

# METAPHYSICAL POETRY

*Metaphysical poetry is a group of poems that share common characteristics: they are all highly intellectualized, use rather strange imagery, use frequent paradox and contain extremely complicated thought.*

*Literary critic and poet Samuel Johnson first coined the term 'metaphysical poetry' in his book Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets (1709-1781). In the book, Johnson wrote about a group of 17th-century British poets that included John Donne, George Herbert, Richard Crashaw, Andrew Marvell and Henry Vaughan. He noted how the poets shared many common characteristics, especially ones of wit and elaborate style.*

# What Does Metaphysical Mean?

*The word 'meta' means 'after,' so the literal translation of 'metaphysical' is 'after the physical.' Basically, metaphysics deals with questions that can't be explained by science. It questions the nature of reality in a philosophical way.*

- Here are some common metaphysical questions:*
- Does God exist?*
- Is there a difference between the way things appear to us and the way they really are? Essentially, what is the difference between reality and perception?*
- Is everything that happens already predetermined? If so, then is free choice non-existent?*
- Is consciousness limited to the brain?*

*Metaphysics can cover a broad range of topics from religious to consciousness; however, all the questions about metaphysics ponder the nature of reality. And of course, there is no one correct answer to any of these questions. Metaphysics is about exploration and philosophy, not about science and math.*

# CHARACTERISTICS OF METAPHYSICAL POETRY

- *The group of metaphysical poets that we mentioned earlier is obviously not the only poets or philosophers or writers that deal with metaphysical questions. There are other more specific characteristics that prompted Johnson to place the 17th-century poets together.*
- *Perhaps the most common characteristic is that metaphysical poetry contained large doses of wit. In fact, although the poets were examining serious questions about the existence of God or whether a human could possibly perceive the world, the poets were sure to ponder those questions with humor.*
- *Metaphysical poetry also sought to shock the reader and wake him or her up from his or her normal existence in order to question the unquestionable. The poetry often mixed ordinary speech with **paradoxes** and **puns**. The results were strange, comparing unlikely things, such as lovers to a compass or the soul to a drop of dew. These weird comparisons were called **conceits**.*

*Metaphysical poetry also explored a few common themes. They all had a religious sentiment. In addition, many of the poems explored the theme of carpe diem (seize the day) and investigated the humanity of life.*

*One great way to analyze metaphysical poetry is to consider how the poems are about both thought and feeling. Think about it. How could you possibly write a poem about the existence of God if you didn't have some emotional reaction to such an enormous, life-altering question?*

*Metaphysical poetry investigates the relation between rational, logical argument on the one hand and intuition or “mysticism” on the other, often depicted with sensuous detail*

*Metaphysical poetry is considered highly ambiguous due to high intellect and knowledge of metaphysical poets.*

## ***DEVICES USED IN METAPHYSICAL POETRY***

*Metaphysical poets like John Donne use complex, dramatic expressions and a variety of literary devices like extended conceits, paradoxes, and imagery in colloquial and personal language that challenges ideas of morality, traditional love, and carnality; it is intellectually inventive even jarring sometimes because it mixes and links two unlike things to create extended metaphors and anecdotes that is unique in comparison to previous poets of his era particularly Edmund Spenser*

***Metaphysical conceits*** are of Central importance in metaphysical poetry. A (metaphysical) conceit is usually classified as a subtype of metaphor – an elaborate and strikingly unconventional or supposedly far-fetched metaphor, hyperbole, contradiction, simile, paradox or oxymoron causing a shock to the reader by the obvious dissimilarity, “distance” between or stunning incompatibility of the objects compared. One of the most famous conceits is John Donne's *A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning*, a poem in which Donne compares two souls in love to the points on a geometer's compass.



# JOHN DONNE

## ***GOOD MORROW***

- *John Donne, after careful analysis, decided to write “The Good Morrow”. In this poem, he compares his former life with present and concludes that present life is better than the previous one. Through arguments, he substantiates his stance; therefore, whole poem is based on arguments. He also quotes some examples from the past. Mostly, they belong to myth. Donne links these examples with his own life. It seems that he is trying to prove something. Perhaps, he wants to prove the superiority of love over other material things of life. It is one of the major characteristics of Donne’s poetry that he considers love the greatest thing in the whole world. However, pleasure of love is dependent on beloved, thinks Donne; one can only feel beauty of love if he has a loyal beloved. In order to determine beauty in Donne’s love, let us do analysis of “The Good Morrow”.*

## ***Title Analysis of “The Good Morrow”:***

*Analysis must be deeper, if we want to acknowledge proper meaning of “The Good Morrow”. Generally, the name of poem originates three meanings; the following day, the time following an event and the near future. It also means a fresh morning. If we combine all these meanings, then we come to the conclusion that John Donne is talking about the freshness, which is present in his future life. He just not only talks about it but also is hopeful about his upcoming life. Previous life of John Donne was waste but the present and future life are not the same. Another meaning, which is derived from “The Good Morrow”, is that the poet wants to forget his past life. He wants to start his life afresh. It seems that he has awakened from a long sleep. Now, he wants to start a new life with new passion and hope.*

### ***Stanza-I Analysis of “The Good Morrow”:***

*John Donne in this poem is not only a poet but also a lover. As a lover, he expresses his gratitude towards the life, which he currently is spending. He along with his beloved laments his previous life. Before falling in love, they were leading a tasteless life. They were unaware about the beauty of life, which is only possible if they have the power of love in their hands. Past days of their lives were rustic and childish. Donne then quotes the incident of “seven sleepers [of] den?”. It is an incident from the myth but is also mentioned in the Bible that seven persons took shelter in a cave. They slept there for more than two hundred years but when they woke up, they did not realize the duration of their sleep. Thus, they could not understand what happened to them.*

*The poet and his beloved have also spent a life like the seven sleepers of den. They had no knowledge about life and love. They were in a long sleep. Donne is putting his life and the life of seven sleepers in juxtaposition. He compares his life with theirs and finds no dissimilarity in them. In his previous life, Donne may have find beauty in woman but he does not consider it truth; it was a fancy; "twas but a dreame of thee."; their beauty was just the reflection of his beloved. Thus, in first stanza of "The Good Morrow", John Donne has begun his love analysis along with scrutiny of his past life.*

## ***Stanza-II Analysis of “The Good Morrow”:***

*Stanza II of “The Good Morrow” is depth analysis of the lovers’ world. There is a sharp contrast between the world of love and the world of reality. Many people are attached to material things of life but in Donne’s eyes, true happiness lies within love. Readers can also witness development of thought in this poem. The poet has changed his thinking. He has wasted his previous life. Although it is painful, yet the poet wants to forget it completely as finally, he sees no more darkness in his life. Poet’s life is far away from irrationality, jealousy and suspicion. If anything is present in his life then that thing is love.*

### ***Stanza-III Analysis of “The Good Morrow”:***

*There is an enhancement in Stanza-III of the poem. While appreciating the beauty of his world, the poet talks about unity. His face shines in the eyes of his beloved. Similarly, his beloved’s face shines in his eyes. “My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears”. The poet and his beloved have created a complete world from their love but there is no possibility of decay in it. Geographical world is temporary and it has “sharpe North” and “declining West”, whereas the poet’s world is eternal; their love is immortal and there is oneness in their love. Here, in last stanza of “The Good Morrow”, the poet is making a clear analysis of equality and unity.*

## ***Analysis of imagery in “The Good Morrow”:***

*Although the poet talks about spirituality of love, yet there are some references and images, which are from the myth. Some examples of images, used in the poem, are: “hemisphere”, “geographical world”, “discoverers”, “seven sleepers of den”, “room” etc. Donne has variety of images; every poem has different type of imagery. Moreover, Donne’s imagery is not imaginative nor is it supernatural. He exemplifies his point of view from real life examples. For instance, “maps”, “room” and “seas” are known to everyone. Thus, imagery of John Donne is simple yet forceful.*

# The Ecstasy

*The poem deals with Donne's metaphysics of love. It presents the communion of two souls of a loving couple on a grassy turf beside a river, untouched by carnal passions. The physical aspect of love-making finds no mention here. The lovers are engrossed in the thought of an abiding union and are animated by the impulse to coalesce and fuse into one. The poem presents the lovers in a trans like state when both of them appear to be verging on being oblivious of their carnal life.*

*Donne's typical method is to present an idea in terms of concrete images. The images become emotional equivalent of his thought. Let us see how he presents the unforgettable idea of a beatific experience through the image of 'extasie' reinforced by a wealth of images culled from different spheres of life.*



*There is a pun on the title word, 'extasie'. In the modern sense it refers to the trans-like state the lovers have entered into. But the original Greek meaning takes us to the heart of the poem. The Greek word, 'ekstasis' means 'going forth'. The souls go out of their respective bodies. They have a dialogue ruminating over their communion, and surprisingly enough, there is a bystander who is within a convenient distance from there. This third person is no impediment in their love-making on the spiritual plane. He appears to be device invented by the poet, adding substance to their highfalutin experience, either by testifying to the veracity of the experience or by also coming under the spell of their ecstatic vision. Here the poet's mood is romantic, bringing in the violet, a conventional image of love, reclining on the pregnant bank, but the pictorial description of the visual beauty simply enhances the intensity of their love without any romantic gloss, and it is much in keeping with the mood of the poet.*

*The expression, 'balm' also rightly finds company in the sweet –smelling violet evoking the right ambience. This image of the violet which has a visual beauty recurs later in the poem with a changed connotation without any romantic association. Here we have the botanical expression, 'grafting', as a variation in a different way on the image, 'to engraft our hands', used at the outset of the poem. The two images: the images of engrafting hands and transplanting of a violet-work in conjunction with each other. The former implies the removal of their separateness and their emerging into a single identity and the latter speaks of the strengthening of the weaker breed of the violet in a richer soil. It is symbolic of the creation of a new soil that is bereft of all weaknesses.*

*The poet does a remarkable feat of imagination by finding the image of a jeweler threading pearls on a string. The lovers are lost in gazing at each other in such a way that there is perhaps, the optical illusion of their eyes being on a double string. It appears to be hyperbole that the eyeballs are on the string, and only justification for this image is that it is suggestive of their becoming one. The lovers find themselves on the same emotional wave-length and from this rapport they establish it appears that all hostilities cease other reflected in their eyes suggest an addition of pictures. The word 'propagation' apparently suggests an increase in spiritual grandeur.*

*The fourth stanza presents the core of the experience of oneness of the lovers. The soul here takes the lead and the body lies still and inert. The soul is engaged in a mission and accomplishes the task with a remarkable serenity and aplomb. The image comes to us in an expanded form. It is the image of two equal armies, arrayed against each other and awaiting announcement of victory in the battlefield by fate. The expression, 'equal armies' shows the attitude of the poet towards lovers in the sense that in the Petrarchan vein there is one sided love-making, that is, the lover adores the beloved as if the latter were a duty and the former a vassal, but here both are on par with each other without having an edge over the other. The body becomes quiescent and the soul is resplended with spiritual ecstasy.*

*In stanza V we have another elaborate simile that describes the physical condition of the lovers. They are compared to statues in a tomb from where the soul has gone out. The image of the 'transplant' is picked up in stanza XI in a different manner. The concept here is of 'interanimation', and this is on physiological as well as metaphysical plane. It is the rejuvenation of the phoenix-like soul ravaged by loneliness. With this reshaping of the soul in a new mould the lovers have the feeling that they are beyond the inexorable law of change, decay and death. Time has no effect on them, because they have reached the state of timelessness. They have passed beyond the confines of the temporal world and enjoy a state of bliss, and the poet rightly says, ". . . whom no change can invade."*

*But later in the poem there is a transition from the world of timelessness to the mortal coil of life. The poet talks about the descent of the soul into the body. Many critics take it to be a denouement that after celebrating the ecstatic union on the spiritual plane the poet talks about their coming back to the body. It is no anti-climax because in the Donne universe there is no segregation of soul and body in hermetically sealed boxes, and this interanimation is a subtle process which invigorates and enriches the life. Without the incarnation of the beatific vision in the body it remains shadowy, chimerical and ethereal. Stanza XVI is pregnant with deep physiological implication:*

*As our . . .*

*. . . which makes us man.*

# 'The Flea' by John Donne

*The poem is divided into three stanzas of nine lines each. In stanza one, the speaker shows a flea to a young woman he is trying to coax to sleep with him and argues that because it bit him and then her, their blood is joined in the flea's body, which is almost like being joined sexually. He points out that the flea isn't a monogamous creature; it just moves from host to host, sucking blood, and nobody calls it wrong or sinful. It is just doing what's in its nature. Therefore, if the flea's action is innocent, then there is nothing wrong with them having a sexual relationship.*

*In stanza two, the speaker furthers his argument, trying to convince the woman that the flea is like a marriage bed where they've joined as one. The woman never speaks in the poem, but there's a suggestion that she wants to squash the flea, because the speaker begs her to 'spare' it and compares killing the flea to killing him and herself as well, because their lives are joined in the flea.*

*In stanza three, the speaker pleads with the woman, arguing that the flea hasn't done anything wrong, and that in fact their relationship is even less sinful because they would be only committing to each other, while the flea never remains with one host/partner. His words indicate that she's told him that killing the flea has harmed neither of them, and that he'll soon get over her: 'Yet thou triumphs, and say'st that thou find'st not thyself nor me the weaker now.' He concludes that she has sacrificed her 'honor,' or her virginity, not by giving herself to him, but by killing the innocent flea that holds both of their lives.*



## ***Brief Analysis of Donne's Flea***

*The Flea is a poem that takes the reader into the heart of an intimate space. Here sit a man and a woman, possibly on a bed, the man pointing out the presence of a flea, quite common in Renaissance times, the middle of the 16th century.*

*This tiny parasite has recently sucked blood from them both, as is their instinct, so the man takes this opportunity to put forward an argument for sexual union to the woman, based on the now swollen flea's actions.*

*About the sucking of the flea: it's all quite natural a process, no sin or shame or loss of virginity involved. That word maidenhead actually means hymen, so we can assume the woman is a virgin.*

*Their blood is mingled, a successful act for the flea who doesn't have to bother with pleasantries, charm or promises (to woo). If only they could emulate the flea and mingle their own blood, that is, have sex.*

*The woman is about to kill the flea but is stopped by the man...Oh stay. He posits that the flea is sacred, a symbol of marriage, and that killing it would amount to sacrilege.*

*She ignores him. She's having none of this religious symbolism or hyperbole. It's interesting to note that she is silent throughout the poem yet is the one who has all the power. She kills the flea with her nail. Tiny act, huge consequences.*

*By killing the parasite the woman has effectively ended the argument, the man almost says as much... 'thou triumph'st'...leaving them both on the bed as equals.*

*Yet, in the final three lines there seems to be a twist. The man admits she could be right... 'Tis true'... but, in a last attempt to win her over... 'when thou yield'st to me'... he says that only her honor will be lost, a trivial matter, just like the killing of the flea.*

*So the reader is left to ponder on the argument, to savour the mini-drama and to conclude that the outcome of this brief encounter will never be known.*

## ***Summary of Twickenham Garden***

*The speaker of the poem is broken-hearted. He goes into a garden to be soothed, to receive a cure for his broken heart. But that is not to be so; because he also gets his worries and his love into the garden too and they won't allow him to heal.*

*The garden which was originally full of glory was now 'benighted' by the 'winter'; meaning that his broken heart made the garden look like a sinister place. He felt as if the trees were laughing and mocking him. He wants to be some senseless piece of the garden so that he can escape from this vicious cycle.*

*The speaker says that the tears that does not taste like his's are all false. The speaker laments the inability to see a woman's heart clearly. Because of this, he says only the woman knows the truth and her truth causes a lot of pain to her lover.*

## ***Central Idea of Twickenham Garden***

*The central idea of the poem is to show a broken heart, a man who loves a girl dearly but cannot receive back the same from her, and the emotions it goes through.*

## ***Tone of Twickenham Garden***

*The tone of the poem is sad and bitter; sad at the beginning and bitter at the end, but never turning hostile towards the lady who is alluded to in the verse.*

## **Poetic Devices in Twickenham Garden**

### **Allusion:**

*The speaker does not specifically say that his love was unrequited. But it can be seen through the verse. In the same way, the receiver of his love, the woman is not specifically mentioned. But going by the setting of the poem, it can be assumed to be Countess of Bedford, to whom the Twickenham Park belonged to.*

### **Rhyme:**

*The rhyme of the poem is unconventional. But as if to make this irregularity a regularity, the poet uses the same rhyme scheme in all the three stanzas. The rhyme scheme is ABABBCCDD.*

### **Personification:**

*There is some personification in the second stanza. The trees are said to 'laugh and mock'; both actions of a person.*

## **Symbol and Metaphor:**

In the last line of the poem, the speaker says he brought a serpent into the Paradise. The serpent, as one can guess, is not literally a one. It is taken from the Biblical verse of Adam and Eve. The serpent tricks Adam into taking an apple from a tree, which gets him exiled into the world to live by the sweat of brow. The serpent the speaker speaks of is something similar.

# Andrew Marvell

## "The Garden"

### **Summary:**

*"The Garden" begins with the speaker reflecting upon the vanity and inferiority of man's devotion to public life in politics, war, and civic service. Instead, the speaker values a retreat to "Fair Quiet" and its sister, "Innocence," in a private garden. The speaker portrays the garden as a space of "sacred plants," removed from society and its "rude" demands. He praises the garden for its shade of "lovely green," which he sees as superior to the white and red hues that commonly signify passionate love.*

*The speaker claims that when passion has run its course, love turns people towards a contemplative life surrounded by nature. He praises the abundance of fruits and plants in the garden, imagining himself tripping over melons and falling upon the grass.*

*Meanwhile, his mind retreats into a state of inner happiness, allowing him to create and contemplate “other worlds and other seas.” The speaker then returns to addressing the garden, where he envisions his soul releasing itself from his body and perching in the trees like a bird. He compares the scene to the “happy garden-state” of Eden, the Biblical paradise in which God created Adam and Eve. The poem ends with the speaker imagining the garden as its own cosmos, with a sun running through a “fragrant zodiac” and an “industrious bee” whose work computes the passage of time.*



*The chief point of the poem is to contrast and reconcile conscious and unconscious states, the intuitive and intellectual modes of apprehension. Yet this distinction is never made explicitly, Marvell's thought implied by metaphors. The poem combines the idea of the conscious mind including everything because understanding it and the unconscious animal nature including everything being in harmony with it. The point is not that these two are essentially different, but that they must cease to be different so far as either is to be known.*

*The Garden is a poem rich in symbolism. The gardens to which Marvell most directly alludes in his poem are The Garden of Eden, The earthly paradise and that garden to which the stoic and Epicurean, as well as the Platonist retire for solace or meditation. The poem begins by establishing that of the entire possible garden, it is dealing with that of retirement, with the garden of the contemplative man who shuns action. Man vainly runs after palm symbolizing victors oak symbolizing rulers and Bayes symbolizing the poets but retired life is quantitatively superior. If we appraise action in terms of plants we get single plants, whereas retirement offers us the solace of not one but all plants. The first stanza then is a witty dispraise of active life, though it has nothing to distinguish it sharply from other kinds of garden poetry such as libertine or Epicurean.*

# A Dialogue Between the Soul and Body by Andrew Marvell

*The poem, A Dialogue Between the Soul and Body by Andrew Marvell describes the conflict between the human Body and the human Soul, each attributing its troubles and sufferings to the other. The Soul feels that it is a prisoner inside the Body while the Body feels that the Soul is a tyrant imposing all kinds of restraints and restrictions upon the Body.*

*The Soul wishes that the Body should die so that the Soul can go back to heaven, its original abode. The Body, in turn, holds the Soul responsible for all the sins that the Body commits. All sins, says the Body, are the results of the many and conflicting emotions which the Soul experiences.*

## ***Imagery and Metaphysical Elements in the Poem***

*The poem, A Dialogue Between the Soul and Body contains vivid and concrete imagery and makes use of a number of conceits of the metaphysical kind. In fact, the very basis of the poem is the metaphysical kind.*

*In fact, the very basis of the poem is the metaphysical concept that the Soul and the Body are separate entities. The Body feeling itself to be a victim of the Soul's tyranny, and the Soul believing itself to be a prisoner inside the Body are metaphysical conceits.*

*In the opening speech, we have a graphic picture of a prisoner being held in chains and fetters, and about to be hanged on the gallows. In the second speech, we have a vivid picture of the Body going about like a walking precipice.*

*In the third stanza, we have the vivid picture of a ship nearing its destination but getting wrecked just when it is close to the harbor. In the final speech we have a series of vivid pictures describing the physical manifestations of the emotions experienced by the Soul.*

# The Definition of Love by Andrew Marvell

*The poem, The Definition of Love talks about the nature of the love, which exists between the poet and his beloved. The poet regards this love as being perfect and therefore unattainable. In the poem, the poet, first of all, makes his readers acquainted with the parentage of this love. This love, the poet says, is of rare birth. It is the offspring of the marriage of Despair and Impossibility. Only resolute Despair could have produced such a divine love. In the case of a love like this, Hope would prove to be utterly vain and futile because this love can never be achieved.*

*The poet in the next lines tells that it is the hostility of Fate which is responsible for not permitting him and his beloved to be united. Fate is always jealous of perfect lovers, and never allows them to be united. A union between two perfect lovers would be a fatal blow to the power and authority of Fate.*

*Fate has placed these two lovers as far part from each other as the North Pole and the South Pole are from each other. These lovers can never come together in spite of the fact that they are the pivot round which the whole world of love revolves.*



*The love, the poet says, can be fulfilled only if the spinning spheres collapse and if the earth is torn asunder by some violent convulsion. In order to bring these lovers together, the whole world must be projected or flattened into a plane. As only oblique lines can meet each other in all geometrical angles, in the same way only guilty or adulterous lovers can find the fulfillment of their passion. The love of the poet and the love of his beloved are, however, like parallel lines which can never meet even if they are stretched to infinity. Thus the love of the poet and his beloved is only a meeting of the minds but can never take the form of a physical union. This love may be defined as “the conjunction of the mind”, and opposition of the stars.”*

## ***Theme, Imagery and Metaphysical Conceits in the Poem***

*The poem, The Definition of Love by Andrew Marvell describes the character of the poet's love for his beloved. This love, says the poet, is perfect and therefore unattainable. This love is divine, but for that very reason hopeless. Perfect love of this kind is most unwelcome to Fate who therefore never permits the union of perfect lovers. This kind of perfect love can mean only a spiritual union but never a physical one. This love is "the conjunction of the mind and opposition of the stars."*

*The poem contains a number of metaphysical conceits, which can be best defined by the lines like "begotten by Despair upon Impossibility". The idea here is that the poet's love is unattainable, but in order to express this idea the poet personifies Despair and Impossibility, and imagines that his love was produced by their union.*

*There is another use of conceit in the poem. And this is more fantastic conceit than that of the previously discussed. The poet says: "His love can be achieved only if three conditions are fulfilled: first, the spinning planets must collapse; second, the earth should be torn asunder by some fresh convulsion; and third, the whole world should be projected or flattened into a planet. As these three conditions are impossible to fulfil, the lovers cannot be united.*

*Yet another conceit occurs in the stanza in which the poet compares the loves between him and his beloved to the parallel lines which can never meet. Only oblique lines meet in all geometrical angles, and in the same way only the passion of guilt or adulterous lovers can be satisfied. The two closing lines of the poem also contain a metaphysical conceit.*

# **An Horatian Ode: upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland**

## **Andrew Marvell**

### **Analysis**

This poem is, obviously, an ode celebrating the return of Cromwell from his defeat of the Irish while looking forward to his campaign against the Scots. "An Horatian Ode: upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland" is written in AABB rhyme scheme with eight stanzas in the first two lines and six in the last two lines of each stanza.

This writing is historical, and, according to historical use of the word "Ode", it is meant as a song to be sung. The phrase "Horatian Ode" comes from the Greek poet/writer/philosopher Horace. It means an ode that has one stanza whose pattern repeats throughout it. They are also subject to philosophy and more personal than other types of odes. In this poem, Marvell uses two couplets per stanza and repeats it consistently.

## Historical Background

*Marvell's Horatian Ode appears to have been written between Cromwell's arrival in London in June 1650 and his departure for Scotland a month later. Marvell responded to the occasion of the invasion of Scotland in a way that showed not only the poet's understanding of the event but also placed the event in a larger national history. It was in an atmosphere of expectation and uncertainty that Marvell felt impelled to give form to his thoughts about the killing of the king and the emergence of a new military leader. Cromwell's emergence and the radical change in temper and plans of the new government certainly presented a challenge peculiarly attuned to Marvell's habits of mind.*

# Horatian Ode

*The **Horatian Ode** is the Latin descendant of the Aeolic ode, both of which were written to project a tranquil, contemplative tone meant for meditation. Both retain the purpose and formality of all odes, however the Latin descendant attributed to Horace in 20 BC, is better preserved.*

*The Horatian Ode is simply a stanzaic form in which all stanzas are structured in the same pattern at the discretion of the poet. (rhyme, meter, number of lines etc.), more technically it is “nonce stanzaic” or a “homostrophic” ode (ode made up of same structured stanzas created specifically for that poem)*

*Below are the first 2 stanzas of an Horatian Ode On Cromwell's Return from Ireland by Andrew Marvel (1621-1678). It is written in quatrains made up of rhyming couplets, L1,L2 iambic tetrameter, L3,L4 iambic trimeter and indented. The poet could just as well have written the ode in cinquains in iambic pentameter with alternating rhyme and as long as all of the stanzas were the same, it too could be identified as an Horatian Ode.*

*The forward youth that would appear*

*Must now forsake his Muses dear,*

*— — -Nor in the shadows sing*

*— — -His numbers languishing:*

*'Tis time to leave the books in dust*

*And oil th' unused armor's rust,*

*— — -Removing from the wall*

*— — -The corselet of the hall.*





