



OVERVIEW OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

5. Metaphysical poets and Romanticism

METAPHYSICAL POETS

What is metaphysical poetry ?

- A group of poets emerged in the beginning of the seventeenth century, whose poetry come to be known as the metaphysical poetry.
- Metaphysical :- literally 'meta' means beyond and 'physic' means physical nature.
- A word metaphysical first time used by dr. Johnson in "**The lives of poet**"



I take as metaphysical poetry that in which what is ordinarily apprehensible only by thought is brought within the grasp of feeling, or that in which what is ordinarily only felt is transformed into thought without ceasing to be feeling.

(T. S. Eliot)

ixquotes.com

Major Metaphysical Poets

- John Donne
- George Herbert
- Andrew Marvell
- Saint Robert Southwell
- Richard Crashaw
- Thomas Traherne
- Henry Vaughan

JOHN DONNE

John Donne – Metaphysical Poetry

- Most famous of all metaphysical poets
- The imagery used by John Donne in his various poems comprises of far-fetched images. For example, in his poem "Good Morrow", he compares himself and his beloved with seven sleepers.
- John Donne is very interested in defining and understanding what is real, and what exists and what does not.
- Donne's poems reveal the same characteristics that typified the work of the metaphysical poets: dazzling

CAVALIER POETS INFLUENCED BY DONNE

Cavalier Poets



- ☞ Thomas Carew (1594-1640)
- ☞ Robert Herrick (1591-1634)
- ☞ John Suckling (1609-42)
- ☞ William Davenant (1606-1668)
- ☞ Richard Lovelace (1618-57)



OTHER METAPHYSICAL POETS

George Herbert: Jacula
Prudentium

Andrew Marvell

Robert Southwell

Henry Vaughan

Richard Crashaw

Thomas Carew

Look at this insignificant flea

Triviality of flea

Repetition of verb suck suggests excitement

Readers now knows what he seeks

The speaker complains jealously of the injustice of the insect

this poem – the speaker intends to prove that the lover is being dramatic by denying him

Verb – mingled signals renewed fascination and even arousal at their bloods mixing

By comparing sex to blood in an insect he challenges why intercourse would be different

Mark but this flea, and mark in this,
How little that which thou deniest me is;
It sucked me first, and now sucks thee,
And in this flea our two bloods mingled be;
Thou know'st that this cannot be said
A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead,
Yet this enjoys before it woo,
And pampered swells with one blood made of two,
And this, alas, is more than we would do.

ROMANTICISM

French Revolution

Industrialization

American Independence

Rise of commercialism and

Mass culture



ROMANTICISM

Emphasis on nature and natural or primitive way of life

Critical of civilization

Association of human moods with nature

Emphasis on imagination, spontaneity

Emphasis on individual and subjectivity

Creative freedom

Loose poetic forms

Use of informal language

Expressions of feelings of a solitary man

Influence of French Revolution

WILLIAM BLAKE

Songs of Innocence

Songs of Experience

Marriage of Heaven and Hell

America

The Book of Urizen

The Book of Los

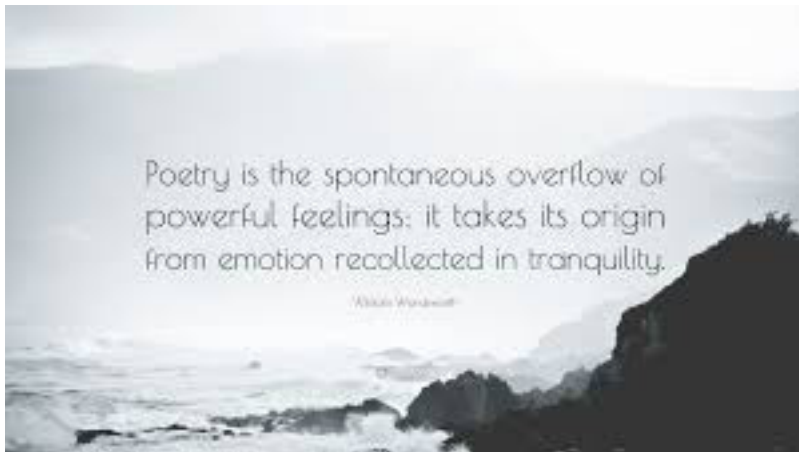


LAKE SCHOOL POETS AND REVOLUTIONARY POETS

William Wordsworth

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Robert Southey



P. B. Shelley

George Gordon Byron

John Keats