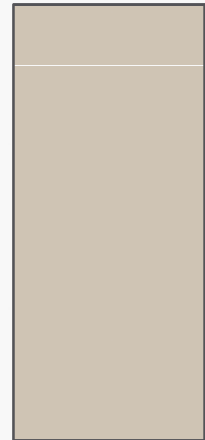


# ROMANCING THE POETIC SELF

A Lecture on Pain and *the Sublime*

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## TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF ROMANTICISM

- Three keywords-  
**self-** return to *Nature*; Nature resonating with the solitary self)  
**pain-** all prophecies come out of pain  
**sublime-** Shelley's notion of Exaltation- all emotions at their heightened state
- Nature as the projection of self
- The Romantic transcends time, history (Odia Romanticism)
- Innate, perpetual
- The Romantic is a testament of emotions
- "The Romantic spirit can be defined as an accentuated predominance of emotional life, provoked or directed by the exercise of imaginative vision, and in its turn stimulating or directing such exercise." (Legouis and Cazamian); "Intense emotion coupled with an intense display of imagery"

# 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY ROMANTICISM IN EUROPE

## German

- The spiritual beyond the five senses; the transcendental, possibility of goodness and *the sublime*
- Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther*- inevitable suffering of the sensitive self

## British

- Return to Nature
- Renaissance of Wonder (Thomas Watts-Dunton)
- Strangeness added to Beauty (Pater)
- Joyce- *Portrait*- static and kinetic art- sublime
  - \*Desire and loathing are produced by the pornographic and the didactic. The Aesthetic emotion is static (that which arrests, tragic art).
  - \*The mind like a fading coal (Shelley) in the mysterious instant.
  - \*Beauty when produces aesthetic stasis, ideal pity and ideal terror would lead to the Sublime.

### a) Blake

- the mystical, moral and philosophical
- mystery of the human subject ("world in a grain of sand")
- innocence and experience (Tiger and Lamb)
- marriage of contraries, religion in the light of love

### b) Wordsworth

- Modifying colours of Imagination (recollecting from spots of time)
- Familiar to strange
- Truth of Science and Art

## CONTD...

### c) Coleridge

- willing suspension of disbelief
- supernatural/unfamiliar to immediate
- Primary and secondary imagination (innate to esemplastic, integrational, organic)
- *Dejection*- a grief without a pang- a new earth and new heaven

### d) Byron

- satire on the world, taking refuge in wandering
- adventure

### e) Shelley

- love as going out of one's own nature and identifying with the Beautiful
- intellectual preoccupation of Nature (*Hymn to Intellectual Beauty*)
- *Dejection*- yet now despair itself is mild
- *Defence*- to be a poet is to apprehend the true and the beautiful

### f) Keats

- beauty as an underlying principle of seeking truth.
- Songs of spring, Autumn- poetic compensation of loss
- this harmony produces bliss- Shanta rasa (*Ode to Autumn*)

## ROMANTIC POETRY AND *THE SUBLIME*

- The reception of art is primarily realized in the realms of the sublime; that our ancient aestheticians understood as '*Rasa*', *ananda*, *bliss*.
- **Longinus and the five sources of sublimity**- "great thoughts, strong emotions, certain figures of thought and speech, noble diction, and dignified word arrangement." (*On the Sublime*, 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD)
- **Burke's notion of the Sublime**- "Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the sublime; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling. I say the strongest emotion, because I am satisfied **the ideas of pain are much more powerful than those which enter on the part of pleasure.**" (*A Philosophical Inquiry Into The Origin Of Our Ideas Of The Sublime And Beautiful*, 1757). [**Shelley- "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thoughts"**]
- **Schiller's "independent principle"**- "The feeling of the sublime is a mixed feeling. It is a combination of woefulness, which expresses itself in its highest degree as a shudder, and of joyfulness, which can rise up to enrapture, and, although it is not properly pleasure, is yet widely preferred to every pleasure by fine souls. This union of two contradictory sentiments in a single feeling proves our moral independence in an irrefutable manner." (*On the Sublime*, 1801)

## SHELLEY'S IDEA OF SELF (Preface to *Prometheus Unbound*)

- As to imitation, poetry is a mimetic art. It creates, but it creates by combination and representation. Poetical abstractions are beautiful and new, not because the portions of which they are composed had no previous existence in the mind of man or in Nature, but because **the whole produced by their combination has some intelligible and beautiful analogy with those sources of emotion and thought and with the contemporary condition of them.**
- But it is a mistake to suppose that I dedicate my poetical compositions solely to the direct enforcement of reform, or that I consider them in any degree as containing a reasoned system on **the theory of human life (self). Didactic poetry is my abhorrence;** nothing can be equally well expressed in prose that is not tedious and supererogatory in verse.
- A poet is the combined product of such internal powers as modify the nature of others, and of such external influences as excite and sustain these powers; he is not one, but both. Every man's mind is, in this respect, modified by all the objects of Nature and art; by every word and every suggestion which he ever admitted to act upon his consciousness; it is the mirror upon which all forms are reflected and in which they compose one form. **Poets, not otherwise than philosophers, painters, sculptors and musicians, are, in one sense, the creators, and, in another, the creations, of their age.**
- The only imaginary being, resembling in any degree Prometheus, is Satan; and Prometheus is, in my judgment, a more poetical character than Satan, because, in addition to courage, and majesty, and firm and patient opposition to omnipotent force, he is susceptible of being described as exempt from the taints of ambition, envy, revenge, and a desire for personal aggrandizement, which, in the hero of *Paradise Lost*, interfere with the interest.

# ROMANTICISM IN ODIA LITERATURE

- The Sabuja Juga
- Thin line of difference between the sabuja and sampratika in Odia poetry; coincide in literary history
- Imitation and beautification

Utkala kamala bilasa dirghika  
Marala malini nilaambu chilika  
Utkala ra tuhi charu alankara  
Utkala bhubane sobhara bhandara (Radhanath Ray)

Sila gruha andhakara basi mun janani  
Utkala nathili jaani achi lo toh pure  
Emanta rupa ra lila na bahu tarani  
Aaji e sandhya re nila Mahanadi jale (Mayadhar Mansingh)

Tume dekhi acha silare tara ta ramya kala ra rupa  
Mun dekhichi tahin koti kankala bhagna buku ra stupa (Sachi Routray)

# ROMANCING THE PAIN

## THE ODIA SOUL

- Pain, sublime and the devotional

Dana kana pache mana heu mate  
Nilachakra bana chahin  
Sukhi heuthibi Akhila pati he  
Nirdaya hoiba nahin (Banamali)

Krushna hastu bansi ke dianta mote  
Bhasai dianti Jamuna srote (Gopalkrushna)

Na dele na dia pache akhire mo parasa  
Saburi paranu prabhu na nibhaa harasa (Sarada Prasanna Nayak)

Guhari suna bhagabana  
Badhira hela ki na suna (Ganesh Mahapatra)

Sabuthiru banchita kari keun jasa bana udaiba he  
Jaha deithila sabu ta nelani aau ebe kisa chadaiba he (Lakhmikanta Mohapatra)

- idea of 'the self' understood in connection with the divine
- appeal to the divine; intense pathos
- *karuna rasa*



## CONTD...

- The social, patriotic, and romantic hues

Bhala kari naa buhare naauri  
Jhia ku maduchi dara (Godavarisha Mishra)

**We romanticize pain in order to respond to the surrounding (A boat capsized, a lover drowned, deity emerges)**

Tu hi maa janama bhumi  
Janamile to kola re Kete sura bira nare  
...Ramachandra, Bhisma ,Drona Karna Arjuna  
Kete kete punyabati, kete patibrata Sati,  
Kete bira nari kete bira janani  
Samaste tora duhita, Padmini, Savitri, Sita (Madhusudan Rao)

**Nostalgia, heroism, Nationalism and consolidation of a culture, but the framework is painful memory**

Dura chanda tume bujhila ta nahin kumudini mana bedana (Anutapa)

Dure thile pase achi eha thibu gheni  
Kete dure chandra kete dure kumudini  
Priti abheda tankara  
Jete dure thile je jahara se tahara (Upendra Bhanja)

**Intense pain gets its objective correlative in the two objects/symbols**

**Helplessness of the poet finds a safe refuge, but Pain is its anchor**

## CULMINATION

- Romanticism is Universal
- The Modernist has failed to distance itself from the Romantic
- My nerves are bad tonight,  
Speak to me, stay with me  
Why don't you speak to me? Speak (*The Waste Land*)

THE ALLIANCE CONTINUES