death seemed fair and graceful, and people sought death as a blessing. Now death began to appear as gay and glad as it would look on the Doomsday when the souls would put on new garments and when the bones of the dead will be clothed with beauty. Now human beings can die cheerfully, thinking death to be a kind of sleep and believing that the graves is an honest and faithful dwelling where a dead body can rest peacefully.

For we do now behold thee gay and glad,
As at dooms-day;

When souls shall wear their new aray,
And all thy bones with beautie shall be clad.

Therefore we can go die as sleep, and trust

Half that we have

Unto an honest faithfull grave;

Making our pillows either down, or dust. (OBSV 386)

The poem entitled “Love III” is written in the form of a dialogue. It explains God's infinite love for human beings, howsoever unworthy. It has strong echoes of the poem Dialogue. The poet's soul arrives in heaven and is invited by God to join the communion or the holy feast that is being held there. The poet's soul shrinks from the feast because it is conscious of its sinfulness and believes itself to be unworthy of joining the feast. God quickly perceives the soul's hesitation and asks it if it lacks anything.

The poet's soul replies that it is not worthy enough to join the feast and not worthy enough even to look at God. Anyhow God says that it was He who gave eyes to human beings and that these eyes should not be afraid to look at Him. The poet's reply is that he never made a right use of his eyes and that his sense of guilt now prevents him from looking at God. Then God says that all the sins of mankind were taken by Christ upon himself and that, for this reason, the poet should not have any sense of shame. The poet thereupon says that he will serve as an attendant at the feast, being unfit to be a guest. But God insists that the poet should sit down as a guest and taste the food being served to guests. The poet then sits down in obedience to God's wish and eats God's food.

Truth Lord, but I have marr’d them: let my shame
Go where it doth deserve.

And know you not, says Love, who bore the blame?

My deare, then I will serve.

You must sit downe, says Love, and taste my meat:

So I did sit and eat. (OBSV 387)

This poem entitled “Regeneration” is based on a couple of Biblical passages. It contains an account of the development of the poet from a state of spiritual sterility to that of an awareness of divine grace, and that is why it bears the title "Regeneration".

One day Vaughan went out of doors and followed a path along which grew primroses and shady trees. But although there was every sign of spring outside, there was winter inside the poet's heart which felt oppressed by the sense of sin.

Reaching the top of a hill, the poet found a pair of scales in which he weighed his sorrows against his empty pleasures and found that the former were heavier. Just then he heard a voice which directed his footsteps eastwards. After walking a while he reached a fair, fresh field which was by some people called Jacob's Bed. There the poet sat down to rest.

Moments later the poet saw a majestic grove, on entering which he witnessed a delightful scene. The prodigal Sun shot forth a thousand beams there; the air was laden with scent; and every bush wore a garland. The whole scene was one that suggested spring. Nearby was a spring of water which contained many stones, some bright and round-shaped, and others dull and ill-shaped. The first kind of stones danced through the water with quick movements, while the second
kind lay motionless in the centre of the spring as if they were fixed there. The poet wondered much at this sight.

It was a banke of flowers, where I descried

(though ‘twas mid-day,)

Some fast asleep, others broad-eyed

And taking in the Ray,

Here musing long, I heard

A rushing wind

Which still increas’d, but whence it stirr’d

No where I could not find;

I turn’d me round, and to each shade

Dispatch’d an Eye,

To see, if any leafe had made

Least motion, or reply,

But while I listning sought

My mind to ease

By knowing, where ‘twas, or where not,

It whisper’d; where I please.

Lord, then said I, On me one breath,

And let me dye before my death (OBSV 763)

The real subject of the poem ‘The Shower’ is Vaughan’s sense of his sinfulness and the tears he sheds as a result, thus hoping to find relief. The poet first describes the process of evaporation by which clouds are formed and the
shower of rain that comes from those clouds. He then takes up his own case. He has often prayed to Heaven for grace, but his prayers were not heard. Only by loving God can one find one's way to God's heart.

The rain-drops falling upon the hard earth can soften the earth. In the same way the poet's tears (over his sinfulness) can melt his heart which is at present hard and insensible. Perhaps God will afford some relief to the poet often he has shed enough tears.

Yet, if as thou dost melt, and with thy traine
Of drops make soft the Earth, my eyes could weep
O’re my hard heart, that’s bound up, and asleep,
Perhaps at last
(Some such showres past,)
My God would give a Sun- shine after raine. (TPHV 45)

This poem entitled “The Retreat”, glorifies childhood which, according to Vaughan, is a time of innocence and a time when one still has memories of one's life in heaven from where one comes into this world.

The poem regards the time of childhood as a happy time. It was a time when the poet shone with an angelic light. It was a time when the poet had thoughts only of heaven and when he could still see glimpses of God. During his childhood, the poet had visions of eternity when he looked at a cloud or a flower. The sight of a cloud or a flower reminded him of the glory of heaven. He was so innocent in those days that he never uttered a sinful word and never had a
sinful desire. Through this physical body he could feel the bright beams of eternity.

In view of these glories of childhood, the poet wants to go back to those early days because now the influences of this material world prevent him from seeing visions of heaven.

O how I long to travel back
And tread again that ancient track!
That I might once more reach that plaine
Where first I left my glorious traine,
From whence th’ Inlightned spirit sees
That shady City of palme tree;
But (ah!) my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way.
Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move,
And when this dust falls to the urn
In that state I came return. (TPHV 59-60)

In the poem entitled “Peace”, the main idea is that peace can be found not in this material world of the senses but only in the world of spirit.

The poet tells his soul that there is a country far beyond the stars where smiling peace dwells. The noises and the dangers of this world cannot disturb the peace which dwells in that heavenly country. The forces of peace in that country
are under the command of Jesus Christ who came down to earth out of his love for mankind and who sacrificed his life for the redemption of mankind.

Christ is the gracious friend of the poet's soul which can find security and comfort only in that heavenly world or that spiritual world where grows the immortal flower of peace. The poet therefore urges his soul to give up the concerns and interests of this world of the senses and to seek security in the spiritual world. Only God who is changeless can grant security to the poet's soul and can cure it of its sicknesses.

There growes the flower of peace,

The Rose that cannot wither,

Thy fortresse, and thy ease;

Leave then thy foolish ranges;

For none can thee secure,

But one, who never changes,

Thy God, thy life, thy Cure. (TPHV 83)

The poem entitled “The World” contains a series of pictures depicting the main interests and activities of worldly people, from which a moral is then drawn. The moral is that we should not get entangled in the lusts of this temporal world but should turn to Eternity and to God.

The poem opens with a brief vision of Eternity which seems to the poet like great ring of pure and endless light, all calm and bright. Then follows pictures of this world of Time and the desires and lusts which occupy all the attention of most people here.
There is, first of all, the Lover who is complaining of the disappointment he has met in his love and who is feeling utterly frustrated. Then there is the Statesman who is full of dark and foul thoughts, who works in crooked ways, who exploits churches and places of worship, and who drinks blood and tears.

The miser clings to the gold he has hoarded, feeling all the time afraid lest thieves should take away his wealth. The Epicure believes that heaven lies in the pleasures of the senses. And there are some persons of "the weaker sort" who devote themselves to the pursuit of trivial things of little value. All the time Truth sits neglected and despised, counting the victories of its enemies.

There are certainly people who weep and sing and who soar upwards to the ring of Eternity, but the majority prefers the darkness of a materialistic life to the brightness of a spiritual life. The poet scolds those who get lost in material interests but is told by a divine voice that the ring of Eternity has been provided by Jesus Christ only for those who love him and are devoted to him.

Yet some, who all this while did weep and sing,
And sing, and weep, soar’d up into the Ring,
But most would use no wing.
O fools (said I,) thus to prefer dark night
Before true light,
To live in grots, and caves, and hate the lady
Because it shews the way.
The way which from this dead and dark abode
Leads up to God,
A way where you might tread the Sun, and be
More bright than he.
But as I did their madness so discusse
One whisper’d thus,
This Ring the Bride-groome did for none provide
But for this bride. (TPHV 152)

Poovannan in his book entitled Tamil Ilakkiya Varalaru states that the Cankam poets prayed to God not to get gold and pleasure but to seek His blessings only (57)

In Cankam poetry the deities such as Murukan, Thirumal and Indiran have been praised where as in the English metaphysical poetry the greatness of Christ has been extolled. The metaphysical poets have written about committing sins and the acts of repentance. Herbert’s white hairs on his head were messengers informing him that old age was about to overtake him. Yet he was not afraid. He still had faith in God. He uttered: ‘Thou art still my God’ (OBSV 358). Here the poet is not in despair inspite of his being aware of his mortality.

When Pisiranthaiyar was asked why his hairs did not turn white even in his old age, he replied that he had virtuous family members. His townsmen were also wise ad civilized people. The king was also a kind hearted ruler. In pisiranthaiyar’s reply, religious note is not found. Yet he is also not in despair inspite of his being aware of his mortality.

Yantu palavaka naraiyila vakutal
Yanka kiyarena vinavu tirayin…
Canror palar yan valum ure (CI 467)

Cankam poets have seen God in nature. Sarangapani in his book entitled Canka Tamil Valam states that the Cankam poets realized God in nature. In Paripatal, Nalleluniyar writes about the all pervasive nature of Thirumal:

You are the senses five, of taste, and sound,
Light and smell and touch!
And too, the sensory organs five!
You’re space, felt through sound, the first;
You’re air, felt through the two, sound and touch
You’re fire, felt through the three, sound, touch and light!
And last, the earth felt through the senses five,
Of sound, touch, light, taste and smell!
In sum, you are the trible worlds seven,
The primordial prakriti containing Gunas. (PP 144)

Ilaveyinanar sees God in nature:

Your warmth and light are in the sun
Your coolth and softness in the moon
Your Grace and bounty in the rain;
Your forbearance and providence in the earth;
Your fragrance and luster in the kaya bloom;
Your form and stature in the sea;
Your fineness and sound in the sky;
Your advent and dissolution in the air; (PP 35)
In yet another poem, ilaveyinanar sates that God has the qualities of nature:

You are the essence immanent in all things; *(PP 23-25)*

You are the heat in fire;

You are the fragrance in flowers;

You, the bright radiance of gems!

You the truth in the word,

You are the love in righteous action!

In heroic action you are the valour!

You’re the essence of the Vedas!

You’re the first among the Elements!

You’re the light of sun,

You’re the coolth of the moon!

You are everything everywhere!

Similarly Henry Vaughan states that the sight of a cloud or a flower reminded him of the glory of heaven.

And looking back (at that short space,)

Could see a glimpse of his bright-face;

When on some gilded cloud, or flower

My gazing soul would dwell an hour,

And in those weaker glories spy

Some shadows of eternity; *(TPHV 59)*
Even in the breeze, Henry Vaughan could realize divinity. He requests God to make the breeze blow upon him a little. Hence it could be inferred that both the Cankam poets and English metaphysical poets realized God in nature.

But while I listning sought
My mind to ease
By knowing, where’twas, or where not,
It whisper’d; where I please.

Lord, then said I, On me one breath,
And let me dye before my death! (TPHV 22)

Every human being is aching with desire to achieve immortality. It is the archetypal longing for achieving immortality. Elegy is referred to a poem mourning the death of a particular individual. In Cankam poetry, many poets had mourned the death of kings or chieftains of particular regions. In English metaphysical poetry also the deaths of great men or women had been lamented.

One can find the predominance of an archetypal frustration in the elegies written in Tamil and English. More over it is an obvious sign of the human fear of death. And this fear of death has won over the human beings to the religious faith.

According to Roger Fowler “The language of funeral elegies provided opportunity for plaintive, melancholy generalizations on death or on the state of the world”.

M.H. Abrams defines archetype succinctly as follows:

The term archetype denotes current designs, patterns of action, character-types, themes and images which are identifiable in a wide variety of works
of literature, as well as in myths, dreams and even social ritual. Such recurrent items are held to be the result of elemental and universal forms or patterns in the human psyche, whose effective embodiment in a literary work evokes a profound response from the attentive reader, because he or she shares the archetypes expressed by the author. (84)

Frustration is caused by three distinct characteristics namely physical, sociological and psychological barriers. Physical barrier is due to the physical inability to carry out a deed at times of experiencing a loss.

Pothiyar came across physical barrier when Kopperuncholan died. The latter was a great philanthropist and a man of good deeds. Pothiyar asks all the poets to join hands with him to curse the God of Death. Here, his physical inability to do anything other than to curse the God of Death has been delineated vividly.

\[\text{anaiya}\text{n ennatu, attakkönaï} \]

\[\text{ninaïyäk kürüm in uyr uyttanru} \]

\[\text{paital ökkal tați atanai} \]

\[\text{vaikam vammo väymolip pulavir(CI 474)} \]

When Valavan died, Masathanar ridicules the God of Death that he would starve thereafter. He could not get enough food. Because, Valavan, who used to provide food for him by killing a number of men in the battle field was no more. In this situation also, the frustration is due to physical barrier. Unable to do anything, the poet curses the God of Death.

\[\text{Nanipētaiyē nayanil kürrum} \]
In a poem sung by Vanparanar, the psychological state of a lady who lost her husband in the battle field has been explained. She lacked physical strength to carry the dead body of her husband. At the same time she was unable to scream or cry as she was afraid of calling the attention of the tigers. She cursed the God of Death to suffer like her. Here the physical barrier has inflicted severe frustration upon the lady.

Avvaiyar’s elegy is an example for the Psychological barrier causing frustration. After hearing Adhiyaman’s death, Avvaiyar also wanted to die. She could not think about the days and nights without the presence of Adhiyaman. In the following lines pessimistic view of life is fully expressed:

Pessimism finds place in another poem written by Avvaiyar. Adhiyaman used to provide toddy freely for all people. He also shared his food with all other people. Avvaiyar felt that after the death of Adhiyaman one could not find any poet in the world. It was also impossible to find any philanthropist who would like to present gifts to poets.
In a pessimistic mood, another poet requests the potter to make a bigger earthen pot so that her dead husband and herself could be placed together. In a desperate mood, the lady wants to be buried along with her husband.

imat tāli akalitāka vaṇaimō
nāṇan talai mūṭūrk kalam ceykōvē (CI 480)

Perunchathan, a chieftain of Olla iyr region died. After his death Keerathanar sang a song praising him. He saw blossoming mullai flowers on the creepers. In a perssimitic mood, Keerathanar stated that young men and women would not pluck the flowers. Men and women singers would not deck their heads with beautiful flowers. He concluded that the blossoming of the flowers after the death of the chieftain was only a waste.

val vēl cāṭṭan māynta pinrai
mulliyum pūṭtiyō ollaiyūr nāṭte( CI 478)

As a rare phenomenon in the psychological state of mind, one could come across an overjoyed mother after seeing the dead body of her son in the battle field. She was happier than the moment of her giving birth to her son. Even in the state of frustration, she could derive happiness.

citaintu vēṟu ākiya
patu makan kitakkai kāṇū
inra nānrinum peritu uvantanaḷē (CI 483)

Frustration is caused by sociological barrier also. To illustrate this principle, the poem written by Perunkoppenu could be analysed. As her husband was dead, the lady was not willing to lead a sordid life as a widow. In the past, the
society had imposed severe restrictions on the way of life a widow had to lead. She had to eat restricted tasteless food variety only. She could not sleep on the usual beds. Moreover she had to lie down on a bed of stones. Perunkoppendu stated that it was better for her to lie down on the pyre than to lead an empty life. She considered the pyre to be a water tank, filled with lotus flowers. Hence she wanted to die along with her husband. Perunkoppendu’s poem is a protest against the social customs of the cankam period.

va l itał avilńta tāmarai
nal irum poykaiyum tium ōrarrē. (CI 478)

In another poem, yalpanar sang the glory of a brave chieftain who donated food and drinks to each and every one who visited his palatial house which had the doors opened for ever. After the death of the chieftain, his house had lost all its charms. It was like a boat in the drained river. Moreover it looked like the widow of the hero. Her head was shaven and all her jewels were removed from her body. She was also undertaking the hardships of a widow. While comparing the house with the widow who lost her charms, the poet is bringing to light the hardships and sufferings undergone by a widow.

Koymalį talaiyotu kaimmaiura kalankiya
pullennanaiyāl, palani īlantē (CI 481)

English poets also experienced frustration when great men and women passed away. While writing a poem upon the death of Oliver Cromwell, Andrew Marvell experiences frustration due to psychological barrier. In the beginning of
the poem, pessimistic view is expressed. He states that human glory is vain and the world is worthless. He also considers all things to be transitory.

All wither’d, all discolour’d, pale and wan,
How much another thing, no more that man?
Oh! humane glory vaine, oh! death, oh! wings,
Oh! Worthless world! oh transitory things!(OBSV 757)

Yet, while concluding the poem, he changes his opinion. He ends the poem wish an optimistic note. He opines that Cromwell’s honour, praise and name shall last long.

As long as rivers to the seas shall runne,
As long as Cynthia shall relieve the sunne,
While stags shall fly unto the forestst thick,
While sheep delight the grassy downs to pick,
As long as future time succeeds the past,
Always thy honour, praise and name,shall last. (OBSV 758)

Some Tamil poets had hurled abuses against God of Death when great men died. But Andrew Marvell appreciates Charles, the king for not cursing God when he was executed.

He nothing common did or mean
Upon that memorable scene :
But with his keener eye
The axes edge did try :
Not call’d the Gods with vulgar spight
To vindicate his helpless Right,
But bowed his comely Head,
Down as upon a Bed. (OBSV 760)

Frustration could be seen in the elegy upon the Death of John Donne written by Thomas Carew. He says that poetry has become a widow because of the death of John Donne. According to him, they have lost their language itself.

“Have we no voice, no tune? Did’st thou dispense
Through all our language, both the words and sense?” (OBSV 399)

When Perunkopendu died, her husband Makkotai wrote a poem. He stated that it was a distressing fact that even after the death of his wife, he was still living. His distress was not strong enough to deprive him of his life.

Vellitai pottiya vilai viṟaku imattu
Olalar pallip pāzal cērṭti
nānkar māyntañal matantai
innum vāḷval; enitan panpē (CI 478)

Similarly Henry King felt sad when his wife passed away. He was sad that she died first and got the victory. He predicted that his pulse was announcing his arrival like a drum. Though he was marching slowly, he was certain that he would atlast sit down by her.

Tis true, with shame and grief I yield,
Thou like the Van first took’st the field,
And gotten hast the victory
In thus adventuring to dy
Before me, hose more years might crave
A just precedence in the grave.
But heark! My Pulse like a soft Drum
Beats my approach, tell Thee I come;
And slow howe’er my marches be,
I shall at last sit down by Thee. (OBSV 358)

In the Tamil elegies God of Death is cursed for taking away the lives of kings or chieftains. In an English elegy, Ben Johnson states that God of Death Himself feels sad for taking away the life of a child.

“Weepe with me all you that read
This little storie:
And know, for them a teare you shed,
Death’s selfe is sorry. (OBSV 157)

Perunkopendu considered the pyre to be a water tank filled with lotus flowers. Similarly, Richard Crashaw, in one of his poems, states that the grave is the second marriage bed for the couple who died. He tries to draw an optimistic note even while describing death.

To these, whom Death again did wed,
This grave is the second Marriage- bed.
For though the hand of Fate could force
‘Twixt soul and Body a Divorce,
It could not sunder man and wife,
‘Cause they both lived but one life. (OBSV 623)
Pari’s daughters also sang a song expressing their frustration. They had not only lost their father but also the castle and the hillock. They were also living as expatriates. In this case, the frustration is due to sociological barrier, the moon reminds the departed leader in the cankam poetry.

“irrai tinakal ivve nni lavil
venrēri murasin vēntar em
kunrum kontār; yām entaiyum ilamē (CI 452)

Herbert presents his ideas through down to earth associations with common words. But Vaughan communicates mystical transcendental flashes of spiritual insight. Vaughan’s poetic debt to Herbert lies chiefly in his having borrowed a conceptual framework in which to structure and present his ideas. Some of Vaughan’s ideas even seem to have been borrowed from Herbert. But it is reasonable to suppose that he felt he was sharing the ideas rather than stealing them. But Vaughan also made an important contribution of his own, in presenting his spiritual vision so strikingly. In Donne’s divine poetry Christ is depicted as saviour who is the victor over sin and death. According to Helen Gardner, Herbert’s religious poetry may be considered to be love poetry:

Some religious poetry, Herbert’s perhaps, can be regarded as a species of love poetry. But Donne’s is not of that kind. The image of Christ as Lover appears in only two of his poems. The image which dominates his divine poetry is the image of Christ as saviour, the victor over sin and death. The strength with which his imagination presents this figure is the measure of his need, and that need is the subject of the finest of religious poems.(136)
The elegies written in Tamil and English reveal an archetypal frustration. They also express the greatness of the persons whom they portray. Anyhow, some of the elegies end with an optimistic note.

To sum up, the English metaphysical divine poems and the cankam poetry delineate mysticism as a relationship between man, nature and God. Paripadal and Thirumurukarru padai which belong to the Cankam poetry find God in nature. Even in the English divine poems, God has been seen in the different forms of nature. In the Tamil divine poems, the greatness of Murukan, Mayon and Indiran has been elaborately discussed whereas in the English divine poems, the greatness of Christ has been delineated. Moreover, fear of death has won over the human beings to the faith in God. In the metaphysical poetry one can come across the human beings repenting for the sins and expecting for salvation. In Cankam poetry the wish of human beings to attain heaven after the death has been indicated. In Cankam poetry and English metaphysical poetry, the mortality of human beings is reminded with help of the natural objects. The Cankam poets and the metaphysical poets prayed to God not to get gold and pleasure but to seek His blessings only.