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## Separation Anxiety and Desire for Union in John Donne's "Lovers' Infiniteness", "The Apparition", and "The Dream"

*John Donne'un "Aşıkların Sonsuzluğu", "Tezahür" ve "Rüya" Şiirlerinde Ayrılık Kaygısı ve Birliktelik Arzusu*

Seher AKTARER<sup>a\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Öğr. Gör. Dr., Recep Tayyip Erdoğan Üniversitesi, Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu, Rize / TÜRKİYE  
ORCID: 0000-0002-8890-3532

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### ABSTRACT

This article aims to thematically and stylistically examine the tension experienced between the desire for union and separation anxiety in John Donne's "Lovers' Infiniteness," "The Apparition," and "The Dream" from his poem collection *Songs and Sonnets* (1635). It proposes that in these three poems, Donne's speakers do not resolve this tension between desire and separation; rather, they dramatize it to reveal the emotional contradictions that are inherent in love. Thus, they seem to navigate the instability of love, instead of clarifying it. The three poems in this article are specifically selected in parallel with Donne's complex and occasional contradictory dynamics of love in his two collections *Holy Sonnets* (1633) and *Songs and Sonnets*. Donne's speakers employ puns, paradoxes, and metaphors that are characteristic of Metaphysical Poetry to dramatize the contradictions at the core of love by putting a special emphasis on the physical dimension of it. Through these elements, Donne's speakers illustrate peculiar portrayals of lovers. In "Lovers' Infiniteness", the lover/speaker is in pursuit of total possession of the lady's physical or spiritual being. In the dark tone of the poem "The Apparition", feelings of revenge and longing are conflated. In "The Dream", the lover/speaker's tone oscillates between reality and dream, seeking physical unity with the lady in both. The analysis in this article underscores the use of Metaphysical techniques by Donne to dramatize a fundamental contradiction in love.

### ÖZ

Bu makale, John Donne'ın *Şarkılar ve Soneler* (1635) adlı şiir derlemesinde yer alan "Aşıkların Sonsuzluğu", "Tezahür" ve "Rüya" adlı şiirlerinde birleşme arzusu ile ayrılık kaygısı arasında yaşanan gerilimi tematik ve biçimsel olarak incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Makale, bu üç şiirde Donne'ın konuşmacılarının arzu ve ayrılık arasındaki bu gerilimi çözmek yerine, aşkın doğasında var olan duygusal çelişkileri ortaya çıkarmak için dramatize ettiklerini öne sürer. Böylece, aşkı açıklığa kavuşturmak yerine, aşkın istikrarsızlığında geziniyor gibi görünürler. Bu makaledeki üç şiir, Donne'ın *Kutsal Soneler* (1633) ve *Şarkılar ve Soneler* adlı iki derlemesindeki karmaşık ve zaman zaman çelişkili aşk dinamiklerine paralel olarak özellikle seçilmiştir. Donne'ın konuşmacıları, aşkın fiziksel boyutuna özel bir vurgu yaparak aşkın özündeki çelişkileri dramatize etmek için Metafizik Şiir'in karakteristik özellikleri olan kelime oyunları, paradokslar ve metaforlar kullanır. Donne'ın konuşmacıları bu unsurlar aracılığıyla aşkların kendine özgü tasvirlerini ortaya koyar. "Aşıkların Sonsuzluğu" nda aşık/konuşmacı, kadının fiziksel ya da ruhsal varlığına tamamen sahip olmanın peşindedir. "Tezahür" şiirinin karanlık tonunda intikam ve özlem duyguları iç içe geçmiştir. "Rüya" şiirinde ise aşığın/konuşmacının tonu gerçeklik ve rüya arasında gidip gelmekte, her ikisinde de kadını fiziksel bir birliktelik aramaktadır. Bu makaledeki analiz, Donne'ın aşkta temel bir çelişkiyi dramatize etmek için Metafizik teknikleri kullandığının altını çizmektedir.

\* Sorumlu yazar/Corresponding author.  
e-posta: seher.aydogan@erdogan.edu.tr

## Introduction

John Donne (1572–1631) was a prominent English poet, preacher, and thinker whose life was marked by many personal, political, and religious upheavals. As the son of a wealthy merchant and Catholic family, John Donne was born in 1572. His mother was a descendant of Sir Thomas More. As a Catholic, he experienced a lot of upheavals in an anti-Catholic England. He attended Oxford but could not complete it because of his Catholic roots. Later, he accepted the Church of England where he served as Sir Thomas Egerton's secretary. When he secretly married Lady Egerton's niece, he was dismissed and imprisoned. During the rule of King James I, he accepted ordination and became one of England's greatest preachers (van Emden, 1992, pp. 11-12). This life change is also reflected in his poetry which transitions from libertine love poems to divine poems.

On his approach to poetry, in one of his sermons, Donne remarks that, “[i]n the constitution and making of a natural man, the body is not the man, nor the soul is not the man, but the union of these two makes up the man” (1955, p. 261). According to Donne, all the experience in life comes from this defining bond between the body and the soul. The interplay between these two components of a person influences all aspects of a person's life, including health, disease, relationships, jobs, and leisure (Targoff, 2008, p. 1). The major themes in his poems, specifically his approach towards love and union in his *Songs and Sonnets*, are extensively influenced by this comprehensive perspective on the human experience. *Songs and Sonnets*, which is composed of fifty-four love poems, was not offered as a unified collection until the 1635 edition (James, 1988, p. 45). The focal point of all the poems in the collection is love. Donne's approach to love is full of ambiguities with a touch of his exquisite wit. Frank Kermode asserts that Donne is “an obscure poet” as a consequence of his unconventional ways of using wit, which makes his manner “tortuous” (1957, p. 9). The degree of this richness and unconventional approaches in Donne's poetic style is a fundamental characteristic of his poetry. His poems about love are particular in that they demonstrate opposing emotions and desires.

This article claims that specifically in his three poems, “Lovers' Infiniteness”, “The Apparition”, and “The Dream”, John Donne explores an aspect of love that is defined by the desire for union and the anxiety associated with separation. Unlike his approach to love in his *Holy Sonnets*, which engages more with spiritual love and devotion, these three poems selected from *Songs and Sonnets* address love's more earthly and physical aspects. Additionally, while insisting on physical intimacy and the dramatic tension of love, Donne employs unconventional metaphors to praise the lady in contrast to the Renaissance idea of love in which the lover “the *fin anam*, desired not to conquer and to dominate, but to serve and to adore” (Valency, 1982, p. 26). Nevertheless, in Donne's perspective, even occasionally loathing the lady serves as a method of confronting her. It is no coincidence, then, that Ben Jonson considers John Donne as “the first poet in the world in some things” (qtd. in Donaldson, 2011, p. 150), cherishing his peculiar contribution to poetry which brings unprecedented and unique practises.

Donne's approach to love is rarely straightforward; instead, he depicts it as a point of tension, where longing and doubt, intimacy and separation, and reason and emotional turmoil intersect. By examining how Donne utilizes metaphors, puns, paradoxes, and conceits unique to his style, this article examines the intricate ways in which Donne depicts these instances of tension specifically in his three poems, “Lovers' Infiniteness”, “The Apparition”, and “The Dream”. The article will thematically analyse these poems by illustrating the specific paradoxes and metaphors used by Donne to express a lover's desire for total possession of the beloved, juxtaposed with the anxiety of losing her. Rather than making overarching claims about Donne's entire body of work, the focus will be on how these themes are employed within these specific poems.

### **“Lovers’ Infiniteness”: An Assertive Argument on Unity**

The speaker in “Lovers’ Infiniteness” pleads with his beloved lady for her absolute, unconditional, and undivided love in the form of a dramatic monologue. He contends that unless he possesses all of the beloved lady- physically or emotionally- he will never be genuinely satisfied. The poem illustrates the personal logic of the speaker, who posits that partial love is insufficient. The speaker adopts a highly compelling approach to lead the lady to a total surrender to him. Directly addressing the beloved lady by using the pronoun “thou”, the speaker has an extremely persuasive manner in “Lovers’ Infiniteness”. The speaker is engaging in an active dialogue, while the addressee remains silent or indifferent.

Donne uses the three-stanza pattern construction in the poem to justify his argument. He draws logical inferences out of illogical comparisons, paradoxes, and metaphors. The beginning of the first and the last stanza of the poem illustrate these paradoxical statements: “If yet I have not all thy love, / Dear, I shall never have it all” (Donne, 1952, p. 15, lines 1-2)<sup>1</sup>. Likewise, throughout the poem, Donne extensively makes use of “‘If . . . then’ hypotheses, with developing arguments and sub-arguments signalled by such markers as ‘Yet,’ [1, 7, 23], ‘Or if,’ [12], ‘But if,’ [14], ‘For’, [19], ‘And yet, [20], ’” (Magnusson, 2006, p. 194). The poem does not include any direct uses of the word infinite, but the contemplation of the unbounded love is effectively maintained by the continual repetition of the term “all” (Stauffer, 1946, p. 241). This suggests of an all-compassing love, even without the explicit use of the word “infinite”. The indeterminate borders of love, thus, create a continual tension throughout the poem. The tension arises from the speaker’s attempt to rationally argue for total possession of love, an emotional entity that resists logic, certainty, and measurable boundaries.

As a very typical characteristic of Metaphysical Poetry, throughout the poem, Donne applies “distorted or unexpected perspective[s]” which constitute the very “essence of Metaphysical conceit” (James, 1988, p. 33). At first, the speaker talks about his sufferings caused by love: “Sighs, tears, and oaths, and letter” (6) that he has “spent” (6). However, he twists it when he mentions that these elements are things to be spent, transforming it from a spiritual entity to a worldly understanding. The speaker complains about the lady whose indifference may kill him. He has done a lot to win the love of his beloved. However, he cannot easily be satisfied with the love he receives. Even the slightest idea of not being loved thoroughly would result in her finding another lover: “If then thy gift of love were partial/ That some to me, some should others fall/ Dear, I shall never have thee all” (9-11). As stated by Targoff, in general Donne’s love poems in *Songs and Sonnets* celebrate a love that is “mutually constituted” (2008, p. 49) and the lover detests the mere notion of being separated from the beloved. Similarly, the speaker in “Lovers’ Infiniteness” would experience complete fury due to an unrequited love in this poem.

Donne starts the initial stanza with a captivating metaphor that depicts love as a commercial exchange. Alongside the poem’s numerous contrasts, Donne utilises Metaphysical conceits focused on images related to business negotiation and bargaining. The speaker states that he has “spent” (6) a lot to “purchase” (5) the love of his beloved in an act of “bargain” (8) and states that if this treasure is shared with others, he can “never have [her] thee all” (11). Using this metaphorical framework, Donne shows love as a transaction affected by competition, exclusivity, and judgement, which shows that the speaker wants a complete ownership.

<sup>1</sup> All further references to the stated three poems are to the line numbers from the cited edition.

The speaker continues with the same metaphor of business transaction in the second stanza when he states his fears about others being involved. He is afraid of being “outbid” (17) by other men who have an entire “stock” (16):

But if in thy heart, since, there be or shall  
New love created be, by other men,  
Which have their stocks entire, and can in tears,  
In sighs, in oaths, and letters, outbid me,  
This new love may beget new fears,  
For this love was not vow'd by thee. (14-19)

Continuing with the same metaphor, in the third and last stanza, upon wanting more of the beloved, the speaker mentions that she should have “new rewards in store” (26). The speaker’s framing of love as a business transaction exposes a perspective on love which implies that love is something to be earned. According to the speaker, such an emotional experience operates within the economics of risk, value, and return. Furthermore, the way he talks about her indicates that he treats her as a commodity, regarding her emotional and potentially physical reactions as things to be bought and used. The speaker’s view of love as something that is not given but bargained, fought for, and finally owned is a transactional and possessive view of closeness, highlighting the economics of love. This whole stanza is consistent with the speaker’s approach to love which demonstrates that the components of love, such as sighs, and oaths, are commodities in a competitive market. The speaker’s portrayal of love, which is not granted but negotiated and won, presents an unusual perspective on love.

In addition to the business negotiation metaphor, the speaker likens the lover’s heart to the ground. He claims that whatever grows in that ground, which symbolizes a heart in this context, is undoubtedly his (21-22). The crops, namely the products of love, are claimed by the lover in a highly assertive tone. As Lynne Magnusson (2006) puts it, “[t]his is about what the speaker wants and how she is obliged to satisfy his will” (p. 197). The speaker employs the metaphor of organism, development, and lushness as a counterbalance (Freedman, 1972, p. 11) to emphasise that he works for his love and claims to take whatever is grown there. He asserts possession over everything cultivated in that ground, that is lady’s heart, without relinquishing any portions to others. The tone is mostly materialistic, but the metaphor of growth and development also hints to a spiritual side, showing that love goes beyond the physical and is based on emotional and psychological change. Consequently, he skilfully creates a captivating and convincing argument by putting spiritual love in a practical and materialistic setting.

This association between heart and ground contributes to the business negotiation metaphor, as it is framed in a manner that implies possessing something materially. In this transactional context, the speaker provides emotional calculation and expects the lady to give him something in exchange for his investment. He suggests “a way more liberal” (31) exchange of love, in which both people entirely commit to one another, leading to a complete and mutual union:

Love’s riddles are, that though thy heart depart,  
It stays at home, and thou with losing savest it;  
But we will have a way more liberal,  
Than changing hearts, to join them; so we shall  
Be one, and one another’s all. (28-33)

The “liberal” union of hearts and being “one another’s all” evidently point to the consummation of love. Following numerous actions that appear to be insufficient to convince the lady, the speaker exploits every possible way to create a sexual implication, which may ultimately lead to his desired outcome. Thus, in the poem, by using logic and also claiming “the unity of body and spirit”, the speaker “demands that love be embodied” (James, 1988, p. 46). As he ends the

poem, he concludes his argument by claiming the lady's "new rewards in store" (26), and he must have them all. Thus, the speaker further reinforces the transaction metaphor through which he views love by reducing the lady's emotional and possibly physical offerings to commodities, items to be claimed and possessed.

Throughout the poem, the speaker alternates between involvement and detachment. He is completely focused on his own desires and the constraints imposed by the lady's affection. He aspires to form a union with the lady, and he has a deep-seated aversion to losing her. By using "brief words and sudden contrasts", as T. S. Eliot puts it, (1975, p. 60), he attempts to persuade the lady to consummate this love in a highly assertive manner. The speaker's fluctuation between persuasiveness and detachment highlights his preoccupation with personal desires as well as exposing his weakness and fear of losing the beloved, thereby intensifying the emotional intensity of his quest for union.

### **"The Apparition": Frightening in the Name of Persuasion**

Donne's, "The Apparition" appears to be a fusion of both affection and animosity towards the lady. Akin to "Lovers' Infiniteness", the poem features a dramatic monologue of the speaker who tries to persuade and seduce the lady. In the poem, the lover's ghost approaches the lady believing that she is responsible for his demise. According to the speaker, she has caused this with her refusal, and she is the alleged murderer of her lover. In addition to the passionate manifestations of love and hate, the poem incorporates revenge and jealousy. The love the speaker has requires repentance, while simultaneously blaming and trying to persuade the lady to be united. The speaker's separation anxiety is dramatized through the imagined scenario of his death, which symbolizes the emotional devastation he experiences as a result of the beloved's rejection. By visiting the lady, he exhibits his desire to be united with her. With these intense emotions, the poem, as Harold Bloom (2008) puts it, is

a hate poem of the very first class [...] as he [the speaker] tosses between sleep and waking, the horror of his situation, the vileness of the woman he has loved, and the whole squalor of the outworn liaison come upon him and overwhelm him. (p. 118)

The intense and dramatic tone of the poem is initiated by the persuasive, assertive, and accusatory voice that is highly dark in the opening lines: "When by thy scorn, O murd'ress, I am dead/ And that thou think'st thee free/ From all solicitation from me/ Then shall my ghost come to thy bed" (1-4). As stated by Donald MacKenzie (1990), this tone "is a kind of drama that is, zestfully, self-dramatising" (p. 72). Rather than praising the lady and expressing his intense affection for her, the lover is trying to frighten her to override her lack of interest in him. As Laurence Perrine (1990) argues, the poem is all about a "thwarted love and unspent desire" (p. 2). The speaker employs a strategy to manipulate and coerce her into complying with his desires (Perrine, 1990, p. 2). Similar to the conceit in "Lovers' Infiniteness", the speaker emphasizes that his "love is spent" (15). He aims to avenge and compel the lady to repent by making her extremely frightened: "And thee, feign'd vestal, in worse arms shall see; / Then thy sick taper will begin to wink" (5-6). However, he goes so far as to attack her virtues by referring to her virginity as "feigned". Additionally, the ghost's decision to visit the lady's bedside illustrates the corporeal aspect of love. He visits her bed but there is another lover there with the beloved:

And he, whose thou art then, being tir'd before,  
Will, if thou stir, or pinch to wake him, think  
Thou call'st for more,  
And in false sleep will from thee shrink;  
And then, poor aspen wretch, neglected thou  
Bath'd in a cold quicksilver sweat wilt lie  
A verier ghost than I. (7-13)

The lover attempts to persuade her to be with him instead of the other lover who is less competent than him. The third party, according to the speaker, will be fatigued from their previous lovemaking with the lady. When she attempts to awaken him to defend her from the ghost, he assumes that she desires more and pretends to be sleeping. As a result, the lady will be left alone with the ghost lover.

As for the taper-candle metaphor, it has been employed to describe the passage of life in literature before perhaps most famously in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, where life is described as "a brief candle" that "struts and frets his hour upon the stage" (2000, Act V, Scene 5). Donne gives the picture a far darker interpretation by linking the taper's extinguishment to both the end of life and the speaker's ghostly reappearance. Therefore, the taper going out means not just death, but also the end of the lady's safety as the ghost returns. This results in the transformation of a well-known emblem of how short life is into a tool of terror. The lady's emotional and mental strain is further exacerbated by the suggestion that her actions would have spiritual repercussions after her death.

Additionally, Donne portrays the pain of unrequited love as a genuine force that is fatal, rather than a transient emotional wound (Perrine, 1990, p. 4). In "The Apparition," the speaker envisions himself as a ghost who has returned from the grave to meet the woman who rejected him. This implies that his mortality was precipitated by her rejection. This theatrical performance transforms emotional distress into a physical and existential repercussion. The speaker's ghostly presence is not merely malicious; it also implores the beloved to repent, and the peculiar encounter heightens the beloved's sense of remorse. It is hinted that she might be able to avoid his fury if she acknowledges her error and experiences regret: "I had rather thou shouldst painfully repent,/ Than by my threat'nings rest still innocent" (16-17).

"The Apparition" is, in essence, a dark monologue of a vengeful lover who pursues his beloved even after he died to take revenge and compel her to repent. This is possibly why MacKenzie renders the poem a "quasi-conversational piece" generated "through one prolonged unit, weaving sequences of rhyme across different line-lengths to create an unrelenting movement and a final crescendo" (1990, p. 72). The poem is further enlivened by the interpretation of death as a means of maintaining control over the beloved even in the afterlife. It both reflects the lover's fixation on possessing her and demonstrates the inventive use of metaphors to investigate the darker aspects of love. Within this context, death continues to be a disturbing extension of the speaker's need to control the beloved, letting him think he has power over her even after she dies.

### **"The Dream": Union on the Borders of Reality and Dream**

In "The Dream," the speaker once more communicates his desire for a union with the lady who wakes him up from his dream. It is a passionate poem that displays an individual and strong love for a lady. The speaker wakes up from the dream in which he is once again fantasising about the woman and their love. He remains happy when he is awakened since the actual presence of the lady is much better than the best dream: "Therefore thou wak'd'st me wisely; yet/ My dream thou brok'st not, but continued'st it" (5-6). The lover speaks exclusively about his affection towards the lady who wakes him up and waits passively. His mood develops depending on the lady's responses. He changes his attitude when she is "coming" or "staying" or "rising" (21-22).

Overall, the poem features the dreamer's shifts between the reality and the dream. It is reinforced by the use of repetitive paradoxes such as "reason" and "fantasy" or "dream" and "history" (4, 8). Presenting dreams as more truthful than facts and fables as equivalent to

historical facts, the boundary between the real and imagined life is blurred. By stating that thoughts of the beloved can “make dreams truths, and fables histories” (8), the speaker reverses conventional expectations, creating a poetic tension between the real and the imagined. The poem also benefits from “delicate, long-drawn musical effects, the bold and ecstatic rapture of Donne at his best” (Bloom, 2008, p. 105). The witty interplay between perception and imagination is emphasised by these stylistic choices.

The presence of the lady is obscurely stated. In the poem, she is both a dream and a reality. This lady, who wakes the lover from the dream, may even be “a mental picture,” or “an abstract, metaphysical idea, corresponding to that which Donne had in mind” (Lewis, 1934, p. 436). Such an interpretation indicates that rather than being a physical reality, the beloved lady’s presence is constructed in the dreamer’s mind. The lady, thus, becomes much less realistic and fulfilling, compared to the idealised figure he has envisioned in his dream (Allen, 1960, p. 293), highlighting the blurry boundaries between the dream and reality. Similar to “Lovers’ Infiniteness” and “The Apparition”, the speaker tries to convince the beloved to stay with him. At the end of the first stanza, he proclaims: “let’s act the rest” (10), which points to the physical act of love. It is an endeavour to bring the lady to bed:

My dream thou brok’st not, but continued’st it,  
Thou art so true that thoughts of thee suffice  
To make dreams truths, and fables histories,  
Enter these arms, for since thou thought’st it best,  
Not to dream all my dream, let’s act the rest. (6-10)

The lover here once again suffers from being deprived of the lady and desires physical intimacy. Based on both abstract and concrete thought, dream and real life, Donne endeavours to establish unity with the lady. As a result, the poem becomes a very vivid portrait of sensuality. However, the yearning for union remains unwavering in the face of love. This is why J. B. Leishman (1965) regards the diction of the poem as “precise and almost scientific” (p. 228), highlighting the immutable purpose of the speaker. He longs for a physical connection and pursues to conflate the abstract with the concrete by transforming his dream into reality. In his opinion, love is not bound to dreams and fantasies but should be experienced fully in reality. The desire to move from dream to reality also suggests a shift from being passive to active in the consummation of love. Thus, the thematic idea of unbounded love in “Lovers’ Infiniteness” is echoed again.

The second stanza goes deeper into the poem’s theme of the blurry line between reality and illusion, notably in how the speaker makes the beloved seem almost supernatural. The speaker foregrounds the lady’s eyes, beauty, and heart, and calls her an angel. She is portrayed as a divine beauty and gift that can read his thoughts “beyond an angel’s art” (16). He implies that with that spiritual power, the lady knows what he has been dreaming. This description has a strategic purpose in the speaker’s speech as it combines spiritual reverence and sexual desire, making the lady both a muse and a lover. Thus, by giving her an angelic feature, the persona ends the stanza with often-quoted rhyming lines: “I must confess, it could not choose but be/ Profane, to think thee anything but thee” (19-20). According to him, it would be almost blasphemous to give up the love of her. This aspect isn’t religious, but it rather strengthens the speaker’s yearning for union by implying that she is the source and fulfilment of both his dreams and his awakening. Donne uses a mix of dream logic, divine imagery, and emotional persuasion to display a lover who wants to prove his affection by making the object of his desire holy.

In the last stanza, the real world and the dream world are blurred once again as the speaker states: “But rising makes me doubt, that now/ Thou art not thou” (22-23). This statement reveals the lover’s inability to discern between the real presence of the lady and her ethereal image generated in his dream. The physical and spiritual are intermingled at this

moment. Blurring between reality and dream, he again uses paradoxical phrases such as, “goest to come” (29). No matter whether it is in a dream or reality, she will always be there. Regardless of her departure or stay, he will keep on dreaming/seeing her:

If mixture it of fear, shame, honour have;  
Perchance as torches, which must ready be,  
Men light and put out, so thou deal'st with me;  
Thou can'st to kindle, goest to come; then I  
Will dream that hope again, but else would die. (29-30)

The spirituality in the beginning and the physical approach in the last stanza are conflated. He mentions that when the lady goes, the dream will persist. The distinction between this dream world and the actual world is imprecise. The speaker also asserts that love should transcend strong emotions: “That love is weak where fear's as strong as he/ 'Tis not all spirit, pure and brave/ If mixture it of fear, shame, honour have” (25-26). This releases love out of all restraints. He implies that love should be pure and ideal. By elevating love, the last stanza reveals a hopeful tone. The speaker's belief that genuine love transcends boundaries and binaries is illustrated by this integration of spiritual and physical love. From this vantage point, the speaker's approach to love in the poem appears to be both an earthly and spiritual experience. The final hopeful tone in the end suggests a resolution to the tension between these two realms. Similarly, Thomas Carew praises Donne's wit by highlighting his innovative use of language to convey these complex ideas. In his “An Elegie upon the Death of Doctor Donne” (1635), he praises Donne's poetry by stating that,

[...] to the awe of thy imperious wit  
Our troublesome language bends, made only fit,  
With her tough thick-rib'd hoops, to gird about  
Thy gyant fancy. (p. 368)

Carew celebrates Donne's poetic genius in his inventive use of language by transcending traditional boundaries. Likewise, the speakers in the three stated poems employ unconventional methods to persuade the lady.

### Conclusion

Donne's speakers/lovers in “Lovers' Infiniteness,” “The Apparition,” and “The Dream” demonstrate a complex interplay between the desire for physical connection and anxiety of separation. The personae in these poems fluctuate between desire and anxiety, intimacy and separation, and seduction and authority. Throughout the poems, instead of resolving these contradictions, the speakers dramatize them. Employing paradox, wit, and Metaphysical conceits, the speakers reveal that they not only articulate their peculiar approach to love but also reveal its instability. This instability remains unresolved and is utilised to further enhance the dramatic mode of the poems. Donne's speakers in these three poems idealize love whilst rendering it physical, volatile, and deeply psychological. They emphasize the control over love, whether through argument or threat. According to them, love serves as a battlefield for argument and negotiation. Consequently, these poems convey an erratic state of love, illustrating a dynamic and often tumultuous experience.

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