

Çatışma ve Temas: John Donne'ın "Dialogue of One"ndan T. S. Eliot'ın Monoloğuna

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Özet

Bu çalışma Donne'ın aşk şiirleri ile Eliot'ın "J. Alfred Prufrock'un Aşk Şarkısı" adlı şiirini birlikte okumayı amaçlamaktadır. Eliot, on yedinci yüzyılda yazılmış İngiliz şiirinin, yirminci yüzyılda yazılmış şiiri yankıladığını düşünmektedir. Bu yüzden bu çalışma Eliot'ın modernist şiiri ile Donne'ın metafizik şiiri arasındaki benzerlikleri ve farklılıkları araştırmayı hedefler. Bu araştırma Donne'ın şiirlerindeki bütünlük fikri ile Eliot'ın şiirindeki parçalanmışlık kavramı üzerine kuruludur. Bütünlük ve bölünmüşlük temalarının incelendiği bu yazı öncelikle esrime mefhumuna odaklanır, kendi ve öteki arasındaki sınırın nasıl aşındığını ve beden ve ruh arasındaki geleneksel karşıtlığın nasıl alt üst edildiğini çözümler. Bunun yanı sıra, bu çalışma ironiyi ele alır ve Eliot'ın şiirindeki ironi kullanımı ile metafizik şiirdeki ikili karşıtlıklar üzerine kurulu mecazları karşılaştırır. Bu yazı ayrıca her iki şaire de dil ve duygu meselesi açısından yaklaşır. Bunlara ek olarak, on yedinci yüzyıl şairinin bütünlük duyarlılığı ile yirminci yüzyıl şairinin ayrılmış duyarlılığını karşılaştırır. Donne'ın birlik üzerine kurulu diyalogunun bir çatışmaya ve temasa yol açtığını, Eliot'ın monoloğunun ise bir temasa meydan vermediğini görürüz.

Anahtar Kelimeler

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T. S. Eliot
Metafizik Şiir
Modernist Şiir

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Conflict and Contact: From John Donne's "Dialogue of One" to T. S. Eliot's Monologue

Abstract

This paper aims to read Donne's certain love poems in conjunction with Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock". Eliot believes English poetry composed in the 17th century resonates with that of the 20th century. Therefore, this article explores the similarities and differences between the metaphysical poetry and the modernist poetry. This discussion is predicated upon the notion of wholeness in Donne and the idea of fragmentation in Eliot. The exploration of the themes of completion and disintegration initially focuses on the concept of ecstasy, analyses how the boundary between the self and the other dissolves and how the conventional dichotomy between the body and the spirit is challenged. This article also deals with the notion of irony in terms of fragmentation and compares the use of irony in Eliot's poem with the employment of metaphysical conceits based on binary oppositions in Donne's poems. This study further concentrates on both poets with regards to the sensuousness of language. It finally contrasts the unified sensibility of the seventeenth-century poet with the dissociated sensibility of the twentieth-century poet. This paper concludes Donne's "dialogue of one" rests upon conflict and contact whereas Eliot's monologue does not lead to contact.

Keywords

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About Article

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T. S. Eliot is generally credited with rediscovering Donne in the twentieth century. Eliot, who rekindles interest in Donne, reckons that "this poetry and this age [the seventeenth century] have some peculiar affinity with our own poetry and our own age [the twentieth century]" and believes that "our mentality and feelings are better expressed by the seventeenth century than by the nineteenth or even the eighteenth" (1994, p. 43). Eliot also asserts that the metaphysical poets are "in the direct current of English poetry" (2014, p. 383). In accordance with this observation, this paper, based on this above-mentioned eerie affinity, explores the similarities and differences between the modernist poetry of the twentieth century and the metaphysical poetry of the seventeenth century. It aims to compare and contrast certain love poems by John Donne and "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" by T. S. Eliot. This study is predicated upon the idea that the metaphysical poetry of the seventeenth century is "a kind of forerunner of our modern sensibility" (Low, 2006, p. 242) and "the decisive precursor of modernism" (Haskin, 2006, p. 242). Both Donne's and Eliot's poetry seems to be characterized by binary oppositions such as the dichotomy between the body and the soul. This opposition appears to be fundamental to the work of both poets. Hence, this article discusses how these two poets deal with the rupture between the seemingly mutually-exclusive concepts such as the body and the soul, the self and the other. The essential cleavage between the body and the soul also informs the divide between the self and the other. Therefore, the disintegration of the self in Prufrock resonates with the idea of unification in Donne. Eliot is engrossed in Donne's poetry because he is impressed by Donne's yearning for a unified notion of the self. Both poets seem to make use of fragmented images, yet Donne desires to achieve a sense of completeness whereas Eliot's Prufrock remains fragmented and split at the very end of the poem.

One of the most fruitful ways to compare and contrast the idea of disintegration and the notion of unity in these two poets is to study their poems through the concept of ecstasy, to analyse them with regards to the boundary between interiority and externality. The word ecstasy originally means "the *ek-statis*, or being beside the body" (Stewart, 2002, p. 179). Similarly, "ecstasy" derives from "Greek *ekstatis* 'standing outside oneself', based on *ek-* 'out' + *histanai* 'to place'; in relation to this, "ecstasy" also means "an emotional or religious frenzy or trancelike state, originally one involving an experience of mystic self-transcendence" (Lexico, 2021). Therefore, this paper discusses whether the poetic personas in Eliot's and Donne's poems are able to achieve the state of ecstasy, to stand outside their selves, to realize the notion of a unified self. Guibbory (2006) argues that Donne is "keenly aware of the instability of desire, of the conflict between our longing to dissolve the boundary between self and other and our impulse to withdraw and reassert the self's separate identity" (p. 141). In Donne's love poems, the boundary between self and other dissolves, whereas the self appears to withdraw into interiority in Eliot's love song.

The meaning of ecstasy refers to an experience of self-transcendence. Donne's poetry involves certain elements of transcendence. His poetry is marked by the *trans-* words such as transubstantiation and conversion. For instance, Donne speaks of love in terms of metamorphose in his "Twickenham Garden": "The spider Love, which transubstantiates all, / And can convert manna to gall" (2013, 6-7ⁱ). In this poem he points to the transformative power of love; even though he seems to present love in a negative way in this part of the poem, he is cognizant of the experience of metamorphose as a result of love. Donne seems to be a poet who is able to experience the state of ecstasy. For example, in "Twickenham Garden" he

desires to step out of his body and wants to be “[s]ome senseless piece of this place”, to be made into “a mandrake” or “a stone fountain weeping out my [his] year” (16-8). These lines demonstrate that he does not want to be captured in his internal self; he is willing to be transubstantiated into something else other than himself, outside his interiority because Donne believes that “[n]o man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main” as he says in his “Meditation XVII” (201, 1-3). This impulse to be immersed in the whole and thus to accomplish a sense of completeness is a manifestation of the poet’s desire to discard the individual self.

In order to achieve the state of ecstasy, one needs to step out of their self; the self is interdependent on the other so as to accomplish a unified notion of self. In Donne’s love poems, the “experience of loving and being loved offers a feeling of integration that contrasts with the fragmentation and corruption [in “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”] the speaker finds in the real world”; therefore, “we find circles, images of perfection and wholeness, in the ‘mutual’ love poems” (Guibbory, 2006, p. 141). Accordingly, Donne cherishes the idea of fusion in his poem “The Ecstasy”, in which the lovers are intermingled through poetic images and metaphors: their hands are “firmly cemented”, attached and glued to each other; their eye-beams are twisted so their eyes are threaded “upon one double string” (2013, 5-8). These images evince that the lovers are interwoven; they are able to open up their interior selves to each other in order to only realize that oneness is achieved through being doubled; they disregard their singular one-ness to experience plural oneness, that is unity; they do not hesitate to be integrated into one another; they are not intimidated to externalize themselves only to be internalized by the lover/beloved. Likewise, their hands are engrafted, which they see as “the means to make us [them] one” (9-10). “Graft” means “a shoot or twig inserted into a slit on the trunk or stem of a living plant, from which it receives sap” (Lexico, 2021). The lovers seem to be inserted into one another; they regenerate each other by means of being fused into one another. Thus, the lovers are transplanted and implanted in one another. Also, the idea of transplant as a poetic image invokes the state of ecstasy, standing outside oneself and experiencing transcendence. The image of the engrafted hands is followed by the image of “pictures in our [their] eyes to get / Was all our propagation”; the lovers of “The Ecstasy” only propagate through their eyes (Donne, 2013, 11-12). The etymology of the word “propagate” refers to “multiplied from layers or shoots” in Latin (Lexico, 2021). Hence, the lovers are multiplied in their eyes through their reflections in each other’s eyes; thus, the lovers become multi-layered or at least double-layered as they cease to exist as a single entity. Also, “propagate” means “breed specimens of (a plant, animal, etc.) by natural processes from the parent stock” (Lexico, 2021). In accordance with this meaning, the lovers breed/reproduce themselves and each other in the eyes; they are both specimens and the parent stock; they originate from and end up in each other. So they animate each other through specular procreation; the eye-beams that are transmitted between the lovers give birth to this propagation in the eyes. The lovers in “The Ecstasy” are entwined in such a way that their “souls - which to advance their state, / Were gone out – ‘twixt her and me” (Donne, 2013, 15-6). The lovers of this poem seem to have achieved the state of ecstasy as their souls are disembodied; the lover is to disintegrate within himself so as to be fused with the beloved. Their souls are located in the interspace between their bodies, and thus their bodies are bridged to form one, yet double, entity. The lovers of “The Ecstasy” are so much intermingled that they no longer recognize whose soul it is that speaks: “He – though he knew not which

soul spake, / Because both meant, both spake the same" (25-6). The boundary between the lover and the beloved is blurred due to the yearning for completeness; the border between self and other is eradicated.

The lover in Donne's "The Ecstasy" contends that the ecstatic mixture of the souls does not confuse them: "This ecstasy doth unperplex / (We said) and tell us what we love" (29-30). Fusion is not confusion; the lovers who are entwined should not be confounded by this intermingling; fusion is not supposed to muddle the lovers. The lover admits that the soul is already a mixture of things; the mixed souls become one soul only through being mixed again: "But as all several souls contain / Mixture of things they know not what, / Love these mix'd souls doth mix again, / And makes both one, each this, and that" (33-36). In a way he warns the lovers that they should not give up on the mixture of souls as he believes it is only the fusion of the souls that disambiguates the confusion. As a result of the ecstatic experience of being in love, the lover might be intimidated as he is likely to misjudge that he is to lose his self and he might get baffled as there is intimidation in intimacy. Nevertheless, the lover asserts that one should cease to exist in his own self and step out of his self in order only to achieve the sense of a unified self. The lover also assures that integration follows disintegration; the fragmented self gets disintegrated only to be integrated into a more complete sense of being. Donne keeps on using the *trans-* words in "The Ecstasy": "A single violet transplant, / The strength, the colour, and the size / All which before was poor and scant / Redoubles still, and multiplies" (37-40). The metaphysical poet deploys the language of transplant so as to highlight the power of the fusion of the lovers. Being entwined in love does not lessen one's sense of being; on the contrary, being cemented in love intensifies and aggrandizes one's existence. Donne repeatedly brings to attention that one needs to be lost in ecstasy in order to find himself, and that one should relate to the other than to the self in order to attain a harmonious sense of being. When in love, two souls inter-animate each other; the use of the prefix *inter* points to the act of being immersed in one another and the sense of transmission and transformation into each other when one experiences the ecstasy of being in love, standing outside oneself.

Having dwelled on the fusion of the souls and the interdependency of the self on the other, Donne moves on to turn upside down the alleged dichotomy between the body and the soul in "The Ecstasy": "But, oh alas! so long, so far, / Our bodies why do we forbear? / They are ours, though not we; we are / The intelligences, they the spheres" (49-52). He argues that our souls are grounded in our bodies; he rejects the constructed opposition between the spirit and the flesh; in other words, Donne defies "the Neoplatonic body/soul dualism" (Guibbory, 2006, p. 142). Instead of the Neoplatonic lover that leaves the earthly body behind and climbs up the ladder to heavenly love, Donne "immortalizes the intersubjective union of man and woman" (Bell, 2006, p. 212). Furthermore, he asserts that the lovers should be grateful to their bodies as the bodies make it possible for the souls to melt into each other. Therefore, if the souls in love in "The Ecstasy" desire to be fused into one another, they should make use of their bodies: "For soul into the soul may flow, / Though it to body first repair" (Donne, 2013, 59-60). The body must be cherished in order to propagate the souls' fusion as the following lines from "The Ecstasy" suggest: "As our blood labours to beget / Spirits, as like souls as it can; / Because such fingers need to knit / That subtle knot, which makes us man" (61-4). Donne introduces another image of the lovers intertwined through the use of the fingers knitted; he believes that

the knot that knits the lovers makes them into complete human beings. Human is imperfect without his self being fused into the other in both body and soul; in order to achieve “this dialogue of one”, the lovers in “The Ecstasy” should be “to bodies gone” (74-76). Accordingly, Bennett (1966) argues that “Donne, in “The Ecstasy”, is attempting to explain that the union of spirit with spirit expresses itself in the flesh, just as the soul lives in the body and, in this world, cannot exist without it” (p. 169). Likewise, in “Air and Angels”, Donne celebrates the unity of the body and the soul: “But since my soul, whose child love is, / Takes limbs of flesh, and else could do nothing do, / More subtle than the parent is / love must not be, but take a body too” (2013, 7-10). The soul and the body are transmuted into one another; the spirit is fleshed out as the soul turns out to be more ethereal when in love. These poems demonstrate that Donne believes that “body and soul are interdependent” (Guibbory, 2006, p. 143). In support of this, Eliot (1994) claims that “[o]ne of the capital ideas of Donne, the one which is perhaps his peculiar gift to humanity, is that of the union, the fusion and identification of souls in sexual love” (p. 54). Eliot, the creator of Alfred J. Prufrock, the disintegrated and fragmented self, appreciates the unity in Donne; this appreciation of the fusion in Donne’s poetry makes its lack in Eliot’s poem more prominent.

This image of the lovers fused into one another in Donne’s poem constitutes a stark contrast to the self which is fragmented and disintegrated due to the rupture between the self and the other in Eliot’s “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”, a modernist poem marked by “the terrifying problem of personal communication” (Shusterman, 1994, p. 35). It has been repeatedly noted that Prufrock is unable to live a meaningful life, therefore he feels frustrated; he represents “split personality” (Donoghue, 2011, pp. 99-100), the divided self that presents itself as the disintegration of the totalizable voice. Prufrock’s unified self-image is severely threatened because of the self-cancelling oppositions such as the dichotomy between the body and the soul, the self and the other. Differing from Donne’s poetic personas who seek to be immersed in unity and harmony (to what extent they fulfil their desire is another matter of discussion), Prufrock, “the solitary, the shipwrecked, solipsistic lyric self” (Mays, 1994, p. 111), suffers from fragmentation and disintegration. He has a fragmented perception of his existence and the outside world, and the unified notion of his self is disrupted. To use Donne’s language of fusion, Prufrock seems to be unable to be engrafted onto another being, or his eye-beams do not appear to be twisted with those of the beloved, or his hands are not firmly cemented with those of somebody else. In contrast to the male lover in Donne who experiences a mystical self-transcendence in the ecstatic state of love, Prufrock is indulged in his own interiority. The experience of ecstatic, mystical transcendence in Donne is replaced by Prufrock’s mind that “lavished on [...] puny epiphanies” (Donoghue, 2011, p. 101). He does not stand outside himself; rather than extending himself to the outside world, he delves into the floating ideas in his mind. The chasm between the self and the other, the soul and the body is much wider in Eliot’s modernist poem than that in Donne’s early modern poems. Both poets recognize the rupture; the lover in Donne strives to bridge it, whereas the self-deprecating Prufrock, “a thinking, inert sensitive self” (Mays, 1994, p. 110), remains fragmented at the end of the poem.

Irony is the primary literary device employed by Eliot that foregrounds disintegration and fragmentation. The modernist poet “involves the self in the divorce between content and form, between what is intended and what can be said” (Mays, 1994, p. 110). The title that Eliot chooses for his poem is ironic; the poem is supposed to be a love song, yet it turns out that

Prufrock is far from experiencing the ecstatic state of love. Bloom (2011) states that Christopher Ricks finds the title incongruous and the name Prufrock outrageous (p. 1). Irony is a poetic device used by the poet to point to the dividedness of the self that Prufrock suffers from; even the title of the poem does not relate to the poem unless it strikes the poem in an ironic way. The breach between the title and the poem itself may be considered to reflect the rupture that Prufrock experiences. Irony is employed to point to the dissonance between what one says and what he means; it introduces incongruity and discordance. The dissonance that is created by irony is similar to the rupture that the modern poet experiences and expresses.

Irony in Eliot's poem and metaphysical conceits in Donne's poems could be discussed in relation to each other. Irony brings up the opposition in the same way that the metaphysical conceits are built on binary oppositions. Irony expresses the conflict by means of uncovering the disparity between the signifier (what one says) and the signified (what one means). Detached from the meanings they signify, signifiers float in the world of the solipsistic Prufrock due to "a Prufrockian dispersal of focus within the alternate meanings that metaphors introduce" (Altieri, 1994, p. 204). This disparity between the signifier and the signified in Eliot's poem could be seen as related to the dichotomy between the body and the soul, the self and the other in Donne's poems; this rupture could be associated with the conceits of the metaphysical poetry which rely on binaries. Irony is fundamental to "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and conceits based on binary oppositions are central to Donne's metaphysical poetry; irony points to the irrevocable rupture in the former, while conflict between binary oppositions leads to contact in the latter.

Differing from Donne's "dialogue of one" from "The Ecstasy", "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" is a monologue, which suggests that Prufrock is dissociated from the external world and does not engage in a dialogue with the other. In opposition to Donne's vision of fusion described in "The Good-Morrow" as in "If our two loves be one, or thou and I, / Love so alike that none can slacken, none can die" (Donne, 2013, 20-21), Prufrock's love song opens up with "Let us go then, you and I" (Eliot, 2000, 1). This opening line might be interpreted as Prufrock's talking to himself as he does not appear to address a particular beloved in the course of the poem. Eliot (1994) contends that "[c]onflict is contact" (p. 84). The conflict between such binary oppositions as the body and the mind, the self and the other would be a form of contact for Prufrock. However, he is so immersed in his own self and buried in his own mind that he does not appear to have a contact with the external world. In other words, he does not stand outside himself; he does not extend himself to the outside world; he does not participate in the external world. As opposed to the forward-thrusting male lover in Donne's poems who hankers after attachments, Prufrock, an "obsessed evader of the sexual experience" (Bloom, 2011, p. 2), is a detached observer who agonizes over his imaginary encounter with the women in his destination, and his anxiety triggers the monologue in his mind, which is haunted with "the room [where] women come and go / Talking of Michelangelo" (Eliot, 2000, 13-4). These lines demonstrate that he and the women definitely are not inter-animated souls like the lovers in Donne's poem. He is so different from the lovers in Donne's "The Good-Morrow" who are described as two hemispheres that complete one another (2013, 17); Donne's poem celebrates "a sense of completion, as if the lover has finally found what was missing from life, his other half" (Guibbory, 2006, p. 141). Alienated from this sense of completion and wholeness, Prufrock thinks that only his bald head or his thin arms could be material for women's

conversation: “(They will say: ‘How his hair is growing thin!’)”; (They will say: “But how his arms and legs are thin!”)” (Eliot, 2000, 41, 44). Prufrock is far from being able to achieve a fusion with the beloved. His reveries become masochistic when he remembers the eyes of these women who pass judgment on his physical appearance and dominate him in a relationship. Their eyes paralyze him as they perceive his weaknesses and prevent him from asserting himself; therefore, he is scared of the eyes fixing him: “And I have known the eyes already, known them all - / The eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase, / And when I am formulated, sprawling on a pin, / When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall” (Eliot, 2000, 55-8). The image of the male lover who is pinned on the wall by the eyes of women who have “an overwhelming sexual power” for him (Bloom, 2011, p. 2) is very different from the male lover in Donne’s poem whose eye-beams are twisted with those of the beloved, and whose eyes are threaded with those of the beloved upon one double string. The lover in Donne’s poem is assertive whereas Prufrock is timid and intimidated; Prufrock seems to be unable to transcend himself and be merged into the other. The lover in Donne’s work tries to terminate the fissure between the body and the soul, the self and the other, and to interweave himself with the beloved while Prufrock seems to be captured by the self. For Prufrock, the other does not exist; therefore, there is neither conflict nor contact between the self and the other. Donne’s struggle represents his attempt to bridge the divide between the body and the soul; the seventeenth century poet seeks to change conflict into contact. The metaphysical poet seems to be able to achieve a sense of unity and fusion; in Donne’s poetry, the rupture between the body and the soul produces a conflict for the poet to achieve contact in the early modern period. On the other hand, the rupture between the mind and the soul seems to Eliot to be insurmountable as he believes that the soul has almost disappeared under the supremacy of the mind: “The soul itself had to be constructed first; and since the soul has disappeared we have many other things, the analysis of Stendhal, the madness of Dostoevski” (Eliot, 1994, p. 54). Eliot asserts that the soul has to be reconstructed in order to accomplish such unity as Donne’s. The seventeenth century poet says in “Love’s Growth” that “Love sometimes would contemplate, sometimes do” (Donne, 2013, 14). Donne cherishes the combination between the mind and the body, fusing thought and emotion; he has both philosophic speculation and strong emotion. On the other hand, love seems to only contemplate in Prufrock’s case; he embodies “a resounding clash between his thought and his feeling” (Oser, 2011, p. 85). Owing to this rupture between thought and feeling, the mind and the body in modern poetry, Eliot is engrossed by the metaphysical poetry of the seventeenth century, when “[s]ensation became word and word was sensation”, “a period when the intellect was immediately at the tips of the senses” (Eliot, 2014, p. 248).

Besides the dialectics of fragmentation and fusion, integration and disintegration, another way to compare and contrast Donne’s poems with Eliot’s poem is to focus on sensuousness in their poems. Eliot finds in Donne “a direct sensuous apprehension of thought or a recreation of thought into feeling” (Eliot, 2014, p. 379). According to Eliot, Donne has the essential quality of transmuting ideas into sensations, of transforming an intellectual observation into a feeling. Eliot cherishes the quality in Donne that enables the metaphysical poet to interconnect the mind with the body. Donne’s poems point to “a kind of *intellectual-bodily* imagination of the embodied soul” (Byatt, 2006, p. 251). Embodied thought or thinking body is fundamental to Donne’s poetry. However, Prufrock’s mind predominates his body, and he is, therefore, “[l]ike a patient etherized upon a table” (Eliot, 2000, 3), who is unable to interlink his feelings and

thoughts. Eliot (2014) acknowledges the quality of the seventeenth century metaphysical poetry which transmutes thoughts into sensations: "in certain periods the revolution of the sphere of thought will so to speak throw off ideas which will fall within the attraction of poetry, and which the operation of poetry will transmute into the immediacy of feeling" (53). In Donne's poems, feelings are not repressed; on the contrary, they are transubstantiated into thoughts through intellectualization. On the other hand, in Prufrock, one comes across the frustration of feelings. Donne is aware of dissonances and creates a harmony out of them; however, Prufrock is suppressed by dissonances, which causes him to procrastinate rather than arrive at a resolution. As a result of this frustration, he does not dare to ask the overwhelming question although he is already overwhelmed by the question; he does not dare to "disturb the universe" (Eliot, 2000, 45-6). Prufrock is not a man willing to join himself with the universe; Prufrock, who is steeped in the floating ideas of his mind, constitutes a contrast to the lover in Donne's "The Sun-Rising" who dares to "eclipse and cloud" the universe "with a wink" (Donne, 2013, 13), and to the lover in "A Valediction: Of Weeping" whose tears run over the world: "Till thy tears mix'd with mine do overflow / This world; by waters sent from thee, my heaven dissolved so" (Donne, 2013, 17-8). Donne's orgasmic language not only refers to his sensual union with the beloved, but also to his fusion with the world around himself; he extends his self to the external world; his sexually aroused body becomes the dissolving heaven; his orgasmic diction points to his organic, bodily union with the world. Donne's attachment to the bodily/earthly self demonstrates that "human souls are blessed with the gift of corporeality" (Targoff, 2006, p. 224). His orgasmic language is a manifestation of the merging of the corporeal and the incorporeal.

Donne's voluptuous language shows the lovers in an interpersonal and inter-bodied relationship, whereas Eliot's sexually frustrated Prufrock regresses into a realm where the other does not exist. The lover in Donne's "The Canonization" is not scared of losing himself in love; the lovers are willing to be burnt away in love: "Call us what you will, we are made such by love; / Call her one, me another fly, / We're tapers too, and at our own cost die" (2013, 19-21). These lovers are both the tapers and the flies that fly towards the tapers and are burned to death. They are willing to be killed in love as they know they "die and rise again" like the phoenix (23-26). They are eager to be disintegrated from their own selves, their bodies in order to be united and fused into one another; their singular disintegration is rewarded by the plural integration into unity. The sexual overtones of dying support the same view, for the pun on "die" means "both to expire and to reach sexual climax" (Bell, 2006, p. 213). In order to achieve orgasmic unity, the lovers are ready to kill their own selves; they melt into each other; they are transplanted into one another. Love in "The Canonization" makes the lovers each other's "hermitage" (Donne, 2013, 37-38); they shut out the world to be immersed in each other. Brooks (1966) notes that Donne "daringly treats profane love as if it were divine love" and adds that the canonization is "not that of a pair of holy anchorites who renounced the world and the flesh. The hermitage of each is the other's body" (p. 179). Donne celebrates "erotic love as a spiritual experience"; his sensuous language "makes sexual love sacred, suggesting that it offers an experience of transcendence, a taste of the divine" (Guibbory, 2006, pp. 142-143). On the other hand, Prufrock goes into the sea where there are the mermaids that won't sing to him and this is how the poem closes: "We have lingered in the chambers of the sea / By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown / Till human voices wake us, and we drown" (Eliot, 2000, 129-31). The mermaids are fantasy figures; they are not flesh and blood; they are

the creatures of his mind. Also, the sea is a metaphor for his escape from the external into the internal. In opposition to the lovers in Donne's poem who cherish the life of a hermit in each other, Prufrock is secluded in himself; the external world drowns Prufrock.

Donne's orgasmic language culminates in unity while Prufrock's love song ends in a solipsistic world. Donne (2013) celebrates unity in his love poems as he believes that "[p]erfection is in unity" in his Elegy XIX (9): "Whoever loves, if he do not propose / The right true end of love, he's one that goes / To sea for nothing but to make him sick" (1-3). For the metaphysical poet, the true end of love is to be immersed in unity, both body and soul; the lover who is not fused into the other becomes sick in the sea of love. However, in contrast to the "self whose identity is fluid" presented in Donne's poems (Guibbory, 2006, p. 136), Prufrock goes to the sea where the mermaids do not sing to him, where the self does not flow into the other, because he is not immersed in unity with the beloved; he goes to the sea only to be secluded in himself; he feels sick since he does not stand outside himself and extend himself to the other so as to merge and be inter-animated with the beloved. Grierson (1966) points out that Donne is "more aware of disintegration than of comprehensive harmony" (p. 113). Similarly, Guibbory (2006) points out that "[o]bsessed with change and decay, Donne desires permanence and stability" (p. 138). In this sense, Donne is similar to Eliot; both poets are keenly aware of the dissonances and discordances in their respective times. They both suffer from the clashes at the core of human existence. Nevertheless, Donne, differing from Eliot, strives very hard to create a harmony out of disintegration and fragmentation because Donne has a poet's mind which constantly amalgamates "disparate experience", fuses "the ordinary man's experience [which] is chaotic, irregular, fragmentary" (Eliot, 2014, p. 380). In Donne's case, conflict is contact; the rupture makes him all the more passionate to achieve fusion although it is also true that conflict severely threatens his sense of unity. In his "The Metaphysical Poets" Eliot (2014) speaks of "a dissociation of sensibility set in [in the seventeenth century], from which we have never recovered" (p. 380). Prufrock agonizes over this state of dissociation of sensibility; his intellectual visions and revisions are cut off from feelings and sensations. In his case, thoughts are not merged with feelings; his contemplative side takes over his feelings. The hierarchy between the mind and the body in Prufrock's case is similar to the divide between the soul and the body in Donne's poetry. Grierson (1966) puts forward that Donne strives "to find a rhythm that will express the passionate fullness of his mind, the fluxes and refluxes of his moods" (p. 119). Donne seeks to make his thoughts embedded in his feelings. On the other hand, Eliot's Prufrock is overwhelmed by the floating ideas in his mind which do not seem to be transmuted into sensations; he is oppressed by "a tedious argument / Of insidious intent" (Eliot, 2000, 8-9); his mind is clouded like the yellow fog that "lingered upon the pools that stand in drains" (14-17). He exercises philosophical speculation, yet he lacks strong emotion while Donne has both; he does not dare to squeeze "the universe into a ball" (93), whereas Donne (2013) claims in "Love's Growth" that the lover is the centre of the universe that all the other spheres revolve around: "If, as in water stirr'd more circles be / Produced by one, love such additions take, / Those like so many spheres but one heaven make, / For they are all concentric unto thee" (21-24). Donne's poetry is marked by the excess of images and the dispersion of intellectual curiosity; his poetic persona disperses himself, extends himself, disseminates himself both bodily and cerebrally as his orgasmic language refers to the dissolution of the body and the mind at once. On the other hand, the imagery used to express Prufrock's states of the mind is dull, stale and dysfunctional; he does not disseminate in the

bodily sense of the word; his intellectual side closes in upon himself instead of dispersion. The imagery employed to express Prufrock's sense of being is like "[a] kind of sorrowing dullness to the mind" in the words of Donne as he says in his "Farewell to Love" (2013, 20). Donne uses this figure of speech to express the state of the lover who only cares about the body and does not feel the urge to achieve a fusion of the body and the soul when he is in love; once his fleshly desires are satisfied, he is overwhelmed by the sorrowing dullness of the mind. The mind might trigger this kind of sorrowing dullness when the mind is cut off from the body, and when the body is not intermingled with the soul/mind. Therefore, Prufrock is handicapped by this kind of sorrowing dullness because he seems to be unable to accomplish the fusion, and he is impaired by the rupture between the mind and the body. However, Donne seeks to create a harmony out of "a harder fight between the secular, the 'man of the world' temper of his mind and the claims of a pious and ascetic calling" (Grierson, 1966, p. 121). Donne attempts to achieve a sense of fusion out of this fissure between the two sides of his personality; therefore, this clash between the soul and the body is fruitful in Donne's case since conflict is contact; yet, in Eliot's poetry, his poetic persona seems to be unable to benefit from such a conflict because Eliot believes that the soul has already disappeared and needs to be reconstructed first. Without binary oppositions being set first, conflict does not lead to contact in Eliot's case.

In conclusion, Donne's poems marked by "a genuinely modern sensibility" (Haskin, 2006, p. 237) speak to Eliot. In opposition to the dissociated sensibility that characterizes "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock", the seventeenth century metaphysical poetry of John Donne is claimed to have "unified sensibility" (Leishman, 1966, p. 131). Donne's metaphysical poetry has a poetic vision that glimpses various kinds of unity and relationship in an infinitely complex, baffling world. Donne as a metaphysical poet is aware of the dissonances, yet his metaphysical conceits show that "even the more violent couplings of dissimilars were simply expressions of the underlying unity of all things" (Mazzeo, 1966, p. 135). He desires to obliterate the disjunction between the body and the soul, the self and the other; therefore, Brooks (1966) points out that "Donne's imagination seems obsessed with the problem of unity [...] it welds together the discordant and the contradictory" (p. 184). Likewise, Hunt (1966) argues that Donne's poetry "equates the sinful pleasures of the flesh with the pure bliss of heaven (p. 190). Thus, Donne equates the soul with the body and seeks to terminate the sharp dichotomy between the body and the soul. In his attempt to reconcile the body with the soul, he strives to achieve a fusion where "words, movement, and feeling have a unity in which no element outweighs the other" (Gardner, 1966, p. 220). Unity is fundamental to Donne's poetry. Eliot (1994) claims that "genius tends toward unity" (p. 52). Eliot finds the metaphysical poetry to be the harbinger of the modernist poetry of the twentieth century; he thinks that "the present age is a metaphysical age" (p. 43). The metaphysical poetry of the seventeenth century and the modernist poetry of the twentieth century reflect and shed light on each other, both are preoccupied with the issue of the duality and binary oppositions. Donne is obsessed with the rupture between the body and the soul, the self and the other; in order to bridge the divide and achieve a fusion, he tries to combine the body with the soul and attempts to step out of his self, stand outside himself, be submerged, intermingled, and inter-animated with the other through the ecstatic experience of being in love. On the other hand, Prufrock seems to be unable to achieve unity between the fragments of existence; he is severely overwhelmed by the breach between the mind and the body. From the early modern period onward, with the rise of rationalism, the soul has been replaced by the mind. Eliot feels that the soul has

disappeared under the sovereignty of the mind and needs to be reconstructed; he wants the soul to be refashioned because his poetic persona Prufrock seems to be unable to accomplish a unified sense of being. Prufrock fails to stand outside his mind and relate to the external world; he is engrossed in his interiority where there is no divide between the self and the other.

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ⁱ In this study, poems have been quoted with line numbers instead of page numbers.