

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE METAPHYSICAL POETS

A) Delight in novel thought and expression:

The Metaphysical poets desired 'to say what they hoped had been never said before'. They had their own thoughts and they worked out their own manner of expressing them. They played with thoughts as Elizabethans had played with words. Wit is the salient feature of Metaphysical poetry.

The Metaphysical poets try to find a connection between the abstract and the concrete, the remote and the near in describing his experience of emotional reality. For example: when Donne in "A Valediction forbidding Morning" compares the 'twin souls' of the lovers to 'stiff twin compasses'.

B) Far-fetched sensibility:

The Metaphysical poetry causes wild conceits. The poet ransacks all fields of knowledge, science as well as nature for comparisons. They try to yoke together contradictory things. They link two different areas of experience. The true function of Metaphysical conceit is to join the parts of a fractured world.

C) Affectation and Hyperbole:

In a good Metaphysical poetry the Hyperbole is never superficial. It always has been a favorite device of the poets and they used it purposively.

In Andrew Marwell's poem "To His Coy mistress" the poet begins with a series of hyperbole in the praise of the lady.

D) Obscurity and Vague:

The Metaphysical poets combine dissimilar ideas without attempting to unite them. The real obstacle in understanding the metaphysical poetry is its novelty. They try to yoke together dissimilar experiences. They use private symbolism, which the reader find difficult to understand.

E) **Dramatic Realism :**

The Metaphysical poets used brilliant conceits apart from direct speech. They used colloquial language to bring about the dramatic realism.

Donne is foremost in using dramatic realism in his poems.

F) Learning:

Metaphysical poets were the men of learning and they wanted to show it through their poetry. Metaphysical poetry is laden with the poet's scholarship. As Dr. Johnson says no man could be born metaphysical poet.