CHAPTER IX

ORIENTAL ELEMENTS IN MARLOWE'S TAMBURLAINE, EASTERN POETIC IMAGES IN ELIZABETHAN LOVE POETRY, AND MYSTICAL ELEMENTS IN DONNE

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I. MARLOWE AND THE MONARCHY OF THE EAST

Marlowe's Tamburlaine the Great is one of the important Elizabethan plays written on Eastern theme and character. Among the various sources suggested by scholars, Marlowe seems to have based this play on George Whetstone's English Mirror, which serves, almost in an Oriental manner, a strong note of warning to the rulers of the time of the fickleness of the fortune and the wrath of God for their misdirected actions. There is a strong sense of Divine will or purpose that appears to work throughout the two parts of the play and lends support to Tamburlaine to act as the scourge of God to punish the Christian as well as Moslem rulers for their deeds. Tamburlaine, therefore, can be recognized in an extraordinary way, as a deeply religious work in which the dramatist works out the application of the Divine Will in a pattern which is laid in the tapestry of eastern life and concept of religion which includes both Christianity and Mohammedanism.

Of the many plays written on Eastern themes and characters during the Elizabethan era, quite a few have perished and the authorship of others has not yet been determined. Most of these plays are based on the plots derived from various Spanish sources either to be found in original Spanish works or their English translation. Many of these Spanish plays took as their subject matter the histories of Eastern kings and potentates.

One of the most important plays is Marlowe's Tamburlaine the Great, Parts I and II. Various sources
by different scholars have been suggested for this play. To Boas "his chief source appears to have been the Latin Magni Tamulanis Seythiarum Imperatoris Vita (1553) by Petrus Perondinus." Boas may not be very correct in holding this view, as many other sources were available to Marlowe at a time, when heroic themes based on the Eastern background were very popular. Among these the most important sources were Thomas Fortesque's The Foreste or Collection of Histories (1571), an English version through the French, of Pedro Mexia's Spanish Silva de Varia Lection (1542) which contained in Part II, Chapter XXVIII, the story of Tamburlaine. Another source may be traced to the Turkish Chronicle of Lonicerus which Marlowe might have consulted. But a source which makes a truer interpretation of the meaning of Tamburlaine is certainly George Whetstone's English Mirror, which was published in 1586 and in which the author uses the story of Tamburlaine just to warn the Christians of the scourages God had sent against those nations and people who forgot the wheel of fortune and were lost in their own pomp of power.

The English version of George Whetstone is based on the Spanish version of Pedro Mexia's Silva, which reflects the essential spirit with which most of the chronicles of the Eastern kings were written mainly by the Moslem writers or Spanish-Arabs in the medieval times.

From the time of the great Spanish Poet-Philosopher Ibn Hazm of the eleventh century up to the great historian and philosopher of religions, Ibn Khaldun of the fourteenth century, there were scores of writers who had recorded the
lives and the rule of powerful and renowned monarchs, 
Sultans and other potentates. These writers had one 
feature common in all their writings. Besides giving 
splendid accounts of the great and significant achievements, 
they pointed out the various shortcomings and also the 
course of their fall which was attributed chiefly to their 
pride, riotous living, and God's displeasure they incurred 
for neglecting the Divine commands. Thus most of the 
Eastern chronicles and histories ended with a didactic 
note reminding the people as well as the rulers of the time 
of the fickleness of Fortune and the wrath of God, which 
might inflict the sleeping and forgetful people in any form.

While recording such accounts the Eastern writers 
also gave a justification of all the sufferings and 
miseries inflicted upon a people or a nation at a 
particularly moment of history chiefly because such people 
deserved the wrath of God. Thus apart from the fact that 
these writers cited the various stories of sufferings of 
the people in the times of Noah, Moses and other scriptural 
sources, they also cited the recent instances of the fall 
of the proud and pompous rulers in the hands of other 
mighty forces which symbolized Divine Justice. The history 
of Bajazeth with all his vanity, pomp, pride, his neglect 
of the specific commands of God, along with his ignoble 
fall under the hands of the great Tamburlaine, was most 
effectively used by the writers to admonish the then 
proud and sceptical rulers of the time.

There was a second and greater reason for giving 
such account in the oriental chronicles. The Moslem world 
had not only lost, by this time, all its former glory,
power and greatness, but was losing constantly all its kingdoms established principalities in various parts of the Western world, particularly in Spain chiefly owing to their luxurious life and sinful dissensions amongst themselves; and the final defeat of the Moslem in 1492 by Ferdinand and Isabella and their total expulsion from the land, served as the fresh example of the punishment of God, meted out to a people who forgot their God and the essential principles of the moral world.

The accounts of the fall of scores of Amirs, Sultans, Kings, and Princes in Spain and other places could very well be seen in the defeat that all the 'Sultan' and 'princes' met in the hands of Tamburlaine. The story of the mighty Tamburlaine scourging the powerful nations of Asia and Europe, therefore, was as much a lesson for the Moslem world as it was for the Christians. But this story became a poignant, tragic and significant symbol chiefly for the Eastern world because it gave a correct picture of the loss of the greatness of the Moslem power in the East and almost its total extinction in the West. Tamburlaine, the rising monarch of the East, was a scourge for the West, at the same time, he dealt a severe blow to the deeply rooted power and glory of Islam in the East itself. This history, therefore, was obviously, uppermost in the minds of the Moslem writers of the fifteenth century and was as much used by them as it was made use of by their Spanish contemporaries.

The Spanish writer Pedro Mexia has this in mind when he uses the story of Tamburlaine in Silva de Varia Lection. While giving an account of the mighty power of
Tamburlaine, Mexia puts more emphasis on the tragic fate of Bajazeth, which in Fortescere's words "might suffice to withdraw men from this transitory pomps, and honour" and thereafter provokes the warning from Zenocrate:

> Those that are proud of fickle empery,  
> And place their chiefest good in earthly pomp,  
> Behold the Turk and his great empress.  

(II, iii)

Whetstone, using the story in his *English Mirror*, brings out particularly this spirit of the story and taking Tamburlaine as the instrument of God's anger, shows his sympathy rather than disapproval of Tamburlaine and his army; thereby gives, "what is, on the whole a sympathetic account." 2 "In his army," records Whetstone, "was never found mutine. He was wise, liberal, and rewarded every soldier with his desert. There is no remembrance of a greater army than this." 3 The battle in which he forced Bajazeth, Emperor of the Turks, to raise the siege of Constantinople was the fiercest battle "that in any age was foughten." 4 Bajazeth's fate, to be carried about in an iron cage and fed from the fragments of Tamburlaine's table, is used as evidence not of Tamburlaine's cruelty but of the uncertainty of the worldly fortunes.

Like the Arab as well as the Spanish writers, Whetstone also justifies the cruelty of Tamburlaine as the Divine punishment to chastise and subdue the proud kings and their subjects: "And in truth," says Whetstone, "Tamburlaine, although he was endued with many excellencies and virtues, yet it seemed by his cruelty that God raised him to chasten the kings and proud people of the earth." 5 It is with this Oriental motive of admonishing the weak and feeble rulers of the earth like Bajazeth and the Persian
king Mycetes, a spineless ruler, with aesthetic susceptibilities, that the entire theme was treated by Whetstone from whom Marlowe picks up the very spirit and the motive that lies behind the work. The oriental spirit lies essentially in the treatment of the fallen kings and Sultans through a powerful agent who strikes a strong note of caution. This can be seen in the accounts of historians like Ibn Khaldun and scores of other writers. English version of admonition in which the author imitates the Eastern chronicles may be seen in An Homily Concerning the Justice of God in Punishing of Impenitent Sinners etc by Alexander Nowell (1565). In this work Nowell talks of the justice meted out to the Christians for their sins and reminds the Christian rulers of the Day of Judgement that seems to come nearer for their pride, pomp, and injustice. Whetstone's English Mirror and Marlowe's Tamburlaine stand very close to this work in which Nowell, like the many eastern chroniclers, admonish the Christian rulers as well as subjects of God's wrath and punishments.

It is, therefore, not only a great heroic tale of a great Eastern conqueror, the treatment as well as the central meaning that the narration projects are essentially oriental. There are, of course, other features pertaining to the oriental atmosphere, colour, background, tone, speech, and the oriental concept of beauty which render it, every inch, into an oriental work of art composed by an artist belonging to an altogether different land and age.

Apart from the central motive, the motive of exhorting the people and the feeble rulers, there was another
purpose; Marlowe's aim at striking at the weak dramatic medium and thereafter reforming the dramatic style. The heroic deeds of Tamburlaine, his mighty voice, and his marching army along with his astonishing speech, very well suited Marlowe's purpose of changing the very tone and mode of dramatic narration. As this was quite in keeping with the rich eastern atmosphere and grand style, Marlowe found it most suitable to the new theme and confidently announced his intention of changing the existing dramatic style in the opening lines of the prologue:

From jiggling veins of rhyming mother-wits,
And such conceits as clownage keeps in pay,
We'll lead you to the stately tent of war,
Where you shall hear the Scythian Tamburlaine,
Threatening the world with high astounding terms
And scourging kingdoms with his conquering sword.

Marlowe simultaneously blended his desire for the reform of the dramatic style with the deeply rooted didactic note that the English translators of the subject had derived from the Eastern chronicles. In the exploits of the scythian Shepherd Tamburlaine, who rose to be the Lord of the Eastern world and who presented in his stupendous career the spectacular achievements of an Oriental conqueror, Marlowe saw a subject exactly suited to his purpose as well as a theme that was in keeping with the tradition of the Renaissance moral philosophy.

This brings us to an interpretation of the play that would appear altogether different from the various views pronounced by the scholars of Marlowe. The first part of the Tamburlaine the Great with the spectacular victory of the great monarch of the East and the ignoble defeat of a
host of Eastern lords and kings, chiefly Mycetes and Bajazeth, actually illustrates the didactic note of the original narrative. The play ends with the hero all triumphant and at the Zenith of his power and conquest while all his opponents are either crushed or put to death or subjected to the most ignoble state, such as Bajazeth being carried like a dog in a cage. Here it may be noted that Marlowe throws into the creation of Tamburlaine the full ardent force and passion of his genius as a result of which we have a "mighty titanic figure, throbbing with intense vitality, a figure that by sheer masterful pressure storms its way into the imagination." As against this titanic figure, all the defeated lords and sultans are treated with the utmost derision and contempt particularly because, like Mycetes and Bajazeth, they are the incarnations of degeneration and as such they deserve all wrath and punishments of God as meted out to them through Tamburlaine. Here Tamburlaine resembles such mighty and peerless eastern warriors as Shorab and Rustum who are known as the undefeated heroes of the East. Such heroical deeds of arms fittingly set forth upon the stage also enables Marlowe adopt the new dramatic style that puts to shame the buffooneries of the popular plays.

As a man of Renaissance Marlowe wanted to embody the character of his hero with all the qualities of this great epoch; but, more than this, he needed certain exotic elements, essentially strangeness and richness in order to portray the protagonist as a typical eastern heroic figure. And to capture all these, Marlowe turned to the
East and the Eastern tale as it supplied the themes and characteristic traits just suited to present the hero of his play. Commenting on the relevance of the Eastern materials to the typical Marlovian hero, Harry Levin observes:

Thus in the late 1580's and early 1590's, an epoch of rising empires and falling dynasties, Marlovian tragedy voiced aspirations which were collective as well as individual. It looked to the East, through the Near East and towards the Indies, as Western Europe traditionally did for its sources of richness and strangeness.

Richness and strangeness are indeed the chief features that the East has contributed to the Western literature along with many other traits. Among many other things, it is the character of Tamburlaine that stands out as the most prominent, rich and strange figure that chides all the great kings of the East as 'ye pamper'd jades of Asia.' Marlowe, a man of the West, completely forgets himself in Marlowe the artist. It is true, as many critics of Marlowe have pointed out, that Tamburlaine embodies in him the aspiring mind of the Renaissance, but this presents only a partial truth regarding the personality of the mighty man. He is much more than the man of Renaissance chiefly because he embodies in all the great qualities of a monarch of the East. He is to be seen primarily as a great adventurous man of the East who with his indomitable spirit, indefatigable character, and restless spirit sets out to shake the rest of the world. He represents the spirit of the East -- he is a Saracen who rose from the humble desert of Arabia, swept the whole of middle-East, Minor Asia, Africa, Spain and the
Mediterranean regions, and came to knock at the very heart of Europe, i.e., Rome. Tamburlaine represents the Saracens who shook the Western world from the seventh century to the twelfth century and subdued most of the mighty nations, as he himself expresses:

Warring within our breasts for regiments
Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds
Our souls, whose faculties can comprehend
The wondrous architecture of the world,
And measure every wandering planet's course
Still climbing after knowledge infinite,
And always moving as the restless spheres,
Wills us to wear ourselves and never rest,
Until we reach the ripest fruit of all:
That perfect bliss and sole felicity,
The sweet fruition of an earthly crown.

(Part I, II,vii,18)

It was primarily this spirit that moved the Arabs. Indeed, the quest for knowledge was as important for the people of East as the conquest of fresh lands, for, as quoted by the holy prophet, they were enjoined upon to "seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave." It was an urge, an unconquerable spirit that inspired them "to hold the fates" in their hands. Hence, strange as it may appear, these lines reveal very well the true spirit of the early Saracen or Moor who had living faith in his personality and as such set out to conquer the rest of the world without any doubt in his mind. Tamburlaine, a great man of the East has all these qualities which these Moslems have forgotten. As a result they appear in the drama as the victims of a conqueror who has come to possess the elements, the spirit, the courage and the mind which their ancestors had in the past.

The play, therefore, achieves poetic justice when it reveals the great kings and powers of Moslem world
kneeling before Tamburlaine. It is in this sense that
Tamburlaine's victory over all the powers of the East
appears as a just judgement of history upon a people
who forgot their own restless spirit and greatness of
mind and thus came to be trampled under the foot of
Tamburlaine. Interpreted in this sense, the entire play,
with the power of Tamburlaine crushing all the minor as
well as major powers of the East, presents essentially
the medieval history of the Eastern Empire - - the sudden
and shooting rise of the Moslem power and then its
subsequent fall, the fall that reduced it to an almost
negligible position in the world.

Besides the significant revelation of the history
of the fall and rise of the Eastern powers, the play also
offers a brilliant study of eastern scenes, colours,
background, atmosphere, and some of the eastern concepts
too. Nowhere in Elizabethan drama do we find a better
description of the rich oriental atmosphere as does
Marlowe reveal in his painting of Zenocrate's beauty:

Not all the gold in India's wealthy arms
Shall buy the meanest soldier in my train.
Zenocrate, lovelier than the love of Jove,
Fairer than whitest snow on Scythian hills,
Thy person is more worth to Tamburlaine
Than the possession of the Persian crown
Which gracious stars have promised at my births.
A hundred Tartars shall attend on thee,
Mounted on steeds swifter than Pegasus,
Thy garments shall be made of Median silk
Enchas'd with precious jewels of mine own
More rich and valurous than Zenocrate's.
(I, III 85)

Zenocrate's character becomes all the more important
when we find that she represents essentially the feelings,
sentiments, passions and sensibilities of a lady from the
East. Soft and tender, she falls in love with Tamburlaine when she finds nobility and sincerity in his character; yet she never speaks out her love in loud or vociferous terms. A true woman of the East, once she has accepted Tamburlaine as her lord in her heart, she does not like to hear anything said against him. At Agydas's exclamation as to how she should love so fierce a man like Tamburlaine and how harsh and cruel would he appear as a lover, she replies:

'As looks the sun through Nilus' flowering stream
Or when the morning holds him in her arms,
So looks my lordly love, fair Tamburlaine.'

(III, ii, 47)

Zenocrate introduces another note of tender feelings, a keen sense of agony and suffering when she remembers her father, her people and her country and the humiliation they are going to face in the hands of Tamburlaine. A typical woman of the East, she is unable to suppress these tender feelings and thus she is tortured with a conflict between love and duty, love for her lord who appears to be a tyrant and duty for her kith and kin. All these feelings Marlowe expresses in a delicate manner:

Now shame and duty, love and fear presents
A thousand sorrows to my martyr'd soul,
Whom should I wish the fatal victory,
When my poor pleasures are divided thus:
And rack'd by duty from my cursed heart?
My father and my first betrothed love
Must fight against my life and present love.

(V, ii, 25-31)

The role of Zenocrate is thus very important from the standpoint of dramatic necessity without whom the entire play would have remained only at one level, that of spectacular scenes, battles fought and fields won by a super-human will. Marlowe introduces into the play an element of sensibility through an eastern concept of
beauty symbolised by Zenocrate; her beauty as seen by Tamburlaine reveals a splendour which is portrayed in the most exotic and oriental colour:

Zenocrate, the loveliest maid alive
Fairer than rock of pearl and precious stone,
The only paragon of Tamburlaine;
Whose eyes are brighter than the camps of heaven,
And speech more pleasant than sweet harmony;
That with thy looks canst clear the darken'd sky
And calm the range of thundering Jupiter.

(Pl. III. iii. 119–125)

It is the image of eye and the sweetness of lips that play a significant role in the love poetry of the East. The poet uses these images to show the immediate effect that the feeling of love has on the lover — the effect that moves and touches the very core of even the most stern and rough element in man. Marlowe uses this particular effect of her beauty, the charms of her eyes and sweetness of her voice she has on Tamburlaine which he feels thus:

Save only that in beauty's just applause
With whose instinct the soul of a man is touched
And every warrior that is rapt with love
Of fame, of valour, and of victory,
Must needs have beauty beat on his conceits.

(Pl. V. l. 178–182)

This is also dramatically very appropriate. In spite of his prejudices against the Turks and the Tartars, Sidney has to acknowledge, the importance given to beauty and poetry by the great generals and the warriors in the Eastern world. He says that poetry is "the companion of camps, highly honoured even by Turks and Tartars." 9

Further, her beauty has a softening effect and Marlowe adds to it a second aspect of Renaissance theory regarding Beauty's effect; this concept is expressed very well by Chapman:

'Beauty in heaven and earth this grace doth win,
It supplies vigour and it lessons sin.' 10
Regarding the significant of this concept in the play, Battenhouse observes:

In accord with this theory we note that Zenocrate's beauty, earthly though it is, can modify the sternness of Tamburlaine's spirit. Under the spell of her beauty he spares her father's life. When in Part II of the drama Zenocrate's death has deprived him of beauty's softening influence, he becomes increasingly savage. 11

The softening effect of Zenocrate's beauty on the impetuous temper of Tamburlaine with her sensuous elements reminds us of one of the well-known Arabic poets Umar ben Abi Rabia who is regarded as an extremely sensuous poet. In a typical oriental manner he sings of the beauty of his beloved Zaynub, who, for all her sensuous beauty and oriental charms, offers a close comparison to Zenocrate:

Oh, what a joyful day it was,
When I met her at al-Khayf and she captured my heart ....
Oh, companions, it is true that I knew many women;
I sang of their beauties, I sang of their passion;
But Zaynab, the beauty of beauties,
She is my love,
And she is the sun which outshines all stars. 12

Similarly the influence of Zenocrate's beauty has, therefore, a tremendous impact on the super-human spirit of Tamburlaine; he tells her that her person:

Is more worth to Tamburlaine
Than the possession of the Persian Crown.

Moreover, as has been pointed out by E. M. Waith, Tamburlaine's love, expressed in the poetry of the famous speech beginning with "Disdain Zenocrate to live with me," further "distinguishes him from his rival warriors. Their pride and their ambition are not accompanied by the imagination which informs his promises to Zenocrate." 13
speaking cast in the mould of a classical hero, suddenly appears under the influence of Oriental tradition of romance when he declares that he has worshipped Zenocrate as his love and has kept her free from all the blemishes of dishonour:

Her state and person wants no pomp you see,
And for all blot of foule in chastity,
I record heaven, her heavenly self is clear

Nowhere do we have a better account of a classical hero depicted in the most heroic mode bowing his head to an oriental beauty with all the eastern sense of the acceptance of beauty, its power and the divine element possessed by it.

There are also many other passages in the play that creates an eastern atmosphere and also give a vivid account of the oriental courts and oriental life. Bajazeth represents a good deal of the pomp and power of the eastern courts although he ultimately falls before the mighty force of Tamburlaine. In his address, deportment, and majestic tone, he too appears as a great Eastern Power:

Hie thee, my basse, fast to Persia,
Tell him thy Lord, the Turkish emperor,
Dread Lord of Africa, Europe and Asia,
Greek king and conqueror of Asia,
The Ocean, Terrence, and the Coal-black sea,
The high and the highest monarch of the world,
Wills and commands, (for say not I entreat),
Not once to set his foot in Africa,
Or spread his colours in Graecia,
Lest he incur the fury of my wrath.

(III, i, 21)

Through Bajazeth, Marlowe also presents a minute and detailed account of the inside picture of an Eastern Court and the harems as maintained by these kings:
By Mahomut my kinsman's sepulchre,
And by the holy Alcoran I swear,
He shall be made a chaste and lustless eunuch,
And in my sarell tenel my concubines;
And all his captains, that thus stoutly stand,
Shall draw the chariot of my emperess,
Whom I have brought to see their overthrow.  

(III, iii, 76)

Above all, no dramatist of the Elizabethan era has shown such acquaintance with the geographical details of the East and the topography of the Eastern landscape as has been done by Marlowe in this particular play. Indeed, his fancy luxuriates in the mysterious splendours of Oriental geography, and the prospect of riding in triumph through old-world cities, Persepolis and Damascus, lends glow and colour to Tamburlaine's ambition. His rich imagination sweeps from the East to the West and brings in all the important and rich places of the medieval world before his eyes:

Those walled garrisons will I subdue,
And write myself great lord of Africa,
So from the East into the furthest West
Shall Tamburlaine extend his puissant arm,
The galleys and those pilling brigandines,
That yearly sail to the Venetian Gulf,
And hover in the straits for Christians' week,
Shall lie at anchor in the Isle Asant,
Until the Persian fleet and men-of-war,
Sailing along the Oriental sea,
Have fetched about the Indian continent
Even from Persepolis to Mexico,
And thence into the Straits of Jubalder,
Where they shall meet and join their force in one,
Keeping in awe the Bay of Portingale,
And all the Ocean by the British shore.  

(IV, i, 245)

Such, in essence, is the poetic rapture that Marlowe feels when his imagination is fired by the richness, the strangeness, and the beauty of the East. There are scores of passages in the play that reveal that the poet is entirely engrossed not only in the indomitable spirit and aspiring
mind of the hero but also in the rich splendours, light and colour of the East too. Indeed so engrossed is he in the exotic theme, colour and atmosphere of the East that the poet rises above the usual conventional elements and succeeds in making the play a singular work of art of this age.

A unique feature of the play is Marlowe's treatment of religion. Marlowe's treatment of religion has not been properly understood in the context of various pronouncements made on religion by Tamburlaine. These pronouncements, especially his blasphemies, have attracted a great deal of critical comment from various critics. Since Marlowe himself was accused of atheism, the key question has been whether or not Tamburlaine is a mouthpiece of his author. This is a wrong approach that unnecessarily drags the playwright into the play and thereby creates confusion.

A thematic approach to both the parts of the play will show that the playwright is quite consistent in his pronouncements on religions in the first part of the play; his Tamburlaine is found expressing / contempt for both Christianity and Mohammedanism. This is because Marlowe finds all orthodox forms of religion are advocated by persons who are themselves corrupted. Hence as Christianity has been put to scorn in Act II by the perfidy of its adherents, so Mohammedanism is mocked in Act V. It is thus in the first part of the play that both the religions come under fire and behind this exposure of the weakness of Christianity and Islam we have another meaning that connects both the parts in thematic unity.
In the first part both the Christians and the Moslems are denied help from God. God does not answer when helpless Bajazets exclaims, "O Mahomet, O Sleepy Mahomet." Here, as has been pointed out earlier, Tamburlaine represents the Divine will, as if were, to admonish those people who deserve punishment. Hence, neither the Christian God nor the Moslem prophet is to interfere as these invocations are from people who do not deserve either pity or mercy. On the contrary, in spite of his cruelty and savagery, Tamburlaine is allowed to march victorious from country to country only because his nature reflects human ideals. "In his Superabundance of energy," observes J.B. Steane, "he comes near to the essential being of this God, for energy is an infusion and he who has most of it has most of the God within him." It is with this divine energy transferred to man with superhuman will that Tamburlaine is allowed to play havoc on those kings who have fallen into the hands of fools. The first part of the play deals with such people and hence they receive no answer from their Gods; on the contrary, Tamburlaine is allowed to scoff at these Gods and their religions.

In the second part of the play the order has changed. It deals with a different dispensation as all the weak and corrupted powers of the East have already received the dues, and Tamburlaine, having realised to the full the greatness of human will through the support of divine energy, is now overgrowing himself so much so that, like the Archangel, has forgotten his original limitation and conscious only of his acquired greatness, worldly pomp, and progress. It is
at this moment that Battenhouse's interpretation of Tamburlaine's character becomes applicable. To him Tamburlaine's "passions have fallen victim to three ills: immoderation, misdirection and delusion." It is basically on this point that Battenhouse differs from what is called the romantic criticism of Una Ellis-Fermor because she has studied the drama with the eyes of a modern man to whom upward striving is noble. But it may be noted that the aspiring mind of man that derives its energy from what may be identified with the essential energy of Nature or God, is not condemnable so long it keeps itself on the correct track of Nature or Divine will; and as Tamburlaine is seen as a scourge of God to wipe out the corrupted nations of the East, Ellis-Fermor's criticism justly upholds the striving mind of Tamburlaine in the first part. Battenhouse's criticism of the misdirected and immoderate and intemperate passions becomes applicable only to the second part when Tamburlaine has lost the track and is now, therefore, completely misdirected.

Thus in the second part of the play Tamburlaine, grown immoderate and swollen with pride, has created a dispensation that needs the interference of the Divine will. Here he cannot throw slur at God and go unpunished particularly because the time has changed along with the people. Here we have the Turkish kings deciding upon a truce with the Christians in order to check the unlimited power of Tamburlaine. In other words, the first part showed us a world of disunity and strife, which fell an easy prey to Tamburlaine's ambition supported by the will of providence, while the second, shows us a world well aware of the menace
of Tamburlaine grown beyond human limit and Divine will, organising itself to oppose it. Thus God answers almost immediately in the second part of the play. First, God seems to participate in human affairs when Orcares invokes Christ's aid against the Christians who have broken faith, (Part II, Act. II, Sc. II). The Christians are immediately punished for their perjury, which is clearly confessed by Sigismund:

Discomfited is all the Christian host
And God hath thunder'd vengeance from high,
For my accurs'd and hateful perjury.
(Part. II, II, iii)

The second instance of the Divine power clearly participating with the human dispensation takes place when Tamburlaine dares Mahomet out of his heaven, burns the sacred books and speaks of 'The God that sits in heaven, if any God.' A moment after the sacrilege, after the drowning of the Babylonians has been reported to Tamburlaine, he feels sick and exclaims:

"But stay, I feel myself distempered suddenly."

Next, his only foe who is still at large, Callapine, supplicated Mohammed to revenge the overthrow of Bagazeth and then the three comrades-in-arms open the final scene with a sort of apocalyptic chart to bring the end of Tamburlaine who is stricken at the height of his power. Thus within thirty lines of daring Mohamet to "come downe ... and work a miracle" he is struck by the fever which is to kill him finally.

Hence the religious pronouncements of Marlowe have not been agnostic; on the contrary, seen in their proper context they are quite consistent. Moreover, it is
essentially the sense of Divine will or purpose that appears to work throughout the two parts of the play; and the purpose that first lends support and power to Tamburlaine to act as the scourge of God on the face of earth, also strikes down the same person in the second part of the drama. It is the purpose or will that supplies the basic structural as well as the thematic unity to both the parts of the play and thereafter renders the entire play into a religious work. Perhaps this aspect of the play made Steane see in it "a religion more than a philosophy; and, when all has been said, Tamburlaine must be recognized as in its extraordinary way fundamentally and deeply a religious work." 16

The close co-existence of these two religions which is present from the beginning to the end, adds another unique feature to this play. Marlowe, while depicting the pagan hero dealing with the Eastern people and Islam also involves Christianity and the Christian world as a result of which the play, as a work of art, achieves a unique synthesis of the two great religions of the world. On both occasions when God is challenged in the second part of the play, the challenge is met. Mahamet answers one, the Christian God, the other, and the effect of this is to achieve a fusion, a synthesis of the religions of the world and resolve the different concepts of God into one single thought. Thus pagan and Christian symbols appear to mingle in the play. Christ is honoured by a Mohammedan not doing Mohomet any 'injurie' and Tamburlaine himself appears to worship "an unnamed God of Power," 17 a concept of God which Marlowe brings close to the essential concept
of the Christian and Moslem God, but puts it, significantly through the mouth of an infidel, when the king of Natolia prays to both, defining God as:

He that sits on high and never sleeps,
Nor in one place is circumscribable,
But everywhere fills every continent,
With strange infusion of his sacred vigor.
(P. II. 11. ii. l 49-52)

As suggested by Harry Levin, Marlowe, in his synthesis of these religious concepts, comes close to Spinoza's doctrine that the existence is the essence of God and makes "Christ and Mohammed look down together dispassionately from the Empyrean." Levin, however, forgets to mention another important fact in his approach to the pantheistic immanence: Spinoza was much influenced by the Moslem rationalistic philosophers like Averroes and others. Moreover, another important Eastern philosopher, mystic, and seeker of the Oneness of God, Moses Maimonides of Cordova, had also found the concept of immanence in which Christ and Mohammed were to be seen existing together.

Apart from these eastern philosophical thoughts, Marlowe appears to have been influenced by the great Italian philosopher Giordano Bruno (1548-1600) who, being the master of the idea of unity, sought to find the synthesis in which opposition and contradictions meet and merge; Bruno came close to the Eastern belief that 'God is the soul of the World', and, perhaps, was sentenced by the Inquisition to be burnt alive for his attempt to rise to that highest knowledge of universal unity that makes a man transcend above the limited religions of this world. Spinoza and a host of like minded philosophers were inspired by Bruno's Averroistic thought of unity.
Hence it is essentially under the influence of the Eastern rationalistic strain that Marlowe is able to rise above the common conventional moral standards of the Elizabethans in order to achieve a synthesis of the various religious concepts of God; the Universal spirit that remains above all local allegiance, nomenclatures, rites and myths and is to be identified with the Divine Energy. As a result, we find "heaven seems to co-exist with Elysium and with Mohammdan paradise and if Mohammed is styled 'the friend of God,' Christ is envisioned as 'son to everliving Joue,' who seems in this regard to be consubstantial with Jehovah." 19 Hence, a play dealing with the Oriental theme and characters, with all the setting and background coloured by the rich exotic oriental shades, Tamburlaine becomes a unique work of art which rises above all the established Renaissance philosophical traditions and realises the essence of the concepts of different religions.

The eastern theme also helps Marlowe in transcending the rationalistic system of thought that had disturbed not only the medieval Thomists but also a section of the conservative Latins in the age of Renaissance itself.

Describing Marlowe's use of the phrase 'any god,' as "the agnosticism" that was "treated in Elizabethan times as one of characteristic and dangerous forms of atheism," Kocher concludes that Marlowe is an atheist or agnostic. 20 But Marlowe is no more to be charged of agnosticism or atheism than many of the Eastern Moslem and Jewish philosophers as well as the Medieval and Renaissance followers of Averroes who came under a similar charge.
levelled against them by people who failed to understand the significance of this complex and highly developed philosophy of the East.

In his narrative art and use of images Marlowe achieves another kind of synthesis, that shows the Eastern theme and setting conveyed chiefly through the classical mode and imagery. It seems Marlowe is bent on putting the oriental theme in a western dress. Thus we have Tamburlaine portrayed throughout in the mode of a classical hero, but he is transformed into a romantic hero of the Eastern tradition when his passions are roused by the beauty and richness of the personality of Zenocrate. While describing the beauty of the eastern lady, Marlowe blends the typical eastern concept of beauty with the Renaissance theory of the effect of beauty.

Marlowe raises the fusion to a still higher level of artistic attainment in his use of images drawn from classical poetry and Greek mythology to describe the typical Eastern situation and character. Though the story of Tamburlaine is from the East, Marlowe has the western classical culture and poetry in his mind when he narrates it. He thinks of Caesar and Tamburlaine as warriors of similar breed, when he makes Tamburlaine reveal his mighty military prowess:

My camp is to like Caesar's host
That never fought but had the victory.
Nor in Pharsalin was there such hot war
As these my followers willingly would have

(III, iii, 153)
Similarly, Marlowe brings his knowledge of Ovid to express the beauty of Zenocrate as seen by Tamburlaine:

Or had those wanton poets, for whose birth
Old Rome was proved, but gazed a while on her
Nor Lesbia nor Corrinna had been named;
Zenocrate had been the argument
Of every epigram or elegy.

(II. II. iv. 91-95)

Marlowe also opens superbly the scene of the 'flyting' between the rival leaders for which he mainly uses the Greek epic story through the heroic cry of Tamburlaine:

Ye petty kings of Turkey, I am come,
As Hector did into the Grecian camp
To overdare the pride of Graecia,
And set his warlike person to the view
Of fierce Achilles, rival of his fame
I do honour you in the smile;
For I should, as Hector did Achilles.

(III, V, 64-74)

Above all, Zenocrate's reply to Tamburlaine expressing her love through images drawn from Ovidian mythology shows Marlowe as a superb artist in the fusion of the eastern sentiments and feeling with western images:

They sung for honour' gainst Pierides
Or when Minerva did with rapture strive
And higher would I rear my estimate
Than Juno, sister to the highest god,
If I were matched with mighty Tamburlaine.

(I. III, ii. 51-55)

Finally, Tamburlaine's lamentation at the death of Zenocrate blends the entire eastern scene and situation into the western mode of expression:

And she liu'd before the seige of Troy,
Hellen, whose beauty summoned Greece to armes,
And drew a thousand ships to tenados,
Had not been name'd in Homer's Illiads

(3054 - 7)
Thus the Scythian conqueror is set before us by Marlowe in the western classical tradition. He is a poet no less than a hero — a poet possessing essentially an eastern mind and believing in the eastern picture of heaven and earth. The beauty of his captive bride, the Egyptian Zenocrate, 'lovelier than the love of Jove,' moves him to rapturous utterances. Even when she is being taken away from him by death he pictures the bliss that awaits her beyond the grave, in a vision and concept of heaven which are typically Oriental, revealing once again Marlowe's genius in catching the eastern mind, its culture and atmosphere in Western art:

Now walk the angels on the walls of heaven
As sentinels to warn the immortal souls
To entertain divine Zenocrate...
The cherubins and holy Seraphins
That sing and play before the king of kings
Use all their voices and their instruments
To entertain divine Zenocrate.

(§ II. iv. l 1S-17)
II. THE LIGHT OF LIGHT: THE USE OF THE EYE-IMAGERY IN THE MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE LOVE POETRY

Eye-imagery has always played an important role in the love poetry of the world. Secular as well as mystical poets have found the use of the eye-imagery very significant in expressing particularly the idea of love. In St. Martial's secular manuscripts, which have the warmth and vigour of his contemporary Guillaume, we find an illustration of this in the following:

The fire is fed by the kiss and soft touch of a girl; in her eyes sparkles the light of light, nor is there in all the world more of divinity. 21

Marlowe rightly says, "whoever loved that loved not at first sight," and the phrase "love at first sight" has a celebrated adage in love poetry. It is the meaningful glance which sends out generating rays of love and makes the bond of love possible. Nina Epton, commenting on the function of this imagery, observes:

The eye-image played and still plays an important role in love, particularly in countries where intercourse between the sexes is jealously restrained. 22

It is in the Oriental poetry in general, and in Arabic and Persian poetry in particular, we find the various subtle uses that the poets have made of this imagery to express their feelings of love. In the eastern countries with all kinds of social taboos, the lovers take recourse to various gestures of the eyes as a medium of communication. In the West, the troubadour poets of Provence came in contact with the Spanish-Arab poets, and, having picked up the subtle uses of this imagery, passed these on to other love poets of Italy and other countries;
This imagery is used by almost all the major poets of the Middle Ages and is found in all the Elizabethan poets including Spenser, Shakespeare, and Donne:

Many of the Oriental poets of the Middle-East, and Near-East have used this image which has thereby become an important device of the poetic embellishment of eastern love-poetry. Thus speaks Ben Burd, a poet from an eastern province of Khurasan, of the killing power of the beloved's eyes:

Her eyes, black like those of the gazelle,
Slew her lovers and did not revive them. 23

Besides evoking the sensuous beauty of the beloved's eyes by comparing them with those of the gazelle, the poet particularly refers to the spell that these eyes have on the lover.

To Abul-Khayr of Mahna (d. 1050) who was one of the remarkable mystics and poets of the eleventh century, the eyes of the lover were the permanent abode of his love:

My eyes are with the beloved's vision,
And I love my eyes when she is in them.
I cannot distinguish my eyes from my beloved:
Either she is in my eyes or my eyes do not exist
Except as my beloved. 24

The poet here uses the eye as an image that plays an important role in love.

The eye as a poetic image has been used most conspicuously by the Spanish-Arab poets of Andalusia and other places of the Peninsula in the Middle Ages. The person who actually gave the widest vogue to this image was Ibn Hazm (994–1064), one of the most important poets and philosophers of the medieval Spain. In his famous
treatise on love which influenced the eastern as well as western writers in the entire Middle Ages, he has devoted one chapter to the various significant gestures of the eye illustrating how this image played an equally important role both in life as well as literature in carrying out the various functions of love:

Love has certain signs which the intelligent man quickly detects and the shrewd man readily recognizes. Of these the first is the brooding gaze: the eye is the wide gateway of the soul, the scrutinizer of its secrets conveying its most private thoughts and giving expression to its deepest hid feelings. You will see the lover gazing at the beloved unblinking, his eyes follow the loved one's every movement, withdrawing as he withdraws, inclining as he inclines, as the chameleon's stare shifts with the shifting of the sun.

While analysing the two kinds of love, he talks of the love at first sights which, according to him, has great significance: "Often it happens love fastens itself to the heart as a result of a single glance. This variety of love is divided into two classes." With such elaborate discussion of the functions of the eye in the realm of love, Ibn Hazm made this image most popular, particularly among the poets of Spain in the medieval times.

Most of these poets used the optic image just to express their passion of love aroused by the meaningful and powerful glance of the beloved. Abu Hafs, an Arab poet born in Cordova in the twelfth century, thus speaks of the effect of the beloved's eyes on the minds of the admirers:
Upon her eyes they gazed,
And they were sore amazed;
All wine consumers find
How wine consumes the mind;

Her glances all men dread
But she still keeps her head;
The bearer of the blade
Needs not to be afraid;

My eager eyes unleapt
To greet her and I wept;
The clouds that swim below
The sun, with rain O'erflow.

These lines are to be noted for their felicity of expression and simplicity of tone in which the poet has captured the intoxicating effect of the beloved's eye. Similarly Ibn Iyad, another poet of Cordova of the same century, makes use of this image just to reveal the stern gesture of denial of love:

Her glance denied to me
It acted vengefully
Was ever-bright sword seen
Without its edge so keen?

And so when I descried
How she contrived to hide
And secret seclusion kept
Behind the tears I wept.

In another poem, Behr, a poet from Murcia of the same century, expresses the magic power of the beloved's eyes:

Beautiful is she
Beauty all excelling

A world of witchery
In her gestures dwelling.

Though the expression is simple, it reveals the powerful sensuous elements that the poet attempts to depict in his poems.

Many poets, however, have used this image in most subtle and witty conceits as a result of which the image
associated with such subtle ideas creates a new tension in the poetry of love. Ibn Haiyun's poem *Inverted Eyelids* may be taken as an example of such witty use of this image:

Is a welling fountain hid  
In your eye's inverted lid  
That your tears, alerflowing it  
Run cascading through the slit?  
It is curved (think I) as if  
On the bellows rode a skiff  
And the breeze has made it heel  
Over almost to the Keel.  
And the man, its mariner  
(So to the pupil we refer)  
Fearing he may drown, no doubt  
Bales the brackish waters out. 30

The entire poem is on one image, which, therefore, becomes an extended metaphor. While using some of the usual associations like tears being compared to the flooding ocean and 'pupil' to the man, the poet adds greater subtlety when he mentions the membrane of the eye shaped like a curved skiff. Here we actually notice a kind of discovery, the inventive genius and the exquisite charm combined with dazzling --- elements which anticipate the style and the witty images that the English Metaphysical poets were to use centuries after.

It is chiefly in the oriental poetry that we have the origin of such use of optic image in the love poetry of the medieval period. Partly with the influence of this poetry on the West chiefly through Spain and partly with the treatises on love by Ibn Hazm and others, this particular image appears first in the poetry of the troubadours, and later in the courtly love poetry of the western poets.
Right from the very beginning the poets of Europe have shown great delight in using this image in their love poetry. To them the optic communication between the lovers gives much amorous enjoyment. A close study of this image reveals how these poets have dealt with the different gestures of the eyes and have attributed a significance to each of these. To them, a lowering of the eyelids signifies consent; a prolonged stare indicates suffering and despair; a wink signifies joy, and to touch one's eyelids is a warning. A discreet glance from the corner of the eyes implies a question and an inward glance means a refusal.

The eye-image, however, is chiefly associated with four distinct ideas in the love poetry of medieval Europe. First, it is used as a messenger between the lover and the lady. Many European poets of earlier times have used it as the swiftest and most powerful messenger in the kingdom of love. It is Chaucer who describes very well the medieval use of the eye as a messenger in such lines as:

The eye is a good messenger
Which can to the heart in such manners
Tidynge's sende, that (he) hath seen.
To voide him of his peynes clean,
Wherefore the hearte reioyseth so
That a great party of his wo
Is voided, and put away to flight. 31

The eye communicates the message of love and removes the apprehension of the lover. It is, therefore, the swiftest medium of communication between the two.

The eyes of the lady possessing radiant light have been a very significant image in medieval love poetry. Almost every amorous poet has found the radiation of light
in the eyes of his love and has been struck by such blinding light. Thus the German poet Heinrich Von Morangen, a contemporary of Reinmar and Walter Von Morangen, finds such light in the eyes of his lady:

I must always fix my gaze on her,
Like the moon that receives its light
From the light of Sun;
Thus many times the radiant glances of her eyes
Come into my heart, as she passes before me,
But if the radiant light of her eyes is fled,
Distress befalls me, that I must lament.

To another poet the lady is all heaven and her eyes the moon:

Oh my heart, you are heaven
And your eyes are the moon
And your eyebrows rainbow,
And they have pierced my mind.

One of the frequent uses of the eye-image for the love poet is its association with powerful and deadly weapons like the sword and the dagger. The poet often uses the eye of his lady as striking, killing and stabbing. Such use expresses not only the power of the lady to whom the lover surrenders unconditionally, but also the effect of the power of love that strikes the victim instantly. No less a poet than Dante himself has felt such striking power of his lady's eyes:

My own virtue parted disconsolate
Since it left my heart
In the battle there where Madonna was,
Who came to strike with her eyes
in such a manner that Amor
Scattered all my spirits into flight.

Numerous are the examples of such uses of the eye-image scattered in the entire realm of troubadour poetry. The Renaissance poets have been particularly fascinated by the significance of this image and have used it with all vigour and zeal in their love poetry.
The early medieval philosophers had made a sharp distinction not only between the animal and the rational soul of man but also between the orbits of their activity in natural and spiritual love. It was Avicenna who attempted to make a fusion of the two in order to achieve a harmony in pure love. He assigns to the lower soul a role of partnership with the rational soul whereby love of external beauty, even love of feminine beauty, becomes pure. It then serves as an aid in approaching the chaste object of all love. The conditions demanded in this alliance are submission of the animal soul to the rational soul of man on the one hand, and the domination of the rational soul over the animal on the other. Avicenna first established the principle that "no being is devoid of love and that love pervades all being." He further goes on to say that a rational being always loves and desires the sight of a beautiful form. The form is the manifestation of interior integrity and harmony, the existence of the divinity in its possessor.

Most of the intellectual troubadours believed in such Eastern philosophy, which very soon found its way into the entire body of European philosophy. Led by such a concept, these poets regarded pure love as a fusion of the lover's heart and soul with those of the beloved. Even they go to the extent of dispensing with the distinction between the animal and the rational soul and are able to achieve a perfect and successful union of the two through the eye-image. The eye of the beloved becomes a powerful means to work out a complete change in the personality of the lover as is seen in one of the Spanish poets.
known as Garcilaso:

The eyes, whose dazzling light could make the night,
Bright as the sun when midway in its course
Changed me from what I was to something else

Garcilaso, in whose poetry we have the profound currents of Hispanic feelings, describes very well the concept of the optics of love used chiefly by the Spanish-Arab poets:

When half way there, they meet upon the way
Spirits from my own heart, that now at last
Roused by the beat come fourth to seek the source
Of blessing as a spark moves towards the sun.

The lovers come to achieve a heightened existence and the distinction between the animal and the rational soul is omitted through the effective working of the eyes:

I see in the eyes of my lady
A light full of spirits of love
Which brings a new delight into the heart,
So that a life of joy arises from it.

In her eyes is a light (human, not lux: a light that is not an outgoing radiance but 'a resplenda in se perpetuate effect,' full spirits of love and from the lover's heart a life of joy springs forth). Here the poet makes use of the philosophical belief that the soul is vegetative, distinct from the intellect which is separate. But the spirit of love rising from the eyes, involves the poet's virtue, cor, and spirite through psychomancy and thereby effects a union of the two.

Guido further develops this concept of the spirits working in the lovers through the image of eyes:

Through the eyes a subtle spirit strikes:
Which makes a spirit arise in the memory
From which proceeds a spirit of loving
Which ennobles every other spirit.
Thus in troubadour poetry (including the medieval poetry of Europe in general) we find that the poets have used the eye-image to express the philosophy of the distinction between the animal and the rational soul; they have also achieved a fusion of the two by effecting a union of the different spirits in a psychometric way through a subtle use of this image.

A study of the love poetry of the Elizabethan age reveals that the significant use of eye-image in the medieval poetry was lost sight of particularly by the minor poets. None of these could use this image with all its various meanings and subtlety extent in medieval times. Of course, the eye-image can be seen in most of the love sonnets and amorous expressions, but it has lost its earlier and rich associations in the hands of these poets. In most cases it is just used as a fascinating object of beauty in the beloved, striking the fancy and imagination of the poet:

Those eyes that hold the hand of every heart
OR
To serve, to live, to look upon those eyes.

Often the poet uses the eye just to express a very conventional sentiment of love:

My bonny lass, thine eye
So sly,
Hath made me sorrow so.

Sometimes the poet uses the eye-image just to set his fancy on fire:

Those eyes which set my fancy on fire
Those crisped hairs which hold my hearts in chains.
Even in Philip Sidney we have only a faint echo of the idea of eyes possessing light:

When nature made her chief work, Stella's eyes
In colour black, why wrapp'd she beams so bright.43

Most of these Elizabethan poets find nothing but sensuous beauty in the eyes of the lady and they use this image just to express their appreciation of their lady's beauty:

Her goodly eyes lyke Saphyres shining bright 44

And lordly July in her eyes takes place. 45

Drawn with the attractive virtue of her eyes
My touch'd heart turns it to that happy cost 46

All these images have neither the rich philosophical associations nor the subtle and suggestive ideas of medieval poetry. They appear, on the contrary, most conventional and unimpressive images.

Spenser is the first Elizabethan poet in whose poetry the eye-image appears with the same rich implications of the transmission of passions as was found in medieval poetry. A close follower of ancient philosophers like Aristotle and Plato, Spenser saw the earthly beauty of woman, which inspires love, as the reflection and token of divine beauty. "This exquisite belief reconciles contraries, makes the pleasures of the eye into a school of perfection and love into moral law. By virtue of this faith Spenser ennobled all his lovers, gave his brush full leave to paint in fullest detail the bodily
This belief helps Spenser make a perfect fusion of the animal and the rational soul of man and render the feminine beauty, as manifestations of heavenly things through the eye-image. For him, as for the early troubadour, the eye plays a very important role in striking the lovers with the like passions of love with the result that they surrender to the power of love at once. Spenser develops this in a detailed manner:

For lovers eyes more sharply sighted bee
Then other mens, and in deare loves delight
See more than any other eyes can see
Through mutual receipt of beams bright
Which carrie privie message to the spright,
And to their eyes that in most faire display
As plaine as light discovers dawning day
Therein they see through amorous eye glances,
Armies of loves still flying to and fro
Which dart at them their little fierie launces

Even Spenser however, is unable to catch the subtle and suggestive ideas associated with the eyes of the lady as was seen in the poetry of the Trobar Clus. Rather, he follows the poetry of Trobar Clar and the philosophy expressed by him through his eye-image is simple and clear.

It is in Shakespeare that we have all the different uses of this image mentioned earlier. Shakespeare has used this image in the most effective manner with various purposes.

Like Donne he refuses to make a conventional use of this image such as, "My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun." On the contrary, he is well aware of the eyes having the striking power and stabbing nature of deadly
Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye
Than twenty of their swords

(Romeo and Juliet, II,ii,71-72)

OR

She will not stay the siege of loving terms
Nor bide the encounter of assailing eyes

(Romeo and Juliet, I,i,205)

In this play Mercutio uses the very nature of the
stabbing quality of the eye of the lady:

Alas, poor Romeo, he is already dead:
Stabb'd with a white wench's black eye.

(Romeo and Juliet, II,iv,1.13)

Shakespeare also points out how the eye of the lady
possesses a radiant light and sends its rays out to
catch the eyes of the lover:

So sweet a kiss the golden sun gives not
To those fresh morning drops upon the rose
As thy eye-beams, when their fresh rays have
smote
The might of dew that on my cheeks down
flow's.

(Love's Labour Lost, IV,iii,1)

The eye as a messenger between the lover and the
lady has been used by Shakespeare in an indirect but
richer way:

Sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless message.

(The Merchant of Venice, I,i,1.63)

OR

The April's in her eyes. It is love's spring
And these the showers to bring it on.

(Ant. and Cleop. III,iii,1.43)

Iago, the villain, is aware of the inviting message of
the eye as he suggests:

What an eye she has: Methinks it sound
a parley to provocation,
Cassio: An inviting eye:
and yet methinks right modest.

(Othello, II,iii,1.21)
Apart from these, Shakespeare has made use of the eye-image with more significant and richer associations. For a lady like Cleopatra the eyes and lips are the symbols of eternity: "Eternity was in our lips and eyes" (Antony and Cleopatra, I.iii.1.35). Even where Shakespeare goes to describe the sensuous beauty of the lady's eyes, he makes it most unconventional:

... Her eyes as jewel-like,
And cas'd as richly

(Pericles, V.i,1.109)

Shakespeare, therefore, makes use of this image with all its rich associations and renders it all the more poetic each time he handles it. Most of the rich associations of the past are restored by this genius.

One aspect of this image as found in the love poetry of the most intellectual troubadours still remained to be restored in the Elizabethan poetry. While Spenser and Shakespeare use this image with its various associations, they were not able to catch the highly witty and subtle ideas associated with this image. This was done by Donne. He makes use of this image with greater care and restores its witty, subtle, and metaphysical associations. As Broadbent has rightly suggested, from the 14th century to the 16th, it was chiefly in a simple strain of mellifluity that poetry continued to be written and most of the poets of the sixteenth century except, occasionally Shakespeare, wrote of love with a conventional and uncomplicated elegance. 51 Donne, however, is the first lyrical poet who once more revives the former subtle and complex associations of these images and uses them with witty and subtle devices. The eye-image in his poetry
becomes conspicuous for such implications. Not only does he deviate from the conventional poetry of his age, he also makes use of the most unconventional images. Among these the eye becomes conspicuous for the startling and novel associations that it acquires in his love-poetry. The eye becomes the mirror that reflects the heart of the lovers:

My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears,
And true hearts doe in the faces rest. 52

("The Good-morrow")

His lady's eyes are full of light sufficient to blind the sun:

If her eyes have not blinded thine,
Looke, and tomorrow late, tell mee,
Whether both the India's of Spice and Myne
Be where thou leftst them, or lie herewith me.

("The Sunne RIng")

Like Guido of medieval times, Donne also uses the eye-image to raze the barriers between the animal and the rational soul. He is aware of the philosophical belief in the vegetative soul as distinct from the rational, but he also knows how to achieve a union of the two through this imagery:

Our eye-beams twisted, and did thred
Our eyes, upon one double string,
So to' entergraft our hands, as yet
was all the means to make us one
And picture in our eyes to get
was all propagation.

("The Extasie")

The eyes here help integrate the souls of the lovers and at the same time raise them to a heightened existence.

The eyes of his lady are not only full of light, radiant and bright, but they generate light and heat symbolizing knowledge and love:
Must I then see, alas! eternal night
Sitting upon those fairest eyes,
And closing all these beams, which once did rise
So radiant and bright,
That light and heat in them to us did prove
Knowledge and Love?

("Elegy over a Tomb")

While using the eye as a messenger between the lovers, Donne changes the image into a conceit rendering it thereby an agent of the lover who dwells on the eyes of the lady and picks up all the habits and fashions of the lady, thereby forgetting its own true function:

Send home my long strayed eyes to mee,
Which (oh) too long have dwelt on thee,
Yet since there they have learn'd such ill,
Such fore'd fashions,
And false passions,
What they bee
Made by thee
Fit her no good sight, keep them still.

("The Message")

Thus a close study of the development of the eye-image in the medieval and Renaissance poetry reveals that this imagery was much in vogue in troubadour and oriental poetry with rich associations and implications. In the poetry of Trobar Clus this was used with subtle and witty elements. The minor Elizabethan poets failed to use this image with its rich associations with the result that it became common and conventional expressing ordinary sentiments of love. Spenser is the first Elizabethan poet who attempts to associate this with the philosophical implication, but he too fails to restore its witty and dazzling association. In Shakespeare's poetry this image is seen with all its former associations, as he is able to use it with various rich meanings and implications. Donne, is the...
A poet who, while shaking off all common and conventional uses of the Elizabethan poetry, restores all its witty, subtle and metaphysical associations and makes it, once more, a powerful, significant, symbolical and essential imagery of love-poetry.
III. THE 'HISPANIC INTEGRALISM' AND DONNE

We notice two different streams of poetic tradition emerging in Europe in the medieval period. There is the simple expression of love in an uncomplicated elegance with no strain of wit or presence of passion. This kind of poetry, developed by some of the minor troubadours, continues to appear in Petrarch and other European poets. Simultaneously there emerges the consciously verbal and metaphorical expression of love in a complex, witty and allusive style. This type of poetry, known as Trobar Clus (Obscure), can be traced through Dante and major troubadours to the Arab-Spanish tradition of poetry in which the Hispano-Arabic poets came to achieve 'the consciousness of the whole Being' or what may be called the "Hispanic Integralism."

In England too the main poetic tradition is found to have developed in two different directions from the beginning of the sixteenth century. There is the same simple, direct, and mellifluous expression in the poetry of Surry, Suckling, and a host of other Elizabethan poets who may be connected with the trobar Clar (simple, clear) poetry of the early troubadours. There also appears poetry written in a complex, philosophical and highly metaphorical style which anticipates Metaphysical poetry. This tradition or line of wit is actually revived by Donne who, therefore, appears as the first exponent to serve as a link between the Arab-Spanish poets and the Metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century.
Although there is no evidence of direct contact between Donne and the Spanish tradition, various factors suggest many possibilities through which Donne might have been influenced by this tradition like many of his predecessors. What is remarkable, however, is the similar approach, the same style, and the similar use of the theme of love, that connects Donne with this witty, complex, and metaphorical expression of the Spanish and European stream of poetry.

II

Right from the eighth century poetry flourished in the Moerish Courts of Spain, and the earlier poets began to develop a new concept of love and woman. The new concept of woman actually was not born in al-Andalus, but imported from Baghdad. It was the creation of the poet Mā'īn Ibn Da'ud al Isfahami. His Persian extraction predisposed him to a school of mystical philosophy, which was born in the second half of the ninth century. Starting from the Platonic conception of love as a form of madness inflicted by Gods, unpredicted, irrational and inescapable, he devises a course of conduct based on a pre-Islamic legend of the Banu Udra, 53 (the son of virginity), who were an Arab tribe celebrated by the poets for their genius for unrequited love from which they suffered in a superlative degree and even died of its effects. This elevated ideal became so fashionable in Baghdad that its adaptors fabricated a tradition that the prophet had said, "who so loves and keeps chaste and dies, dies a martyr." Ibn Daud expounded the concept of Chaste love in The Books of the Flower consisting of 100 sections, each containing 100 lines.
Seventy years later, the doctrine was current in Spain and a well-known poet of Jaen, Ibn Faraj enriched the subject by composing an anthology called the 'Book of the Orchards.'

Thus in Moslem Spain, in the beginning of the eleventh century, there developed a new type of poetry along with a new verse technique, called mawashshah. By this time the famous poet Ibn Hazm had treated love with passion, complexity of conceits, and philosophical thoughts; with all these elements he added a novelty to the whole concept. About this idea of love her remarks:

They asked me my age, seeing white on temples. I said, after mature thoughts, 'I account I have lived one moment. To her who owns my heart, I gave a kiss one day, by surprise, However, many years I may endure, I have only lived that moment.'

With such concept and philosophical treatment given to the theme of love, much of Arab-Spanish poetry as well as the Spanish folk songs acquired new characteristics. As this new trend in Spanish poetry developed further, it not only influenced the growth and development of native Spanish poetry, but also the Provencal, and later, the main tradition of European poetry.

Hence from a comparison of these early muwashashah, in respect of their thought sequence and structure with the metrical forms, used by early troubadours, one can hardly doubt the fact, that the origin of Provencal ministrel is to be sought in Spanish folk songs. Indeed, contact between Spanish jongleurs and their Provencal confreres was frequent in those days. They lived the same
gypsy life and every Andalusian spoke Arabic and Romance Languages.

We have enough reason to believe that much of the lost earlier muwashshahah was as full of idealism and amor cortoix as the first Provencal lays. "After all," says Edwyth Hole in his book Poetry in the Arabic Spain, "the conception of chaste love was a Moslem invention, and was well established in Spain by the tenth century." 55

Commenting on the influence of Arabic poets on the Troubadours, J.B. Broadbent, in his book Poetic Love says:

The Arab Court poets sang of true love as the reunion of souls separated at creation. Indeed, for the Arabs the seat of goodness was reason, while the seat of love was the soul, imaginative faculty. This love could properly be felt for only one woman, and not for a married one... The poets of this love were numerous at the petty Hispano-Moorish Courts of the mid-eleventh century: they had commerce with Provence. 56

This fact can be established on the basis of history also. The first troubadour with a renowned name was Guillaume (born 1071), count of Poitiers and Duke of Aquitaine. His second wife was the princess of Spain. 57 From this it can be concluded that the early troubadours must be in contact with the courtly tradition and the established fashion of poetry existing in Spain during this period.

Round about the twelfth century, the impact of a new religion and a new philosophy on the Spanish culture produced altogether a different kind of literature, which
developed a new and more connotative concept of love. This happened particularly in the Catalonian part of Spain, where mysticism coloured by Islamic thought flourished. Catalonia was in contact with South France, Aragon, Castile, and Islamic world and this had important consequences in Catalonian culture. Raymond Lull, the only Hispano-Christian of international fame lived there in the thirteenth century.

Raymon Lull was influenced by the cult of sufism and he did not hesitate to acknowledge the similarity of his thought of sufistic mysticism. He distinctly recalls how, when he was an apostle, a Saracen once told him, that there were religious men among them. The most esteemed among the religious men were those called sufis. They spoke words of love and made use of parables, stimulating great poetry. In the 'Book of Lover and the Beloved' Lull says that he is following the examples of Sufis and is inspired by the sufistic models. This book is a mingling of the Neo-Platonic Christian tradition of divine love and Moslem mysticism.

III

During this period, a peculiar thing was happening in the Hispano-Arabic literature which had an impact on the native writers. In the literature of this time, religion and philosophy are closely interlaced. The latter does not depend upon an objective idea or upon intellectual cognition but on pure belief in faith and existence. This leads to an integralism of spirit and
Such an awareness of the condition of life and self made it necessary that the Moslem writer should merge his entire self into the outer things of the universe and should also associate all the things including woman in his realisation of the Divine. This in other words, may also be expressed as a state of intense fusion of the sensibility and reality into one perfect whole. Examples of this awareness and fusion of all the sensibilities may be found in the works of Avicenna, who makes such a reflection of the inner form of life and in mystics like Ibn Hazm (994-1064) and Ibn Arabi (1165-1240).60

In Ibn Arabi's works we have an extreme example of an ideal woman, a precursor of Beatrice and Laura, treated by combining the generic and timeless with the experience of the person in a specific time and place. All the subsequent writers following these writers of the twelfth century tried to attain the same awareness of the fusion of the outer with the inner, the timeless with the momentary and the generic with the specific, with the result that associations and symbols became the most important elements of literature. All this can be expressed in one term 'integralism.' For centuries love as a theme in
Arabic poetry, in particular, and in Spanish literature in general, became relational — it was the nexus between two persons, the pivot point from which the poet could realize the material and the spiritual, the individual and the generic. Without this sense of the relation, the sense of fusion and co-existence, it would be impossible to achieve integralism. The early Arabic poet, Ibn Hazm strikes the same relation, and in this relation he includes all the things of the universe:

The dew, the cloud and the scented orchard
Seemed our tears, our eyelids and her cheeks. 61

Similarly, in Ramon Lull, we have the same relational and allegorical treatment of love, which has been conceived in dramatic imagination. In his 'Book of Lover and the Beloved' we have a mingling of the Neo-Platonic Christian tradition of divine love and Moslem mysticism, seen for instance, in these lines:

The lover was lying on the couch of love; the sheets were made of pleasure; the coverlet of languor; the pillow of tears. One might wonder whether the cloth of the pillow was like that of the sheet and that of the coverlet. 62

We may examine the place of woman in Moslem society in this connection. Woman was certainly a piece of physiological reality in the Islamic Civilization, and the Moors in the beginning had quite a sensual and robust sense of love for woman. In fact, a common Moor could hardly rise above this natural sense of love. But it would be entirely wrong to say that woman was only a piece of physical reality for all time and for all people, for very soon the writers and the poets, influenced by the
mystics, felt that they should raise the Moorish love for woman above mere sensualism and should make her a symbol or an object of inspiration for divine love. This was chiefly done by the cult of sufism and thus there evolved a new kind of love poetry, with woman, at once a piece of physical reality and an object leading to the realization of the spiritual. As such the poet made attempts to fuse the physical in the spiritual with the result that a close synthesis of the sensation of the body and consciousness of the spirit may be noted in Arabic poetry, particularly in Ibn Faraj, a native of Jaen (Andalusia) in such lines:

She appeared without veil in the night
And the nocturnal shadows, lightened by her face,
Likewise at once lifted their veils
There was no look of hers in which there was not
Powers to make hearts leap.

The poet spends the whole night on the bed of pleasure and sex with the thoughts of divinity and finally says:

And so, I passed the night with her like the thirsty young camel whose muzzle keeps him from sucking
Like a flower garden, where for one like me
There is nothing to enjoy save sight and smell
For I am not like the abandoned beast who treats gardens
As if they were pastures.

Here love plays a significant and dramatic role and actually serves as a means for the poet to make the fusion of the different senses and finally enables him to achieve integralism — the most characteristic trait of this literature.
A close study of the Provencal poetry in the twelfth century reveals that it developed in two directions. First we have the *trobar clar*, (clear) which developed chiefly with the expression of simple love in uncomplicated elegance and with no pressure of passion, in a strain of mellifluity. Guilhalm de Castebanh and Berhant De Ventadorn (1150) wrote songs which reveal the simple elegant expression of love:

> When up the lark begins to run
> With joyous wing into the sun,
> Then, carefree in sweet bliss of heart
> Back again to each doth dart,
> Alas how envy strikes at me
> To see her fly so joyfully;
> Impossible, so sharp the ache
> My heart of longing not to break.64

This song may be noted for its melody and simplicity. It also reveals the development of the kind of the poetry which continued in the shape of what may be called the line of mellifluity right up to the sixteenth or seventeenth century.

Simultaneously there developed the *trobar clus* (obscure) poetry, in which we find the elements of the early Hispano-Arabic poetry and also the Hispanic concept of integralism expressing relational love. This may be called the line of wit. In Arnaud Daniel, whom both Dante and Petrarch admired as the most accomplished troubadour, we have this strain of wit in the consciously verbal and metaphorical expression of love. This corresponds to the French lyric known as *chanson courtois* distinguished from the more direct and conventional type of poetry known as *chanson populaire*.
Some of these lyrics, composed with a witty and passionate comprehension of love, seem to have been written by clerics of the medieval time, for they escape from conventionality and have some kind of novel or subtle verse form. As for instance, in the _Luve Ron_ (love-song) of Friar Thomas of Hales, we have a new treatment of the 'Ubi Sunt' theme:

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Hwer is Paris and Heleyne
That were so bryght and feyre on bleo?
Amaies and Ieyne,
Tristram, Ysyde and the theo?
Ector with his scharpe moyne,
And Cesar, riche of worldes foe?
He beoth iglyden ut of the reyne
So the sche is of the cleo. 65
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Another example of the blending of the theme of secular love with the theme of passion may be seen in the well-known fifteenth century song _Quia Amore Languo_. The poem with its expression of precise and delicate shades of feelings comes close to the poetry of the intellectual troubadours as well as that of the Spanish-Arab poets, as may be seen in these lines:

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In my side I have made her rest;
Look in, how sweet a wound is here!
This is her chamber, here shall she rest,
That she and I may sleep in fere.
Here may she wash, if any filth were;
Here is seat for all her woe;
Come when she wilt, she shall have cheer
_Cquia amore languo_. 66
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We have a few instances of such poems with subtle shades of feeling and metaphorical expressions of love in the early sixteenth century English poetry. In fact very few poets of this period are able to achieve the kind of integralism as seen in the Hispanic poetry. It is, however, Shakespeare, who occasionally rises to this:
height and writes poetry in which reappear the phrases, ideas and complex metaphorical expressions of the early Trebar Clus. The following lines from one of his sonnets afford a good example of this kind of integralism:

That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold
Bare ruined coirs, when late the sweet birds sang,

Here we have what may be called the line of wit which finally developed into Metaphysical poetry.

From the fourteenth to the sixteenth century it was chiefly the troubadour clar, that continued to be written particularly by poets like Surrey and Suckling. Even in Petrarch we do not find very much the line of wit, because he is chiefly concerned with expressing his simple thought and fresh and genuine emotion of love. In him we have what J.B. Broadbent says, "the high-pitched frustration of undefined desires, the cry in the night between puberty and adolescence, and this key note, "the voice of Petrarch", prevailed and the imitators of Petrarch continued to echo the same strain until the sixteenth century." Even Spenser, who has incorporated much of the Platonic love into his poetry, has failed to attain the absolute tension between wholeness and individualism, which energises love; he uses love as a ladder, not to make it philosophical but to purge it of sensuality. Spenser actually loses the entire effect of the relational value of love, because he is concerned primarily with using love puritanically. Hence most of the poets of the sixteenth century except Shakespeare
wrote of love as something happening inside themselves like Petrarch.

IV

Donne, is the first lyrical poet who once more revives the line of wit and the relational love, which appeared in the troubadour poetry of the Middle Ages. Moreover, he is the first English poet, who treats love very effectively as the nexus between two persons and, at the same time, tries to achieve a kind of integralism by showing the consciousness of the whole being through his poetry. In him, we have the awareness of the wholeness of spiritual life, and the blending of the generic with the specific.

It is interesting to note that Donne in his age found himself exactly in the same position as the Arab poet in Spain. For the Hispano-Arabic poet, there was no established order and convention, as he was in a strange world. So also Donne found that in his age the old established orders and beliefs were crumbling. There was a general collapse of all significance and the hierarchy; and the whole page of emblematic correspondences between old and new testaments, heaven and earth, and land and Sea, was torn up. Like the Arab in Spain, Donne as a poet found himself separated from time and order. He was, as it were, left with the "atom of his heart" caressing with himself and, like the early Arab poet, he too was anxious to achieve a kind of meaningful integration of the falling parts of the universe through his poetry. Further, he noticed that the chief cause of this collapse
of order was split individualism or the absence of the relational concept of love; for, to him, individuality destroys identity by asserting it without relationship:

This all in pieces, all coherence gone
All just supply and all relation;
Prince, subject, father, son, are things forgot,
For every alone thinks he has got
To be a phoenix and that can be
None of that kind of which he is.

Hence, giving up the intensely individual or personal concept of love, he comes to develop the kind of philosophical, complex, and relational love poetry through which he is also to achieve the total awareness or 'the consciousness of the whole being.'

Though it is difficult to establish definitely any direct influence of Spanish literature on Donne, the fact that he was aware of the main trends in this literature cannot altogether be denied. Besides some important facts do not rule out the possibility of Donne being in real contact with Spanish literature of his time.

Paul Morgan in 1963 has found a very valuable record which had gone unnoticed hitherto. He has discovered from the Library of Palliol, Oxford, a copy of the third edition of Lope de Vega's 'Rimas', a duodecima, printed at Madrid in 1613. On the flyleaf at the front of this copy is a short inscription which reveals that Leonard Digges, who had gone to Spain with his friend Mabbe, had sent this volume to one of his former pupils, named Will Baker. Digges made this inscription letting a fellow student know about the current literary vogue in Madrid and the great popularity of Lope de Vega. The note suggests that both Mabbe and
Digges were French and Spanish scholars and were in Madrid during this time. This discovery establishes the fact that there were great Spanish scholars in England in the Elizabethan age and that works of famous Spanish writers like Lope de Vega and others were well known to scholars and erudite writers.

Moreover, a clergyman and religious writer like Donne, who retired as Dean of St. Paul's, must have known and digested very well the life and works of St. Teresa, in whom we find the same awareness of "the consciousness of the whole being" and also an attempt to achieve the same kind of integralism which remained a dominant trait in Spanish literature. Besides, Donne was very well acquainted with Spanish language as he participated in the 1596 campaign and spent some time with Essex in the Azores. His follower Crashaw was also indebted to St. Francis de Sales and was influenced by Gongorism. Moreover, in his letters Donne reveals his full acquaintance with the Spanish authors and even uses many of the Spanish proverbs to express a particular idea. In fact in one of his letters he talks of his days in Spain and shows his interest in the farther East which he calls "the Land of perfumes and spices." 70

Above all, the Spanish poet who appears to have a great influence on Donne is Auzias March, (1397-1459) whose poetry finds many echoes in that of the former. "There is something," says Brenan, "unpleasantly hard and egoistic in March's character, as there was in Donne's." 71 What attracted Donne's attention to this
poet was that March was a deliberate and self-conscious artist. He set out to explain the secrets of love and give its mysteries to the world in a new style. He is never content with describing a feeling, but seeks always to analyse it and draw out its full psychological and metaphysical implications. It is this that makes him obscure. He is an intellectual poet, and the things he wants to say are not easily said, especially in the condensed idioms he uses. The most significant fact about his poetry is that he revives the *trobar clus* and thus keeps alive this strain in his poetry, to be picked up by mere intellectual poets of Europe like Donne. His own style is arid and abstract with bursts of clear and passionate expression; and he concedes nothing to ornament and rarely paints a picture. "One feels in his poetry," says Brenan, "the struggle of an artist to organise and express the violent and contradictory feelings that possessed him, but one also, I think, recognizes his deliberate choice of a life which should wring the last drop of poetry out of him." 72 Obviously, in a poet so close to him in temperament, concept of love, and the art of poetry, Donne must have found a good deal to suit his own poetic design.

Thus partly under the influence of the conditions of his age and partly under the influence of Spanish literature, we find in Donne's poetry, a treatment of love which aims at establishing a relation and also achieving a kind of spiritual wholeness embracing all the parts of the universe as belonging to one perfect whole. This treatment of love is at once intellectual,
witty, philosophical and this also relates the material with the spiritual, the specific with the generic and the profane with the religious. His poem 'The Good Morrow' is a good example of this kind of awareness. It is also intellectually conceived showing a tension between body and soul, passion and order and finally this leads to an awareness of the spiritual wholeness:

And now good morrow to our waking souls,
Which watch not one another out of fear;
For love, all love of other sights controls,
And makes one little room, an everywhere.
(The good Morrow')

We have here a part of larger consciousness or Being, recognizing, like St. Teresa, the Divine presence through physical sensations.

As has been pointed out earlier, in the Arabic as well as Arab-Spanish poetry, woman was treated as a being that radiates light and knowledge leading the way to a spiritual awareness on the part of the poet. To the famous poet Rumi woman is a manifestation of the divine light:

Woman is a ray of God, not a mere mistress,
The Creator's Self, as it were, not a mere creature. 73
("Woman")

The illuminated face of the beloved not only "doth teach the torch to burn bright," but becomes a torch itself:

The lovers who dwell within the sanctuary
Are moths burnt with the torch of the
Beloved's face,
O heart, haste Hither, for God will shine upon you,
And seem to you a sweet garden instead of a terror. 74
("The Beloved Compared to a Sweet Garden.")
In the Eastern poetry, therefore, the mistress, is associated with the shining light of the celestial bodies to dispel the darkness of the world:

Where her Yusuf-like face shines as a moon,
Though it be the bottom of a well, 'tis paradise.
With thee, my love, hell itself were heaven
With thee a prison would be a rose-garden. 75
("Where Love Is")

Here is a woman who becomes a wonder whose unveiled brightness dispels the darkness of the darkest place and the fear of hell. Three centuries before Dante was born there was poetry to say that "the nocturnal shadows, lifted their veils," lightened by the radiance of a human being's beauty. 76

Centuries after such expressions once again occur in the poetry of Donne to whom the radiating rays from the eyes of his mistress are strong enough to blind the sun:

If her eyes have not blinded thine
Look, and to-morrow late, tell me,
Whether both the 'India's of spice and Myne
Be where thou leftst them or lie here with mee.
("The Sun Rising")

The poem 'The Sun Rising' also shows the same kind of fusion of all the objects and the entire universe is reduced to his world of love in such lines as:

She is all states, and all princess, I;
Nothing else is . . .
This bed thy centre is, these walls thy, sphere:
("The Sun Rising")

These lines remind us of Ibn Hazm who also telescopes all the objects of the universe into one whole Being in such lines as:
The famous compass image of Donne revealing the domination of the intellect as also the dramatic treatment of love has also its parallel in the poetry of Ibn Hazm:

My eyes cling to you wherever you go
As the adjective follows the noun.

Here the two lovers are enlaced like 'Alif' and 'Lam'

These images also have, besides presenting the physical picture, spiritual significance, for the two alphabets 'Alif' and 'Lam' are the two important attributes of God and stand as two constant symbols in the Holy Koran, shrouded with all the mystery of Divine Creation.

His poem 'The Ecstasy' reveals the attempt of the poet to identify love, the condition of the lovers, and the way they come to self-knowledge:

We then, who are the new souls, know
Of what we are composed and made.

And in the Eastern poet we have the same self-knowledge of the lovers in their tranced unity as in the following lines:

Thou and I, individual more, Shall be mingled in ecstasy,
Joyful, and secure from foolish babble,
Thou and I,
All the bright plumed birds of heaven will devour their hearts with envy.
In the place where we shall laugh in such a fashion. 77

This is also seen in the great Spanish poet Ramon Lull, who makes the same relational and symbolical treatment of love in the following lines:
The Beloved dressed his lover — gown, coat of mail, and kilt; he made him a seat of love, shirt of thoughts, house of tribulations and a garland of weeping.

Here is a plastic integralism of spirit and matter, divinity and humanity. 78 Similarly, in "The Ecstasy," the lovers' one soul united with one body are emblems of God taking on the flesh. Here we find Donne involved in echoing a consciousness of the whole of Being and achieving a kind of integralism through love, which is unique and new for English Poetry.

This is again to be found, though in a different way in another poem in which Donne achieves the same fusion and the integral concept of human life, senses, thoughts, matter and spirit:

She, of whose soul, if we say it was gold,
Her body was the electrum, and did hold
Many degrees of that; we understood
Her by her sight: her pure and eloquent blood
Spoke in her cheeks, and so distinctly wrought
That one might almost say, her body thought
("Second Anniversary")

Here one can see Donne coming close to the consciousness of the 'whole being;' in these lines he visualises a human being ultimately turning into a psychosomatic whole like an angel and thereby he comes close to the awareness of 'the whole being' and 'Integralism.' Moreover, the expression "A shirt of thoughts," used by the Spanish poet Ramon is in no way farther from Donne's expression, "her body thought," and the meaning implied in these expressions shows a close affinity between the Arab-Spanish love poets and Donne.
Mystical Elements in the Poetry of Donne

In his love poems Donne attempts at 'spiritualizing' earthly love by introducing mystical elements, such as, the immortality of the soul and the eternal bliss of the lovers. But we notice a more prominent note of mysticism in his divine poems. While keeping his religious poetry close to ascetic theology, he maintains therein a tone and expresses a form of devotion which appear to refer them to medieval theories associated with the kind of mysticism, which was usually known as Neoplatonic.

It is generally believed that Augustine, Ambrose, and Jerome of the fifth century A.D. introduced the doctrines of Plato and Plotinus to the Latin world. Those Latin doctors were actually responsible for sowing the seeds of what may be called the Christian mystical thoughts, in the West. Augustine's religious criticism, Ambrose's dramatization of chastity, and Jerome's fierce satire of sexual appetite in women were well-known to the people of the Renaissance. Actually the editions of their works by Erasmus had acquainted the people of the sixteenth century with Augustine, Ambrose, and Jerome.

Donne was not only familiar with these texts, he made deep studies of the views of these doctors. Besides, he had in his library many books dealing with mystical doctrines like the Rules of St. Benedict and St. Francis, De Vita Cartusiana, the writings of Tertulian and Cyprian, the life of the Blessed Aloysius Gonzagar the Jesuit, Greccelius and many others. From all these Donne must have picked up a good deal of mystical thoughts.
When the Renaissance and Humanism opened a new epoch in the history of human thought, other great mystics appeared on the scene. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries produced such great mystics as St. Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556), St. Teresa (1515-1582), St. John of the Cross (1542-1591), and Jacob Boehme (1573-1624). This created a favourable atmosphere for those sensitive persons who were interested in taking to ascetic orders. In the seventeenth century the religious ferment and the ardour of devotional life in England turned the minds of persons like George Fox (1574-1690), Gertrude More (1606-1633), Augustine Baker (1575-1641) to mysticism. The religious life of the century had also its influence on poets like John Donne, G. Herbert, Richard Crashaw, Henry Vaughan, T. Treherne, and Henry More.

As the leader and master of all these poets, Donne digested the different texts dealing with mysticism and came to notice a discriminating difference between NeoPlatonism which was the chief source of Christian mysticism, and Eastern mysticism which was based on basic principles of Moslem ascetic concepts. This had influence on the Southern region of Europe through Arabs, Jews, and Spaniards who acted as the chief agent in transmitting eastern concepts and ideals to the West in the early Middle Ages. A dispassionate and objective analysis of the religious poetry of Donne reveals that he is closer to the mystical poetry of the East than to the NeoPlatonic concept of the West.
A brief examination of the ideas of the Neo-Platonists vis-a-vis those of the eastern mystics will make this clear. The Neo-Platonists believed in the Supreme God as the source of all things. Self-existent, it generates from itself. Creation is the reflection of its own Being. Nature, therefore, is permeated with God. Matter is essentially non-existent — it is a temporary and ever moving shadow of the Divine. They also believed that by ecstasy and contemplation of the All-Good, man would rise to the source from where he came. These beliefs are similar to the Sufi teaching. The Sufis too elaborated these ideas, gave them a rich and beautiful setting, and, what is all important, built on them one of the most interesting genres of mystical poetry the world has even known. It is in this respect that Sufism comes close to Neo-Platonism.

But there is a basic difference between the oriental mystical concept and the western Neo-Platonism. The Neo-Platonist's conception of God is purely abstract, the Sufi's essentially personal, particularly so far as the early Sufis are concerned.

Of course, in both the cults we have the importance of ecstasy which is valued both by the Greek and the oriental philosophers. A letter from Plotinus to Flaccus on Ecstasy gives us an idea of the Neo-Platonic views on this subject:

The wise man recognises the idea of Good within him. This he develops by withdraw into the Holy place of his own, soul. He who does not understand how the soul contains the Beautiful within itself, seeks to realise beauty without, by laborious production. His aim should rather be to concentrate and simplify, and to.
expand his being; instead of going out into the Manifold, to forsake it for the One, and so to float upwards towards the Divine Fount of Being whose stream flows within him. 

The same doctrine has been conceived, and practised by the Oriental mystic though it has been expressed in a very personal and concrete manner:

His beauty everywhere doth show itself
And through the forms of earthly beauties shines
Obscured as through a veil ...
Where'er thou seest a veil,
Beneath that veil he hides whatever heart
Doth yield to love, He charms it. In his love
The heart hath life. Longing for Him, the soul Hath victory. 

This has been expressed in a still more intensely personal manner by al-Hallaj:

Betwixt me and Thee there lingers an 'it is I' that torments me.
Ah, Of Thy grace, take away this 'I'
from between us:
I am He whom I love, and He whom I love is I,
We are two spirits dwelling in one body.
If thou seest me, thou seest Him,
And if thou seest Him, thou seest us both. 

The intimacy and the tenderness, the conversational tone and the imploring sensibility of these lines are not to be found in the entire bulk of mystical poetry of the Middle Ages in the West. It appears, however, in a startling way in the poetry of Donne, who moreover, makes this kind of poetry more natural and close to life. Before we proceed to make a comparative study of Donne's poetry and the Oriental mystical poetry, it is necessary to investigate into the kind and nature of religious poetry that existed in England in the medieval and even in the Renaissance until Donne came to change its tone and mode of expression.
Medieval English poetry, which is chiefly didactic and religious, has neither any trait of originality nor any touch of personality. Mr. Grierson gives an idea of this poetry and its impact in these words:

English medieval poetry is often gravely pious, haunted by the fear of death and judgement, melancholy over the 'Fall of princes;' it is never serious, and thoughtful in the introspective, reflective, dignified manner which it became in Wyatt and Sackville, and our 'Sage and Serious' Spenser, and in the songs of the first group of Elizabethan courtly poets, Sidney and Raleigh and Dyer. Although these poets did their best to give a distinct personal touch, they could not attain a higher standard in that field of religious poetry. Commenting on this, Grierson says:

English religious poetry after the Reformation was a long time in revealing distinctive note of its own. Here as elsewhere, Protestant poetry took the shape mainly of Biblical paraphrases or dull moralizings less impressive and sombre than the Poema Morale of an earlier century.

Even the religious poetry of Du Bartas, which the Elizabethan religious poets imitated and the poetry of Robert Southwell do not show much of originality and personal tenderness. Grierson finds in this poetry 'antithetic' 'conceited' and 'passionate' style, but he does not appear to be correct in his assessment. In spite of the fact that the English Catholic poets followed the Italians on religious themes, they could not go beyond the limitations that the age imposed on them. In A Survey of Literature from Donne to Marvell R.G. Cox comes to a more correct assessment of the religious poetry of the sixteenth century in contrast to that of the seventeenth century. He observes:
In its remarkable development of religious poetry the seventeenth century forms a striking contrast with the previous age which has little to show in this field. An exception must be made for the poetry of the Jesuit martyr Robert Southwell (c. 1561–96) which shows an odd mingling of the earlier, more naive Elizabethan rhetoric and the counter reformation ardour, sensuousness and love of paradox. If Catholic poets tended to look to Italian models, protestants found theirs to some extent in Joshua Sylvester’s translation of the didactic and encyclopaedic works of the Huguenot poet Du Bartas, which appeared during the fifteen nineties; but there was no doctrinal exclusiveness, and the strains often mingle. Much religious poetry of this period was affected by the vogue of books of ‘emblems’ sets of allegorical pictures each accompanied by verses expounding in its moral. 84

One thing is conspicuously absent in the religious poetry of the sixteenth century — the intensely personal touch.

Such being the picture of the poetry of the previous age, one can easily come to the finding that Donne is the first English poet to introduce the intensely personal tone in the seventeenth century, as Grierson has assessed:

It is in Donne’s poems, The Crosse, The Annuntiation and Passion, The Litanie that the Catholic tradition which survived in the Anglican Church becomes articulate in poetry; and in his sonnets and hymns that English religious poetry becomes for the first time intensely personal, the record of the experiences and aspirations, not of the Christian as such merely, but of one troubled and tormented soul. 85

Grierson makes a very significant statement here: Far from being the experiences of a Christian, they are those of a human — one who belongs to the cult of the common brother-hood as found in the Franciscan Movement with its message of Freedom and Love. Moreover by laying emphasis on the individual approach to God and establishing
a personal relationship with the Deity, Donne had actually come to universalize the religious experience of man—a feature that was not only lacking in the English religious poetry but also in that of Italy and France. On the other hand, Donne, in his concept of man in relation to God, comes close to the Oriental mystic philosophy which influenced many such Spanish poets like Ramon Lull and others.

Apart from the intensely personal touch and universality of man's relationship with God that Donne adds to the poetry of his age, there are other features which make a striking contrast with the poetry of the previous age, and significantly enough, in all these features, Donne appears to have links with the religious poetry of Spain that developed in the beginning under the influence of Oriental mystical poetry.

The development of Oriental Mysticism in the line of Western Christian ascetic cult and its impact on Western philosophers and poets like Dante and others have already been discussed in an earlier chapter (vide Chapter V). Orthodox Mohammedanism like Roman Catholicism was not in favour of allowing the belief that there is in man an element which, being cultivated, will bring about the fusion of individual soul with the Divinity. But it was precisely this potential union of Creator and Creature that was being implied in the erotic-religious language of Arab mystic poetry. The symbolism employed by the poets caused them accordingly to be accused of holding a
disguised Manichaeism and the charge cost al-Hallj
and Shurawardi their lives. There is something poignant
in the discovery that the grounds of the controversy are
those which reappear in the case of the troubadours, and
later, in the case of the great western mystics from
Meister Eckhart to John of the Cress.

The chief Arabic mystic poets who gave vogue to
the expression of their doctrine in poetry was
Ibnu'l-Arabi of the thirteenth century. In his poetry
as well as philosophy he came very close to Christianity
as he applied the word Kalima, both to Jesus and Mohammad,
though not exclusively to them. To him the perfect man
represents God in relation to the World. Moreover
Ibnu'l-Arabi, comes still closer to the Christian doctrine
of brotherhood when he believes that the popular adoration
of the prophet and the saints is but one of the many forms
of belief in which God reveals himself. The true mystic,
he says, will find Him in all religions:

My heart is capable of every form:
A cloister for the monk, a fence idols,
A pasture for gazelles, the vetary's Ka'ba,
The Tables of Terah, the Koran,
Love is the Faith I held: wherever turn
His camels, still the one true Faith is mine.

Born at Murcia in Spain, Ibnu'l-Arabi had a great
influence on the western poets and philosophers. Ramon
Lull, one of the important mystic poets of Spain, was
greatly influenced by Ibnu'l-Arabi. Under his influence
Ramon Lull writes a kind of poetry which strikes altogether
a new note: the musical quality of the imagery evokes
Galician poetry and the simplicity suggests the Flowers of
St. Francis. Besides the influence of Ibnu'l-Arabi, there
also may be discerned the influence of another famous Oriental mystic from whom the Spanish poet derives a peculiar overtone. Brenan makes a clear record of the oriental influence on this western poet;

One will see, I think, where this comes from if one opens the diwan of Jalalu'ddin Rumi, the great Persian Sufi poet, who lived in the same century. Ramon Lull knew Arabic much better than he knew Latin and was well versed in Sufi philosophers, such as, the Murcian, Ibn'l-Arabi; he often speaks with admiration of their devotional practices and indeed he tells us that he wrote this book in the 'Sufi manner.' Its coloured, allusive style, tender mode of feeling and pantheistic mysticism all breathe the spirit of the Persian East. 87

This strain is carried in a different way in the poetry of Ausias March in the fifteenth century. Although March does not show directly the cult of mysticism in his poetry, his poems are the expression of an intense and agonised search for pure and spiritual love in the person of an actual woman. His love poetry, therefore, is of an original kind—psychological, introspective, perversely tormented so that one finds it hard to believe that it was written in the Middle Ages. He conceived a pure and ideal form of love without any taint of sensual feeling and yet his own nature and that of his lady were continually drawing them towards what he wished to avoid. There is in him also a complexity of thought and a depth of feeling that one does not find in earlier Spanish poetry other than the poetry written by the mystic poets like Ramon Lull. In other words, in his treatment and mode of the expression of his poignant feelings, March is to be regarded as the Spanish poet who keeps up the tradition of the mystical expressions in Spain as started by the Arab poets and
followed by such mystic poets as Ramon Lull.

Another person who keeps up the tradition of mystical expression in poetry in Spain is certainly St. Teresa. It has been correctly held that the nearest thing to the mystical experience expressed in the form of literature would be St. Teresa's life rather than the confession of St. Augustine. Not only does she recognise, like the Arab mystic, the Divine presence through physical sensations, but like the Spanish-Arab mystic Ibn'l-Arabi she shows the total awareness of the whole being. In fact she significantly contributed to the literature of Christian Spain by describing the formation of her own spiritual personality and by revealing how her readings and her confessions influenced her. Yet, such phenomenon had very frequently taken place in Islamic literature centuries before the Romanic writers started writing on these lines. She too appears to make a synthesis of the Oriental and the Western mystical thoughts in an introspective and searching manner. She had an unusual psychological interest which would make us place her beside Montaigne as one of the earliest explorers of the human personality. In the words of Brenan, "In a general way we may say of the Spanish mystics of this age that they were the pioneers of the deeper levels of psychology that border on the unconscious." 88

Another Spanish Mystical poet who made a significant contribution to the poetry of mysticism in the sixteenth century Spain is St. John of Cross, who was also a friar of the Caermelite order. St. John uses the language of symbols
to express the experiences of mysticism and like the earlier Arab and Spanish predecessors he too adds an intensely personal touch in his poetry:

Our bed; in roses laid,
Patrols of lions ranging all round;
Of royal purple made,
Pitched on helcyon ground
With blazonry of golden bucklers crowned.

Shown deeper than before
In cellars of my love I drank; from there
Went wandering on the moor;
Knew nothing I felt no care;
The sheep I tended once are who knows where?

Forever at his deer
I gave my heart and soul, my fortune too,
No other work in view
My occupation; love, It's all I do

If I am not seen again
In the old places, on the village ground,
Say of me: lost of men.
Say I am adventured bound
For love's sake Lost (on purpose) to be found.

The intimacy of love and the feeling of oneness with the Divine self, immediately remind us of the personal touch of another renowned Oriental mystic who expresses the same feeling of love and oneness with God:

I am intoxicated with love's Cup, the two worlds have passed out of my ken;
I have no business save carouse and revelry
If I once in my life spent a moment without thee
From that time and from that hour I repent of my life. 90

It is perhaps for this great quality of the verse of St. John that John Frederick quotes Lorca who thus comments on the poetry of St. John:

The Muse of Gengora and the Angel of Garcilaso must yield up the laurel wreath when the Dueño de St. John of the cross passes by ... The poet who embarks on the creation of the poems, begins with the aimless sensation of a hunter about to embark on a night-hunt through the remotest of the forests. Unaccountable dread stirs his heart. 91
Commenting on St. John's art of fusing the two worlds, Lorca further says:

Metaphor links two antagonistic worlds by an equestrian leap of imagination. St. John of the Cross had to link the very extremes of being by expressing the highest in terms of the lowest, the todo in terms of the nada. Images to express the ineffable must be taken from the physical world and accommodated to the five slant gratings by way of which comes all we know. 92

St. John in his poem expresses a profound sense of happiness and joy at the very idea of union with the Divine through love — a concept that has inspired all the great mystics to ecstasy:

O living flame of love;
how soothing you wound my soul in that profoundity and centre you once made chaos of;
Only consume it soon tearing the veil away in love's encounter.

Oh how serene, how loving here in my hidden breast waking in crannies you are master of; with your affectionate breathing all health and heavenly rest how delicately I am caught fire with love.93

Here we notice a desire for union, a longing for the complete obliteration of the self in the Divine Presence, which immediately reminds of the intense desire for union by the Oriental mystic Rumi:

Show thy face, for I desire the orchard and the rose, garden;
Ope Thy lips, for I desire sugar in plenty, 0 sun, show forth Thy face from the veil of cloud.
For I desire that radiant glowing countenance.94

St. John, perhaps is the only mystical poet of the West whose poetry appears to be steeped in the Oriental concept of mystical union as well as the oriental mode of expression chiefly in respect of its personal touch and
intensity of desire. The poetry of St. John of Cross thus introduces most of the salient features of Eastern poetry into the poetry of the sixteenth century Spain. It buttressed the tradition of the mystical poetical expression that started in Spain under the influence of Arab philosophers and mystics in the twelfth century and was developed by various mystic poets till the time of Renaissance.

II

The religious poetry of Donne can be traced back, through such mystic poets as St. John of Cross, St. Teresa, Auzias March and Ramon Llull, to the Spanish poetry that started under the influence of Oriental or Arab mystical poets. From the beginning Donne was carefully and religiously educated and after some years, he visited Italy and Spain, as Mr. Grierson records, "mere probably with a view to the priesthood." Obviously during his reading of works on theology and religious nature Donne must have digested very well the various works of such renowned Spanish mystic poets as Ramon Llull, St. Teresa, St. John of Cross and even the works of earlier Spanish poets who had written very much under the influence of their contemporaries, the Spanish-Arab writers. Even after this period, there is evidence that he once again visited Spain when he joined the band of reckless and carefree young men who sailed with Essex to Cadiz and the Islands. All these factors leave no room for doubt regarding Donne's acquaintance with Spanish language and literature.
By the time Donne came to write, the conflict between the spirit and the senses had come to a climax. The excessive claims of bodily pleasures threatened to throw all attempts of maintaining a balance between the body and the soul. The vision of the universe was likely to become a split one and the Renaissance writers were well aware of this situation. Mourges presents a vivid picture of this state of affairs:

The hero of Jacobean drama is often torn between a horror of life and a terror of death. So is perhaps the Picaro, the hero of the Spanish novel at the end of the sixteenth century. Renaissance humanism had relied on Nature and reason to make man a harmonious whole. But the age of geographical discoveries had become an age of more upsetting explorations of the mind by itself. St. Teresa's autobiographies and Montaigne's essays had found disturbing recesses in human personality; they had passed the frontier which separate the conscious from the subconscious mind. Montaigne especially had shown our psychic life as threateningly elusive, ever moving, ever-changing flow, and baroque sensibility vacillated at times over dark rivers ... Uncertainty became distrust: the dry stiff distrust of the politician and the courtier, which stands out in Bacon's essays or in the works of the Spaniard, Gracian. 96

Mourges further observes:

The Renaissance poets, like Ronsard had with patience and love tried to build up the cosmos into a harmonious whole, where nature's eternal laws ruled in magnificent hierarchy the rose, Man, and the stars. But now the sense of proportion vanished. The giddy imagination is attracted by the colossal, the limitless Continental poets like d'Aubigne, wander like roaring giants in interplanetary spaces hurling down stars and suns. The sense of disaster pervading the period had to take apocalyptic proportions, and one of the favourite themes of late Renaissance poetry is that of the last Judgment. 97
Such being the condition of his age, Donne finds that his chief aim in writing religious poetry should be to resolve the conflict between the spirit and the senses, build up the theme of his own relationship with God, and demonstrate resemblances between the love of woman and the love of God; for, he thought, with the achievements of these, man could save himself from complete disillusionment.

In his religious poetry Donne turns to such Christian mystics as St. Ignatius Loyola, and other Jesuits who made an attempt to enlist the senses in the service of God. Here he appears to be under greater influence of St. John of the Cross; this can be seen from a comparison of the following two poems:

The Wayfaring virgin
Word in her womb,
Comes walking your way-
Haven't you room? 98

(St. John of the Cross)

Donne expresses the same idea, i.e., his desire to enter the Divine kingdom in a different way:

Since I am coming to that Holy roome,
Where, with thy Quire of Saints for evermore,
I shall be made thy Musique; As I come
I tune the instrument here at the doore.
And what I must doe then, thinke here before. 99

But it seems Donne is unable to find a perfect synthesis for the conflicting elements. The fusion of the spirit and senses in the mysticism of St. John of the Cross in whom the balance between the body and the spirit is rather tilted more in favour of the spirit does not satisfy him. Donne who is unable to ignore the flesh.

"Spanish mysticism" points out Mourges, "was still soaring on those supreme heights which St. John of the Cross had
reached, where, all material life annihilated, the soul rejoices in a luminous void." Hence, although he derives much from the mysticism of St. John, he makes further studies of the Spanish authors to find out the truth regarding Divinity and the ground that offers for the fusion of the material and the spiritual worlds. He is chiefly concerned with the problem of finding out truth in Divinity in the works of Spanish authors as he himself has expressed in his letter to Lord the Marquis of Buckingham:

I can thus far make myself believe, that I am where your Lordship is, in Spaine, that in my poore Library, where indeed I am, I can turn mine Eye towards noselfe, in any profession, from the Mistress of my youth, poetry, to the wyfe of mine age, Divinity, but that I meet more authors of that nation than any other. Their authors in Divinity, though they do not show us the best way to heaven, yet they thinke they doe, and se, though they say not true, yet they do not ly, because they speak their conscience.

Obviously, Donne is not satisfied with the Spanish theologians and their analysis of the truth, for they appear to rely mere on intellect and philosophy than mystical apprehension of truth; as such in his questioning search for the fusion of truth and beauty he goes further back to the Spanish mystical poets like Ramon Llull and through him to the Arab-Spanish poets of the thirteenth century who influenced, as has been already discussed, many of the western thinkers and poets including Dante. In fact it is with the help of the mystical poets that he is able to identify the 'mistress of my youth' with 'the wyfe of mine age.' The eastern concept of mysticism presented in the works of Ramon Lull, helps Donne in his
attempt to realise the presence of the living God in the soul and in nature, both through thought and feeling, the immanence of the temporal in the eternal, and of the eternal in the temporal.

This view was actually first propounded in Europe by the Spanish poet Ibn'l-Arabi, known as the rite of Existentialist Monism, consisting of the belief in one existence and the aspects of the universe as its radiations. Some of the Oriental mystics had developed their creed on the basis of the transcendent spiritual experience of man, reaching the stage of annihilation of the individual entity of man in the only one and Supreme Being, or God. This conception of the unity of the existence, of monoism, was considered, for some time, anti-Islamic and anarchistic in relation to the religious and political order of the society.

But this creed was just the faith that was very much needed by a man of the late Renaissance age which was torn by many kinds of conflicts, chiefly the conflicts between the body and the spirit. This was, therefore, the chief creed that brings Donne so close to the Oriental mysticism; for, with this concept, Donne, like all the mystics in all ages, comes to believe that the problem of the knowledge of God could not be solved through reason, intellect, and philosophy and that the comprehension of reality could not be attained except after a long exercise of "sense and spirit" resulting in illumination. Thus he not only outlived the scepticism of his youth, but also the rational element
in the philosophy of St. Thomas and thereafter became a mystic. His mysticism, therefore, in spite of his interest in philosophy and 'controverted divinity' is independent of rational philosophy; he is mainly interested in the practical, devotional, and empirical side of mysticism and the attainment of illumination after passing through all the conflicts of the matter and the spirit.

When we turn to make a comparative study of Donne's divine poems and those of Spanish, the earlier Arab-Spanish and even the eastern mystics of the early medieval time, we are immediately struck by the close resemblances and similarities in the concepts as well as the modes of expressions. Donne appears to have undergone the same kind of self-scrutiny and self-mortification as many of the Oriental mystic poets -- Al-Ghazali's experiences of self-searching, for instance, make him appear as almost a man of the Renaissance:

From my early youth, since I attained the age of puberty before I was twenty, until the present time when I am ever fifty I have ever recklessly launched out into the midst of these ocean depths; I have ever bravely embarked on this open sea, throwing aside all craven caution; I have poked into every dark recess; I have tried to lay bare the inmost doctrines of every community. All this have I done that I might distinguish between true and false, between sound tradition and heretical innovation. 102

This is the kind of a search for truth, and self-introspection for sifting the seeds of the real from the false which may be found in such seekers of Divine Truth as Ramon Lull, St. Teresa, St. Ignatius Loyola and even in Renaissance men like Montaigne, and
others. But this passage finds a close echo in many of
Donne's letters in which, he too makes a self-introspection,
a search after the truth that would deliver him from
vanity and error:

Everything refreshes, and I wither, and I
grow older and not better, my strength
diminishes, and my load grows, and being
to pass more and more storms, I finde that
I have only cast out all MY BLAST WHICH
NATURE AND TIME GIVES; Reason and descretion,
and so am riddingly subject to two contrary
wrackes, Sinking and Oversetting, and under
the iniquity of such a disease as inforces
the patient when he is almost starved, not
only to fast, but to purge. For I have
much to take in, and much to cast out;
sometimes I think it easier to change myself
of vice than vanity, as one may sooner carry
the fire out of a room than the smoke, and
then I see it was a new vanity to think so. 103

Although Donne deals with a different theme, the
tone, the analysis of the self and the search for reality
are almost the same. Proceeding in his search for the
real truth, Al-Ghazali finds that man can never be
dogmatic as the reality is illusive:

I proceed therefore with extreme
earnestness to reflect on sense-perception
and on necessary truths, to see whether I
could make myself doubt them. The outcome
of this protracted effort to induce doubt
was that I could no longer trust
sense-perception either. Doubt began to
spread here and say: 'From where does this
reliance on sense perception come? 104

What we find here is the sense of scepticism of
the poet regarding the finality of things and the reality,
which illude him. The same sense of scepticism, the
illusive nature of the things of life Donne expresses
while talking of vanity:
And when I think sometimes that vanity because it is thin and airy, may be expelled with virtue or businesses, or substantially vice; I find that I give entrance thereby to new vices. 105

In other words, a good deal of the echoes of the scepticism, the quest for truth, and the self-introspection of the oriental mystics may be seen in various letters of Donne, who has undergone almost the same kind of experience as these mystics.

In his Divine poems, therefore, we have many, many echoes of Oriental mystical poetry. As has been adequately discussed, Donne is the first poet of the seventeenth century to introduce an intensely personal note in his religious poetry.

Thou hast made me, And shall thy work decay? Repaire me now, for now mine and death haste, I run to death, and death meets me as fast, And all my pleasures are like yesterday: I dare not move my divine eyes any way,

Onely thou are above, and when towards thee By thy leave I can looke, I rise again. 106

Such a personal note, expressed in such an intimate tone and with such faith and confidence, is not found in the religious poetry of England in the Middle Ages; but this very tone, the same kind of personal touch is very much present in the poetry of the mystics of the East:

Thee I choose, of all the world lone; Wilt thou suffer me to sit in grief? My heart is as a pen in thy hand, Though art the cause if I am glad or melancholy. What will have I?

Save what thou showest, What do I see? Thou mak'st grow out of me now a thorn and now a rose;

Now I smell roses and now I pull thorns. 107
An Eastern mystic like Rumi expresses in a dramatic tone with the play of speech rhythm his passionate desire to overcome separation and come closer to God:

Nothing is bitterer than Severance from thee,
Without thy Shelter there is nought but perplexity
Our worldly goods rob us of our heavenly goods,
Our body rends the garment of our soul
Our hands, as it were, prey on our feet;
Without reliance on Thee how can we live? 108

The same theme of the fear of separation from God and the same echo of the passionate desire to come close to the Divine presence have been expressed by Donne in a similar dramatic love and speech rhythm:

Yet dearely I love you,
and would be loved faine,
But am betroth'd unto your enimie:
Divorce me, untie, or breake that knot againe,
Take me to you, imprison mee, for I
Except you' enthrall mee,
never shall be free,
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish mee. 109

In the Oriental mystic we have an argumentative style set against the verse pattern with a kind of dialectical subtlety which is unique and novel;

O, soul, if thou, too wouldst be free,
Then love the love that shuts thee in,
This love that twisteth every snare;
Tis Love that snaps the bond of sin. 110

Donne too offers the same kind of advice to the soul in a similar, argumentative and subtle manner with images that add a novelty to his religious poetry:

Wilt thou love God, as he thee? then digest
My Seule, this whole some meditation,
How God the Spirit, by Angels waited on
In heaven, doth make his Temple in thy breast.
One of the significant features of the Oriental mystical poetry is the element of wit that adds a dazzling brilliance to the entire expression. Often, the entire theme is conceived in a metaphorical way and expressed in the most witty manner. This may be seen in the poetry of Rumi:

I am one colour with Thy Love,  
I am a Partner of Thy affection  
In the house of water and clay this heart  
is desolate without Thee;  
O Beloved, enter the house,  
or I will leave it.  

No poet of the seventeenth century shows as much concern as Donne for applying the metaphysical wit to his religious poetry. An erudite poet as he was, he had a great admiration for all the intellectual persons of the medieval times including some of the renowned Eastern philosophers. Edmund Gosse has, therefore, pointed out how 'Donne even speaks with reverence of the deep searching but heretical wit of Averroes whom he calls a very subtle but very deep wit.' Needless to say, that Donne's application of the metaphysical wit is as varied in his religious subjects as in the love poems. In the same metaphor of colour he expresses his passionate desire in the most witty style:

Oh make thy selfe with holy mourning blacke  
And red with blushing, as thou art with sinne;  
Or wash thee in Christs blood, which hath  
this might  
That being red, it dyes red soules to white.  

The thirteenth-Century Spanish-Arab mystic poet Ibn'1-Arabi developed his basic principle of love as the way to the truth based on the ethical principle of love of mankind and tolerance towards all other communities.
He proclaimed that it is the unique light of the same truth which burns in a mosque, in a church, or in a temple. This concept is called the 'Total peace' that makes man belong to one circle of humanity in a spirit of love, barring all racial, religious, political and geographical differences:

My heart takes different shapes:
A cloister of Christian monks
A temple of idols, a meadow for gazelles,
The Kaaba of pilgrims, the tables of Thora,
The Koran . . .
Love is my credo wherever turn this camels
Love is my credo and my faith. 115

Another Oriental mystic poet Rumi expresses the same concept in a different way:

I am not of the empyream, nor of the dust,
nor of existence, nor of entity
I am not of India, nor of China, nor of Bulgaria, nor of Saqsin;
I am not of the Kingdom of Iraqlain,
nor of the countrv of Khorasan
I am not of this world, nor of the next,
nor of paradise nor of Hell;
I am not of Adam, nor of Eve,
nor of Eden and Rizwan
My place is the placeless,
My trace is the traceless,
His neither body nor soul,
for I belong to the soul of the Beloved.116

This concept of the 'Total peace' or the concept of the Oneness of love that dissolves all kinds of earthly and religious barriers is also to be found in the religious poetry of Donne. With his characteristic scepticism Donne pulls down all the barriers that separate mankind:

Is the Pacifique sea my home? or are
The Eastern riches? Is Jerusalem?
Anyan, and Magellan, and Gibraltar,
All straights, and none but straights,
are weyes to them,
Whether where Japhet dwelt, or Chain or Sem,
We think that Paradise and Calvarie,
Christ's Cross or Adam's tre, stood in one place;
Look Lord, and find both Adam's unit in me,
As the first Adam sweet surrounds my face,
May the last Adam bled my soul embrace. 117
The Sufi poets were chiefly known for their rejection of narrow theological doctrines, their scepticism in regards to the fanatic concept of Islam and their belief in the Supreme Love, which comprehends all religions and the entire mankind. Donne too expresses his scepticism in regards to fanatic religious views and upholds the mystic concept of 'Total peace' or the supreme religion of Love. That Donne was close to the view of the oneness of man and believed in removing all the difference between man and man may be seen in his letters and sermons, in which he has subscribed to the views of Sufis time and again, "What concurrence, what sympathy, what dependence maintains any relation, any correspondences between that arm that was lost in Europe, and that leg that was lost in Afrique or Asia, Scores of years between." 118 In another sermon Donne considers the world as a great volume, and man the index of that Book: "Even in the body of man, you may turn to the whole world," When Donne further argues that with the decay of this earthly body, God absorbs man in Him, as "he affords his Body a Resurrection," 119 he comes close to the belief of the Eastern mystics in the final universal love that will remove all the material barriers:

When these 'We and 'Ye,' shall all become one soul, Then they will be lost and absorbed in the 'Beloved.'120

One of the important creeds of the mystic poets is their belief in Soul as a part of the Immortal Being belonging to heaven, which is its original 'abode. As such, these poets regard the existence of the soul as pre-natal.
They also believed in the fall of the Soul from heaven, its original home as a result of which they developed the concept that explains that the full perception of Earthly Beauty is the remembrance of that Supreme Beauty in the Spiritual World. To them the body is the veil, but by ecstasy (Hal) the soul could behold the Divine Mysteries. Avicenna, one of the reputed eastern philosophers who was most popular and had a great influence on the western world throughout the medieval time, has depicted the original abode of this soul in heaven and its fall therefrom:

Lo, it was hurled
Midst the sign-posts and ruined abodes of this desolate world
It weeps, when it thinks of its some and the peace it possessed,
With tears wetting forth from its eyes without pausing or rest,
And with plaintive morning it broodeth like one bereft
O'em such trace of its home as the fourfold winds have left. 121

This concept of the soul and its original abode being heaven is very much present in the poetry of Donne:

Then, as my soule, to heaven her first seats,
takes flight
And earth-borne body, in the earth shall dwell. 122

In his poem 'The Progress of the Soul,' Donne states this with greater clarity and more emphasis:

This soule which oft did teare,
And mend the wrecks of this Empire, and late rome,
And live'd when every great change did come,
Had first in Paradise, a low, but fatall roome. 123

Donne depicts the fall of the soul almost in the same manner and in as similar conceptual mode as depicted by Avicenna:
As lightning, which one scarce dares say, he saw,
'Tis soone gone, (and better proove the Law
Of sense, than faith requires) swiftly she flew
There through the earths pores, and in a plant hous'd her anew.

The Oriental mystics have often dealt with the theme of the Day of Judgement and have given a visual picture of the Day in their own raciotinative and convincing method:

Be sure, the Day of Judgement will drew out
What goo'd or ill so even thou has done
In this life, and interprete all thy dream.
O tyrant who diast tear the innocent,
Thou from his heavy slumber shall rise,
A wolf, thy wicked passions one by one
Made howling wolves to rend thee limbs by limb.

The assuring tone, the vivid and realistic picture, and the belief in the rising of the soul are characteristic of Oriental religious poetry. As we turn to Donne we find that he too has drawn a similar picture of the Judgement Day which had become one of the favourite themes of late Renaissance poetry owing to the sense of disaster prevailing during the entire period. In almost the same assuring tone and as similar visual picture Donne points out the rising of the soul:

At the round earths imagined corners, blow Your trumpets, Angels and arise, arise. From death, You numberless infinities Of souls and to your scattered bodies gee. All whom the flood did and fire shall overthrow All whom wave, death, age, agues, tyrannies, Despair, law, chance, hath slaine, and you whose eyes. Shall behold God, and never taste deaths wee.
One of the most conspicuous features of the Oriental mystical poetry is a kind of inner debate; the poet through subtle and argumentative modes of expression reveals the changing relation in which he places human and divine love. Apart from the treatment of the earthly love or the image of woman as a ladder for heavenly love as seen in such poets like Dante (who too was influenced by Oriental mystical thoughts, as discussed earlier), the common difference between the two kinds of love is either completely eliminated or gets so diluted that the one invariably involves the presence of the other. It is in such mystical treatment of love that the poet makes use of symbolical and erotic expressions of language in order to reveal the elements of ecstasy, which dominate the poet's mind at this moment and make him forget all the barriers or difference. Usually, the mystic poets use images and poetic epithets having double meanings corresponding to the dual nature of love, as may be seen in these verses:

Without the dealing of Love there is no entrance to the Beloved.
This love and the Lover that live to all Eternity;
Set not thy heart onught else:
'tis only borrowed,
How long will thou embrace a dead beloved?127

Obviously, the poet rises here from the earthly love to the Divine Love. This idea is expressed in a different way in another poem in which the poet treats the Divine Love in the most intimate and personal way as in case of earthly lover:
Beloved one, come and stroke my head in mercy! The palm of Thy hand on my hand gives me rest, Thy hand is a sign of Thy bounteous providence. I am afflicted, afflicted, afflicted! Sleep has deserted my eyes Through my longing for thee, O Envy of Cypresses!...

O take my life, Thou art the source of life! For apart from Thee I am wearied of my life! I am a lover well versed in lovers madness, I am weary of learning and sense. 128

The poet treats this love in a language, which is close to speech rhythm. The Spanish mystic Ramon Llull also does away with all the differences between the human and the Divine Love and expresses the same idea rather in a symbolical way through the imagery of birds:

They asked
The birds sang the dawn, and the Beloved who is the dawn, awoke
And the birds ended their song and the Lover for his Beloved, in the dawn
They asked the lover, who is thy Beloved?
He answered:
'He who makes me to love, long, pine, keep, sigh, suffer and die. 129

Besides the new note and the novelty of imagery that evokes feelings of close and strange relationship, the treatment of this subject reveals Divine Love in different levels. This takes us immediately to Donne, who also treats this theme in a similar way; like these mystics Donne also shows changing relations in which he places human love and divine love. He treats the earthly love as a stage in soul's progress and at the moment of great ecstasy his love ceases to be merely love, it finds itself completely elevated and thereafter fused in the supreme love:
In another sonnet he expresses his desire to release himself from the usurper and go to the love:

Yet dearely I love you,
and would be loved faine
But am betroth'd unto your enemie,
Divorce me, untie or breake that knot again,
Take me to you, imprison me, for I except you enthrall mee, never shall be free,
Nor shall chest, except you ravish me.

The expressions like 'betrothed,' 'divorce' 'unite' and 'ravish' all drawn from the earthly passionate life add a new quality to his relationship of love with the Divine and at once remind us of the various similar instances in the Oriental mystical treatment of love.

Of course, Donne had nothing to do with the faith or religion of Islam. As a matter of fact, in the very poem in which he comes close to the Sufi concept of the pre-natal existence of the soul, he expressed his sarcastic contempt for Luther and Mohamat. But the mystic or Sufi has nothing to do with a specific doctrine of theology or religion and perhaps, it is owing to this that many of the great Moslem as much as Christian mystics were declared heretics and finally executed.

In short, when we analyse Donne's religious poems, without going into the question of his faith, we find that his main concern was to define his personal relationship with God. This he did not find in the poetry of his age which was most conventional. Generally the theme of
NeoPlatonic love was in vogue at that time, but Donne treats it most ironically and also expresses his contempt for a poet like Herbert of Cherbury who deals with this theme. As Grierson has observed, Herbert of Cherbury "was just the person to dilate on the Platonic theme of the soul and the body in the realm of love on which Donne occasionally disclaimed in half ironical fashion, Habington with tedious thin blooded seriousness, Cleveland and others with naughty irreverence." 132

Actually Donne in his age seeks literary parallels for the expressions of his deep and mystical experiences of man's relationship with God with the personal, dramatic, conversational, dialectical, and complex characteristics. He finds these in the Oriental mystical poetry developed by the Spanish poets who came in close contact with such experiences revealed by the Spanish-Arab poets. Perhaps without being conscious of their original sources, Donne, like many of his European predecessors, uses these parallels in his poetry, because they serve his purpose. Gibb correctly assesses the influence of the Oriental mystic poetry on poets like Donne. He thus observes:

In such cases the Oriental parallels served as a key to the door at which the west was knocking, or by their colour and brilliance of technique acquired such popular favour that they illuminated the lines along which the European movement should proceed. This is not to imply that they are in standard or served as models to be slavishly imitated; on the contrary the branch of letters to which their impulse had been applied afterwards developed or expanded along its own peculiar lines, without reference to the East and often in complete ignorance of its Oriental forerunners. 133
NOTES

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5 Ibid.

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20 H.P. Kocher, Christopher Marlowe, p. 188.
(Paris, B.N.Lat., 3719, Fol. 42)

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23 Bashshar Ben Burd, from his 'Poem on the Slave Girl,'
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p. 139.

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37 Ibid.,
38 Guido da Colonna, 'Ballatta' XXVI.
39 Guido da Colonna, 'Sonnet' XXVIII.
40 Nicholas Breton, 'Bower of Delights'
41 Thomas Lodge, 'My Benny Lass Thine Eye.'
42 Thomas Lodge, 'Those Eyes which set my fancy on a fire.'
43 Philip Sidney, 'Astrophel and Stella,' Sec.VII.
44 E. Spenser, 'Epithalamion' line. 17.
45 Robert Green, 'Fair is my love for April in her Face.'
46 Samuel Danial, 'Sonnets to Delia,' No. 48.
48 E. Spenser, 'An Hymne in Honour of Beautie,' line. 232.
49 Shakespeare, 'Sonnet' No. 130.
50 Shakespeare, these and other quotations are taken from The Complete Works of Shakespeare, ed. by Peter Alexander, 1954.
55 C. B. Edwyn Hope, Poetry in the Arabic Spain Under the Muslim, 1931, p. 113.
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Regarding Avicenna's concept of the integration of the consciousness the author says: "Avicenna's mystical writings are concerned with the problem of the soul's reintegration into the divine world whence it came. In immortal and divine, the soul is linked to the body involved in matter, inert and evil. During its sojourn in the world it must work out its own eternal beatitude."

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64 Guilhem de Castelbouh, Chansons Cortesises.

65 Fraiar Thomas, 'Luve Ron.'


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