



1. INTRODUCTION

The poet who loves to live and lives to love is Dr. Mayadhar Mansingha (1905-1973). He loves his beloved leman, his motherland, our glorious past, sister who became widow very soon, the mankind and to this earth made of soil, love and human bondage. His entire life was a busy passage of war and bloodshed. He has to fight and struggle hard with the lot, his own kismet, the time and so called societal codes, decrees, doctrines and dogmas through his entire life. His entire life was made of pain, struggle, sufferings and his own optimistic voice which of course

made his eternal ingredients poetic and romantic in true sense. He was very dare and straight forward which is also an important cause of his poetry. This, is reflected too from the petals of his each and every poem. The commitment, the truthfulness and lively emotion, attitude, intuition and experience of all these things as a whole radiate from his literary works, especially from his autobiography and poetry. The knitting art and each word of his poetry exhibits the depth of his sentiment and emotion with a great density and viscosity.

The Text and Context of Mayadhar Mansingha's Poetry

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Abstract:

This paper tries to enlighten the different points of poetic compass of Dr. Mansingha(1905-1973). He is very popular in the world of Odia as well as English Language and Literature as a notable critic, poet, essayist, biographer, autobiographer dramatist, travelogue writer etc. I have tried here to focus on the romantic aspects of his poetry with reference to the special tone and flavour he did add to this trend of Odia literature. Here I have drawn the outlines of his life full of pain, heart-breaks, struggle, his acmes and ideals as an educator and the romantic humanistic aspects of his poetry. To estimate and evaluate the romantic temper and the aesthetic and stylistic value of his poems is another dimension of this probe or paper.

Keywords: Romantic, Nostalgia, Realism, Style, Gandhian Philosophy.



2. MANASINGHA: LIFE AND PERSONALITY

Dr. Mansingha is a prolific poet and in fact a versatile writer of different aspects of Odia literature. Dr. Mansingha was a man of English language and literature but his contribution to the Odia literature is great indeed. He has written a literary history of Odia literature in English language brought out by the Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi. He has gone through none of the stream of the socio-historical phrase. He opted his own style, own theme and own flavour in his own way. He penned dexterously in the different streams of philosophy. His poesies are embedded in the different solutions of Romanticism, Realism, Nationalism and Gandhian Philosophy in his own style. Says Professor (Dr.) Indra Nath Choudhuri on the qualities of poet Dr. Mansingha –

“However, he was pre-eminently a poet of romantic love but in the course of time, along with other eminent Oriya writers added a new tone in the Oriya literary world and turned idealistic romantic sensibility into deep humanistic fervour and laced it with “the still, sad music of humanity,”(Wordsworth). He was a multi-faceted writer excelling both in prose and poetry.” [1]

Born on 13th November 1905 in Nandala village of Chilika, a treasure trove of natural beauty of Odisha. Lost his parents unfortunately in his early childhood just at the age of four years. He took his education by virtue of his firm determination and pursued his higher elementary as well as studies with the help of scholarships and private tuitions. In toto he had the real courage and strength of education and perhaps this made him more straight forward and

firm in his later poetic firmament. His words are not only chesty towards the emotion of the context of said poetry but also committed to his own personality. Hence, it can be said that the words and artistic exertion or the *métier* of Mansingha are evidently the delegates and spokesmen of his ideas and personality. His poetic craftsmanship is really praise-worthy in terms of attitude, attachment and intellectuality which evinces his originality and height in the Odia literature and his elementary contribution to the world literature as well.

Strong will has always been proved powerful than any kind of hindrance or set back. This came true in case of the life of Mayadhar Mansingha as financial hardship could not defeat the strong willpower of Mansingha rather it accelerated the appetite of his progressing mind. After obtaining the B.A. degree from Ravenshaw University in 1930 and M.A. in English degree from Patna University (1932) Mayadhar started his research work(Ph.D.) in Durham University, London as a professional being and was awarded in 1939 for his notable work “Comparative Study of Kalidasa and Shakespeare”. He was the first Odia to receive such a degree in English from a foreign University. Still entire path of his life was not at all a bed of rosy petals. He realized it very soon that life could never be an easy-going for him. His personal ideas and ideals did put him in problems especially in his academic atmosphere. Says Prof. Choudhuri, -

“It was primarily his independent, straightforward and uncompromising and occasionally impulsive nature that frequently brought him into conflict with authorities. He was a man of principle and had very strong personal convictions and because of this he often landed



himself in great misery and hardship and had to suffer a lot at the hands of bureaucrats and politicians.” [2]

After completing such a great degree at that point of time from such a great University with intense and ample research potential he didn't get a good job though there was a vacancy in Calcutta University. He had to struggle a lot to get the justice to his potential and talent. He always tried his students to have vast knowledge and to increase the appetite of receiving new things and new information. Hence, he once told his students not to take Odia as a subject in their academic period because Odia books (especially Sarala Das, Jagannath Das's Bhagabat, Upendra Bhanja and Radhanath Ray etc.) could be read at home by the guidance themselves or by any local guidance. He suggested pupils to take English and other subjects to know more and more. Because these complicated things need guide or experts to be understood and to be digested well. This statement put him in pit of trouble. The college administration took this statement otherwise. It was said that “Mansingha demoralizes students about the mother tongue Odia.” But it is true that a true teacher, or a true researcher or even an intellectual has no caste, no specific mother tongue or no specific geographical territory. S/he should have one appetite and that should be attached to knowledge. The hunger and thirst of knowledge is the only quest of a scholarly man. He brought many changes in the college environment during the days he was in G.M. College, Sambalpur. He was Principal there and at that time he turned the college into an idealistic model institute of learning. Mansingha experienced most of the days of his life bitter. Though he was a man of determination and mental strength still was a man of flesh, blood and cheer and tear. He has emotion and after all

a limit to resist the bitterness of life. As a poet he has expressed this sorrow and sufferings within the words and pulse of his poetry. This is, of course, one of his advantages. Because being a poet he has several deals with the earth beyond this. A poet lives in another earth. This is why Mansingha could resist or bear and shoulder this extra ordinary affliction and throbs. How he expresses his pain may be seen in the poem *Ardhashatabdee* (Half a Century) from the few translated lines-

“Struggles of life have left their scars on my
body
And my eyes are always filled with rears
For being a victim to sufferings and injustice,
O World! What have you given me in life?
I don't know what is good living
But have seen all round me
How the knaves, the proud and the uncultured
prosper.”

(Translated by Durga Charan Kuanr)

By the way, he has fought like a brave tiger with blood, flesh, head and heart of a noble human being. He has struggled, fought and won at the end of the day. Perhaps he has never thought so very seriously to live well till death as he did to live long and so well soon after his death and onward.

Mansingha was a lucky fellow in case of his marital life. Especially, he was luckier than any lucky man to have a wife like Hemalata Mansingha, who was very caring, practical, loving and lovable. She had built Mayadhar and his family. Mansingha was a short temper man. And it is quite obvious to a half-burnt, fate-stricken man like him. Each and every moment he was pricked with the needles of injustice and stung by



the cobra of frailty and the viper of envy. Says Prof. Choudhuri –

“In this kind of wearisome and enigmatic situation, his wife, Hemalata, whom he married in 1932 was always a source of great strength for him. She was a practical woman and in courage and patience managed her household chores. She always remained by the side of her husband during his stormy career – the ten years from 1939 to 1949 as a school teacher, educational advisor to the Eastern State Agency, Adult Education Officer, Inspector of Schools and college lecturer.” [3]

Mansingha indeed was a good man and a fine citizen over all. He loved this land, his motherland, mother tongue, and the earth all around him. He loved this soil and each of its dust and this sky. After all he loved this life an even to this death. He loved to die thousand times on this earth only with this consolation that he has a handful of love within his fist and these love and affection are possible on this earth only. He loves to hold these grains of sand and soil in his fist because there is love within it.

On discussing the literary history and the trend of Odia literature says Prof. J.M. Mohanty in this light –

“The fourth group consisted of four poets who dominated the scene from the thirties to the mid-fifties. They are Kalindi Charan Panigrahi (1901- 91), Baikunthanath Patnaik(1904-79), MayadharMansinha (1905-73) and Radhamohon Gadnayak (1911-2000). In a way they continued the Radhanath-

Madhusudan poetic tradition, exhibiting a similar sensitivity to nature, a contemplative and semi- mystical meditative attitude, a nationalistic spirit and sympathy for the poor and downtrodden. But in the innumerable lyrics they wrote (they hardly wrote long, narrative poems) they made the poetic sensibility more personal, more imaginative and more responsive to changes of emotions. Each is unique but together they succeeded in establishing a poetic personality that was committed to itself and to its own imagination. Accordingly they developed their own poetic structure apparently different from that seen in Radhanath and Madhusudan or even among the Satyabadi poets.” [4]

3. POETRY OF MANSINGHA : A PRISMATIC PROBE

It is said previously that Mansingha was an individual poet of the time. He was with the trend of literature of that time and was not at the same time. He added special flavour and taste to his poems and established a new tradition. He was romantic but not like the Sabuja. He loved and wanted to enjoy the thrill but sticking to this earth, not leaving it. He never did think to go beyond the world of dream. He was a true poet of this soil, dust, of this flower, spring, and sky and of all seven colours. He is a poet of mankind, his wills and existence.

Dr. Mansingha has many similarities with the works and orientations of Baikunthanath Patnaik. Especially in case of mystic and



emotional poems Mansingha was very close to Baikunthanath. Both of the poets have told about the eternal life of mankind. Both have tried the ultimate rise of human soul. 'Nidrita Bhagabaan' and 'Jatra Sangeeta' ('Shesha Geeti') are the two very important poems of Mansingha and Patnaik respectively in this light. Says Prof. Mohanty, -

"As in Patnaik, so in Mansinha, who had a considerable poetic output, there are repeated references to nature and love, and a semi-mystical perception of a power that imbues all nature and controls life. Added to these is a strong awareness of the contemporary socio-political situation." [5]

Some of his notable works are : 'Dhupa', 'Hemapushpa', 'Hemashasya', 'Jiban Chitaa', 'Krusha', 'Swaraajya Aashrama', 'Maati Vaanee', 'Baapu Tarpana', 'Sindhu o Bindu', 'Akhyata', 'Sedinara Kabitaa', 'Shubha Drusti', 'Nikwana', 'Upekhitaa', 'Kamalaayana', 'Jemaa', 'Saadhaba Jhia', 'Konarka' in the section of Poetry. He has written about more than fifty books in the various sections of literature such as Poetry, Essay, Criticism, Novel, long narrative poems, Travelogue, Translation etc.. Each time the observation and finding is same in case of the poetry of Mansingha. And that statement is like this- "The volume, density, viscosity, elasticity (Young's modulus), gravity, liquidity, velocity and the rate of diffusion etc. of Mansingha's poesy are praiseworthy and very high." The tone of his poetry is very impressive and psychological as it is very dramatic.

Mansingha has a number of poems embedded in the synthetic culture of Odisha. We find the art, architecture, socio-cultural life, the glorious past of Odradesha, Kalinga, Utkalinga,

Utkal, Odisha and the harmonious whole within it. Mansingha, in fact deeply loved his land Odisha, to its people, hills, rivers and rivulets, its land, water, air and natural beauty and even to the each and every dust of it. The poet was so very straight forward and nostalgic and a patriot to his mother and motherland.

4. INTERCONNECTEDNESS AND THE POETIC TEXTS OF MANSINGHA

No doubt, the poet is very romantic his beloved girlfriend and even to the beloved mother land, but he is at the same time conscious about the present catastrophe of the values and ethics and war oriented and quarrelsome attitude of the so call time and people just as the poet Mathew Arnold, who is equally philosophical and serious about the Parish and English state and people and even of the world in his notable poem Dover Beach. Mansingha has a number of talents, beauty and significance embedded in his poetry. His manifold talents also imply the intense of his love and purity of his head, heart and humanity. Yes, of course, he was a perfect human being, in a true sense.

Mansingha has rightly opened a new chapter in Odia language and literature with his noble writings. He speaks the naked, earthly and the chesty love of man and woman, which is hardly spoken by any other poet of Odia literature or any other Indian literature. He also speaks or laments about the human misery and the downfall of the whole humanity just as the English poet, P.B. Shelley, who is very serious about the uplift of mankind and the human spirit as well in his ground breaking poem "To a Skylark". It may be noted that Dr. Mansingha was moved by the British poet P.B. Shelley. Shelley's notable poems Ode to the West Wind's optimistic philosophy is



seen in the attitude of Mansingha. Mansingha has personified many things such as the clouds and other things as Shelley, but here it must be said that this poet has not reached that height of spiritual divinity at all spheres as Shelley does. Mansingha was an uncompromising rebel as P.B. Shelley, the greatest romantic poets of early nineteenth century. He continued his struggle for the cause of individual liberty, social justice and peace and the advancement of the mankind and for the uplift of the language, literature, race and community just as Shelley. He wished to bring social reforms by his inspiring and courageous works of literature. He dreamt of an ideal society in which there should be no slavery and no exploitation just as P.B. Shelly. In the poem Nidrita Bhagabana (The sleeping God) the poet laments for human sorrows and sufferings and he thinks of the great purity and height of the human soul as Shelley thinks a couple of steps ahead in the poem 'To a Skylark'. He has addressed there in the poem to a skylark (a little bird) that soars up at a great height and sings so sweetly that the world is enchanted and bewitched by its sweetness. The skylark is not seen as the soul is. Mansingha has trades with this matter too. But it must be said that Mansingha has much more deals with the reality here as compared to the poet Shelley and less deals with the spirituality as compared to Shelley. Yes, the poem has no lesser depth in both the aspects.

Mansingha is a poet of humanism. He shows, here, his own social commitment at its great intensity. Critics admire him because he is very truthful and committed to everything. We see him as romantic as Marvel and Donne but his metaphysical intensity. The Mansingha of Dhoopa was soon changed to another one in the later

works. He turned critical and sarcastic even to the so called life of man, the miserable one.

“The earlier romantic fervour began to give way to a more realistic and critical approach to existing situation of sorrows and sufferings, pain and frustration and all-round poverty in the middle period of Mayadhar Mansingha’s literary career. The passionate lover and the idealistic poet thinking of the past glory of Orissa gradually yielded to greater concern about the socio-economic conditions of society.”[6]

Gradually Mansingha’s poetry became much more realistic and seen weeping for human misery. The centre of his poetry was seen decentralized in those days. Especially in “Maatibaanee”(The Voice of the Soil), ‘Jiban Chitaa’(The Pyre of Life), ‘Krusha’(The Crucifix)he sounds realistic and serious for mankind and its rise. Says Prof. I.N. Choudhury, with a great height of intensity,-

“The poetry of Mayadhar now turns towards the deception of the life of the common man, the poor and the illiterate, particularly the villagers and those who suffered constant exploitation. After the unexampled success of his earlier love lyric, the realities of the world disposed him to write a collection of poems Matibani(The Voice of the Soil, 1947), which included poems such as Rangoon Chithi (The Letter from Rangoon), Gharapasa (The Homesick), Nasta Pally (The Ruined Village), Anudha(The Unmarried Girl) and Kanta Kacha (Measurement for Bangles) and many others.” [7]



The poem Rangoon Chithi brings out the pathos and sufferings and the dismal sky of the poor mother who is being crushed under the drastic and destitute conditions, who is waiting long for her son who has gone there as a daily labourer to quench the thirst of poverty of his family. The heart touching sketch of the poor family is rightly found here. His sense of helplessness and disillusionment are drawn here in the poem “Bhulijaa Itihaas”(Forget History) very lively. A few lines of the said poem is as follows:

“The poor has no right to think of a better living
It is a dream for him what the dog of the
capitalists gets,
What use history which is full of stories of the
kings and the rich,
Is there any record of sufferings of the poor
cottage- dweller ?
Forget history; forget about the victories and
defeats of the kings,
Forget the difference of caste and religion to
usher in a new age in the world.”

The poem is so lively and it directly deals with the mourning of human soul. The poet has got the proper theme to transmit the charge of emotion from this poem particularly.

“This perception has helped Mayadhar in the development of the theme of searching for the ‘chariot in darkness’ or the metaphor of the invincible soul of man. This theme indicates a research of all that is embedded in our racial unconscious and re-establishes confidence in man.” [8]

5. THE PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE IN HIS POETRY

Poet Mansingha has made an earnest appeal to the almighty God to remove and wipe his sorrows and sufferings, pain and tears, cries and disappointment away for a single drop of His kindness from the ocean of His mercy, love and lenience. This noble attempt has been done in his poetry book Krusha (The cross), the collection of one hundred sonnets. The sonnets are written in the form of Shakespearian sonnet, which are popular worldwide. You (the Reader) might see the rate and intensity of his optimism and believe in God here. He says here that the God is not going to disappoint him after this appeal or plea and prayer. The supplication of the poet is also of a very great intensity. The poet has made up his mind to ask the God otherwise what happened to his wisdom, guidance and mercy. The personal life of Dr. Mansingha was really very sorrowful and full of pain and struggle. He has faced several impediments in his social, academic, educational, economic life without being the cause of it. His fate and the dirty politics both crushed him one by one and synchronously too. The sketch and scenes of his life, hence, is full of blueness of dejection, desolation, and morose of mournfulness. In other words, distress, dolour, grief and gloom are the friend for ever to him. One can easily find these things out of his life and own biography. Still he loved Odisha, the land and its air till his last breath. The manuscript of his last will “MY LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT” speaks this evidently. He wanted his children to grow “deeply patriotic towards both Orissa’s and India’s interests”. The poet is very serious about the “truthfulness, justice”, “for culture, education” and “basic human values”.



“His own personal sufferings made him a rebel social, religious and cultural hypocrisy and injustice which find expression in many poems including Nirdaya Bramhin (Cruel Bramhin), in which the poet has described the cruelty of a bramhin who did not care to save the life of a drowning Dalit child lest he would be pulled out by his touch.” [9]

But, the attempt where he challenges the so called believes and doctrines of the society, is really admirable. The poet says that the so called God of the temple, the idol of stone or wood should not be worshipped in the dark sanctum of the temple. This is not the time to do so because the real Gods are there, of flesh and blood, to be worshipped. The “Deva Poojaa”(Worship of God) poem may be seen here in this light. They are the Naranarayana. The common people are the real heroes and the real gods. They must be worshipped instead, says the poet. Here, the poet is more humanistic and realistic. A reader can watch the sense and sentiment of the poet from the few lines below:

“Look Brahmin! To your front and behind you
 Hundreds of gods in human form are waiting,
 Can you reach God side tracking them ?
 Who are you worshipping in the dark dungeon
 of the temple,
 Being afraid to touch the real gods who are left
 outside.
 It is sin, not piety, for which the god has
 become silent.
 And does not utter a word in spite of all your
 worship.
 Know ye priest, the god has left the
 Country for the sins perpetrated by you
 Only the gods of wood and stone are
 Found in the temples.”

The purohit or the priest must pray for the health, wealth and prosperity of the land and the people of the whole state, village or world. So, it is often logical that the priest must play a direct role here for the good sake of the land. If the real and lively gods are there before us then we must serve to them. Hundreds and thousands of the poor people are awaiting with intense patience. How can we avoid them at once just for an wooden idol or an idol of stone? This is the logical question which is asked ever in each and every line of the poetry. Really, the poet, here, is intensely humanistic and philanthropic in attitude. This is not at all the negligible trade of his poetry in fact. He continues like this-

“Instead of worshipping the god of stone
 And wood, come and worship the living gods,
 Whose eyes will shed tears of joy if you
 Speak to them a few kind words.
 Stop the chanting of your incantations,
 Stop the offer of lighted camphor,
 There are thousands of gods waiting
 Outside with outstretched hands,
 Give the food offerings of the deities to
 These hungry gods
 And see god in every human habitation.
 With the worship the silent God will be
 Vocal in no time
 And the neighbours of will exchange among
 Themselves the words of God.”

The worship of the wooden gods, to the idols will yield nothing but in vain. No god will come out of the temple. Nobody will be satisfied. No one in the world will be free of hunger, pain and sufferings. The poet suggests that if you want to do something then do for the needy people, do for the people who are actually hungry, those who have no shelter, no food and not even a piece of cloth to wear and to resist the anger of the



winter and the summer. Eventually, the poet calls for the priests and other representatives as below.

“Come devotees, come priest, don’t enter
The dark dungeon any more,
In the divine light outside, search for
The gods personified.”

Art here advocates for life’s sake. The poet here describes the temple as a dark dungeon. Again he adds to it that the real divine light is outside the so called temple. The gods have taken the incarnation of common man who have no food and shelter. Hence, the poet narrates the poor people as the deities. In his logic, it is not only in vain to worship the wooden god or the stone gods inside a temple, but also sending the self to the dark dungeon of ignorance and sin. This poem is embedded in humanism. And, of course, this kind of approach has its root in the medieval Bhakti trends of poetry.

Mayadhar Mansingha was also quite aware of the ugliness of the communist regime of Soviet Russia. At the same time he was aware of the Pseudo-Gandhians, the false followers of Gandhi. Therefore a number of critics say that his voice was not socialistic or Gandhian. His voice was only for the people and of the people of India, the true voice of protest, dissent and bitter sarcasm of the common people. Says Choudhury-

“As a crusader for social and religious reforms he fought a continuous battle through his poetry, both on the individual and social level, to bring into light the sorrows and sufferings of the poor and neglected people of the country and at the same time focused on the ideals of humanism and universal brotherhood.”[10]

6. THE POETIC HYPOTHESES AND DOCTRINES OF MANSINGHA

The new age of human history should begin. This is the ultimate call of the poet, in fact it is the need of the hour. When the entire humanity will overcome violence, frailty, greed and hypocrisy, the day when the entire humanity will come above the bars and impediments of caste, creed, community, locality, so called religion, language and will be hold tight with the covalent bond love, affection and universal brotherhood, and will start living as a family, as one world nation, with one God in his head, heart and blood and vein, with a pure spirit and concrete zeal, that will be the actual sunrise of that day. This will be the day where a new and sacred human history will be written. In fact, this will be the day where all dreams will come true that great men and poets have ever dreamt through the human history. In the light of Mansingha’s poetry Prof. I.N. Choudhury says-

“This message of universal brotherhood is the age-old message of this country. The main reason for his affinity towards Buddhism in the later years of his life was particularly because he felt that it to be a humanitarian religion based on morality, universal love and kindness and does not believe in caste or priesthood. In fact, the locus of Mayadhar’s humanistic poetry was universal brotherhood, reforming zeal and service to mankind. During the fifty years of his literary career, he was the singular voice that did not change its tune in the post-world war socio-political context. He did not lose his faith in humanity and in Indian traditions and values of life.” [11]



Mansingha has some this kind of wills and dreams in his poetry. He is the poet who wills to come again and again to this mortal earth where pain and sufferings are the permanent subjects to come and attack us. He accepts all these with smile and happiness by the cost of his love, which was ever occurred in this earth and will be possible only and only in this earth. Hence, he wants to live as a man, not as a god or demi god. He is absolutely fine and comfortable with the divine doctrine with his beloved. In his poem 'Dharabatarana', he tells- "I want my birth each time on this earth just and just to get the complete submission those eyes two". Similarly, in the 'Nootana Pranaya', 'Gupta Pranaya' and 'Kasturi Mruga' popularly known as "Three Sonnets" of Mayadhar Mansingha, he has trades with the physical love as well as the spiritual love and the love at its ultimate height. This may be interpreted in the light of existentialism.

His poetry shows the power of pen ever mightier than sword. So called society is full of pseudo-religious doctrines and pseudo-socio-political dogmas and these are merely the malady diseases of the society. The poet has tried his best to express his humanly grief and belched fire with his intellectual mind of a poet. Hence some time the literature acts as an act of charged social reformation. Mansingha's poetry is attaining this height at this point particularly. The poet here focuses on the drastic conditions of the poor people of India and laments upon the lamentation of the homeless destitute people of each and every country.

"Mayadhar Mansingha was pre-eminently a poet of romantic love. A prolific and versatile writer, he wrote essays, poetic plays, long narrative poems and a definitive history of Oriya

literature which was published by the Sahitya Akademi." [12]

He has depicted the idealistic love with intense vision. "The dualities of body and soul and of man and nature are resolved and their essential unity is stressed" [13] in the two poems Hemanta Prabhata (A Morning in Hemanta) and Aatmaara Saundarya (The Soules Beauty) as well as in other platforms of poetry in other compilations. The two poems have that much potency to arrest the attention of a serious reader. These are as follows-

"A morning in Hemanta
The new born sun had painted,
With his golden hands,
exquisite pictures on Nature's green
On the tree tops had fallen, like a golden veil,
Beautifully, soft, golden sunlight.
Below on earth, millions of dew drops
tumbled, pearls on the blades of green grass.
In each, sunlight has wrought coloured rainbows.
Sublime was the sky, the breeze gentle and cool.
The neighbouring groove was resonant
With the cries of a dove, sundered from her mate,
Just then, my darling, fresh from bath,
Flowed into my room.
And I felt
She was a part of the golden Hemanta!" [14]

(Translated by Saubhagya Kumar Mishra)

The season of dew has been personified here. The poet has given here the exquisite pictures of the Nature. Here, we, certainly drive to the resonant area of Wordsworth's poetry. The cool and gentle breeze, the morning sunlight of the season, the cries of the doves, the flowers, the leaves, the horizon, the sky and the grassy surface of the earth, the dew drops which appear like the pearls and diamonds in the reflection of the



sunlight in the morning and many other things are depicted here. Hemanta is poetized here, in short. Yes, the poet wants to live as a poet and die as a poet. Hence, his world is simply poetic. This is the speciality of the poets like Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats and here Dr. Mansingha as well.

In the poem '*Aatmaara Saundarya*' (The Soul's Beauty) the poet Mansingha deals with the beauty of the body and soul. He trades here the eternal beauty by the cost of his choosy and hearty words. The poet strictly declares the sinfulness and unsubstantial conditions of the body for its irrational attachments. But it is very true that body is equally essential as the soul for doing something. Soul may be pure. Soul may be free from several sins and wills and desires but it needs a body to perform earthly deeds. The line "Yet, soul's beauty is far greater, / and man must bow before it!" clearly speaks the mood and motto of the poet. But the very last line is truly important to us which says-"In your body, my dear, I have found it! / my love flows sweet / through your body and mind both!" This means both the body and the soul are lovable and significant for us and for the world.

"Repeatedly you have queried
 'Do you love or only my body?'
 In truth, dearest, both I love!
 This body fashioned of flesh and blood
 these sinful organs, hate, malice and greed,
 these I carry with me!
 How then can I claim,
 Like a conqueror of senses,
 That my love transcends the body?
 Is the body all that beautiful?
 May a time I have drunk of its beauty,
 Its devotee, with eyes filled with joy,
 have adored the Great Artist's craft!
 Yet, soul's beauty is far greater,

and man must bow before it!
 In your body, my dear, I have found it!
 my love flows sweet
 through your body and mind both!" [15]
 (Translated by Saubhagya Kumar Mishra)

Mansingha has shown radical changes in the passage of his poetry in terms of theme, aspects, style and several other things but one thing remained in tact throughout his career, and that is his attitude. Clarifying more, it could be told that, he, throughout his different paragraphs of poet-life remained committed to his profession, that is poetry. He always wanted to live or die as a mere poet. He speaks, advocates, mourns and laments for the common people as well. Hence, he could rightly be told a revolutionary poet of the people. Mansingha was really a very talented and committed poet of the time.

There were a few persons almost in parallel corridor with the Sabujas who were steady enough in their own strands of philosophy. Some of the critics criticize these people for their too much imitation. They say that for this only those poets lost their real moorings. Mayadhar Mansingha(1905-1973) was one of them. One of the great critic and essayist Chittaranjan Das says-

"Mansingha all through presumed that he was cutting a new path and providing a saner alternative. He seems to have retaliated by becoming more romantic and more of an escapist himself. His oft-mentioned poem about boating in moonlight in the Mahanadi is escapism out and out though the poet has very much tried to imitate Keat's ode on the nightingale for a style and an appeal, what he offers is basically nostalgia, obstinate and yet not honest. Mansingha has thus



throughout his entire as a writer remained almost ludicrously torn between the old and the new, between the romantic and the modern. The volume of his writing is enormous, undoubtedly suggesting that the real love of his life was to write and to express himself. His poetical works can be studied phase by phase thus clearly marking the various stages of his commitment to his writings. The range is formidably vast, from his direct love poems full of fervour that comes out of the languor for the beauty in flesh to musings on Gandhi and the Cross on which Jesus had died. The romantic runs all through as the common coagulant. The most beautiful and lovable thing about poet Mansingha is a heart that reveals at everything grand and great and is moved at the very first instant of such an encounter.”[16]

Mansingha was overall an optimistic and philanthropic poet indeed. He is the poet who sees the whole world and grain of life made up of love. All evils and ugliness turns beautiful and sacred in his speculation. The ‘word’ turns ‘Bramha’; Shabdabramha. His words are bathed with emotion and intense sentiments. They come directly from the core-heart of the poet. Hence, we may recall the words of William Wordsworth rightly here in the context of Dr. Mayadhar Mansingha. At different squares of his poetic route he attains the parallel height to that of the world-poet Visvakabi Rabindra Nath Tagore. He has reached the height of Shelley and Keats in some of his poems. Of course, he has lamented sometimes like Faulkner that “we have all failed to match our dreams in perfection.” But, surely this lamentation and cry is not revolutionary or

protesting by nature, but romantic. Yes, he is the first romantic person to give us the smell of the flower, water, air and soil of Odisha eventhough he was submerged in the smoky grey environment of the Sabujas, the Greens of that time. He was always conscious of self and the time and the culture, and turned realistic in his later time.

“After freedom, Mansingha tried to somewhat more realistically exposed and made conscious attempts to give modern themes to his poetry. He also wrote a novel and several essays, including an autobiographical sketch of his experiences as a teacher. The prose he wrote is equally romantic, full of sentimental rigidities which have also an impact upon his use of words. In the later part of his life he seems to have inwardly converted himself to Buddhism and proclaimed that the Buddhist way was the only way.” [17]

Mansingha is also mystic sometimes in his poems but at the very same time he has the intense feelings of the earth and its soil, its air and dust. Mansingha, as Tagore, has seen, the real taste and motto of life in the eyes of the saints, Yogies and Rishies of ancient India. He has given his humble salutation to the great saints and writers of the Vedas and Upanishads. We can see the poem ‘Bharata Tirtha’ of Rabindranath Tagore and ‘Paantha Gaathaa’ of Mansingha. Here he tells that India is the land of unity. Here, the hearts, souls and the minds of castes, creeds, cultures and communities are united. In fact it is a holy land. It is such a land where gods and goddesses ever will to come again and again and to live in. Mansingha has poetized this fact. And he has poetized Odisha.



7. DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS OF HIS POETRY

Mansingha is the poet of this earth. He never wants to die even he wants to come again and again back to this earth in every birth. At the same time he laments on the precarious conditions of human soul and he wants to see the soul free. Mansingha, in fact, did the perfect romantic revival in Odia literature. We can recall the similar romantic revival in the English literature. Says Patrick-

“Had the great change in the poetry of the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth been a revolution of artistic methods merely, it would still have been the most important change in the history of English literature. But it affected the very soul of poetry. It had two sides: one side concerned that of poetic methods, and one that of poetic energy. It was partly realistic as seen in Wordsworth’s portion of the Lyrical Ballads, and partly imaginative as seen in Coleridge’s portion of that incongruous but epoch making book. As the movement substituted for the didactic materialism of the eighteenth century a new temper- or, rather, the revival of an old temper which to all appearance was dead- it has been called the Romantic Revival. The French Revolution is generally credited, by French writers at least, with having been the prime factor in this change. Now, beyond doubt, the French Revolution, the mightiest social convulsion recorded in the history of the world, was accompanied in French by such romantic poetry as that of Andre Chenier, and was followed, many years

afterwards, by the work of writers like Dumas, Victor Hugo, and others, until at last the bastard classicism of the age of Louis XIV, was entirely overthrown. In Germany, too, the French Revolution stimulated the poetry of Goethe and Schiller, and the prose of Novalis, Tieck, and F. Schlegel. And in England it stimulated, though it did not originate, the romanticism of Scott, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley and Keats.”[18]

Patrick names the “Romantic Trend” as “The Renaissance of Wonder” that came in the poetry of the said times. In English it is the period from the appearance of Blake’s Songs of Innocence to the death of Sir Walter Scott. It is commonly called as the Romantic Period. For Mansingha and other romantic poets, beyond barricades of culture, creed, community, nation and language, we may quote the lines of Samuel C Chew and Richard D Altick what they say in this context-”The romanticist is “amorous of the far.” [19] They seek to escape from concrete and common experience and from the limitations of “that shadow-show called reality” which is presented to them by their intelligence. They find and taste their intense delight in the marvellous and abnormal in other words. For a romantic poet like Mansingha or Shelley or Keats or Byron or you say about William Wordsworth the above authors say-

“To be sure, loving realistic detail and associating the remote with the familiar, he is often “true to the kindred points of heaven and home.” But he is urged on by an instinct to escape from actuality, and in this escape he may range from the most trivial literary fantasy to the most



exalted mysticism. His effort is to live constantly in the world of the imagination above and beyond the sensuous, phenomenal world. For him the creation of the imagination are “forms more real than living man.” He practices willingly that “suspension of disbelief” which “constitutes poetic faith.” [20]

Again, how they, means, the romantic poets or the particular poet become mystic gradually is said right here. In its most uncompromising form, in fact, this dominance of the intuitive and the rational over sense experience becomes mystic at a certain height. To which says Abercrombie, - It is “the life which professes direct intuition of the pure truth of being, wholly independent of the faculties by which it takes hold of the illusory contaminations of this present world.” (Lascelles Abercrombie, *Romanticism*, pg. 107) Thus, at this time the poet’s mood is vacant and pensive and overwhelmed at the same time. This is, in fact, a very rare and mysterious mood itself. Many have tried to express the experiences and self-feelings of this passage of time but failed to do so.

“Wordsworth describes this experience as “that serene and blessed mood” in which, “the burden of the mystery” being lightened, he “sees into the life of things.” Blake, who seems to have lived almost continuously in this visionary ecstasy, affirmed that the “vegetable universe” of phenomena is but a shadow of that real world which is Imagination. To the Romanticists not the thing perceived is important but the thing imagined. But it is difficult to sustain for this vision of the archetypal reality. The attempt to find some correspondence

between actuality and desire result in joy when for fleeting moments the vision is approximated, but in despondency or despair when the realization comes that such reconciliations are impossible. Thus, Byron’s *Lucifer* tempts Cain to revolt by forcing upon him an awareness of “the inadequacy of his state to his conceptions.” (Byron, *Letter and Journals*, ed. Prothero, v. 470.) A sense of this contrast is expressed by Shelley in those poems in which there is a sudden fall from ecstasy into disillusionment. The same sense adds a new poignancy to the melancholy strain inherited by the romantic poets from their predecessor.” [21]

The special qualities of ‘romantic’ poets or romanticism is quite hard to express in terms of words. Poetry is an ethereal task to deal. Romanticism is a part of this thing. Hence, it is also very difficult to express the same. Says Daiches, after keen observation of the poetries –

“But having recognized all the difficulties in the way of describing the special qualities of the “romantic” poets, and the limited usefulness of the term “romantic”, we have nevertheless to agree that the term has some justification in the light of poetic theory and practice, to realize that there was a significant shift in taste and attitude taking place throughout Europe in the later part of the eighteenth century (however far back we might trace it in some of its aspects), and that this shift is reflected in literature.” [22]

Poetry, as a part of the literature and literature being a part of society, reflects the culture



of the society to which it is attached. So the collective philosophy of the time and society is expressed in terms of poetic expression. The general human nature is expressed here in this philosophical passage. As the Jacobite movement was responsible for the literary movement in Scotland like a fertile source, the World War I, Tagore's effect and international recognition (Receiving of Nobel award due to his Mystic book *Geetanjali*) and several other things like sudden departure of the fives of the Satyavadi trend due to the Non-Co operation Movement gave birth to the Odia romanticism. Mansingha was a great scholar of English literature. Keats, Shelley, Wordsworth, Byron, Blake and Coleridge etcetera are the poets who had moved him greatly. Mansingha was doing research on the great Sanskrit poet and dramatist Kalidas (who drinks the nature through his eyes) and the ground breaking British dramatist William Shakespeare (who brings the Heaven to earth and blend together and sketches the wonder of renaissance). These two scholars are highly imaginary and romantic indeed. Though Kalidas was dealing with certain classical aspects, Shakespeare was, at the same time, an eminent artist of tragic philosophy. His Ph.D. work has moved him in this light as he was philosophically moved by William Shakespeare and Kalidas as well.

Mansingha left his mark as a remarkable poet of great distinction. He had a great integrity and in-depth commitment not only to quality education, research, patriotism but also towards the spirit of poetry. He was a fine soul in fact, a rare spirit indeed. He left us from the bodily world on 11th October 1973, on the full moon night (Purnima) of the month Aswina. Mansingha's life was full of thrills and struggles. He paints his

life of tears and turmoil in his poem *Samadhi* (The grave) with intense emotion. He always wanted to live or die as a poet and to be loved as a poet. His life was full of humiliations, pain and sufferings. He says-

“O Lord! You have filled my life
With many humiliation
It is bereft of everything save deception,
But don't give me further uncalled for shame
By measuring the little honour that I have left
With the yardstick with the power of self.
Let me live or die as a mere poet
Whose eyes are filled with tears for others.
In the seasons of spring when the flowers bloom,
Or in autumn moon light
If the young men and women of my country
Come and offer flowers of love on my grave,
That will be my best reward,
The greatest honour of my whole life time.”

(Translated by Durga Charan Kuanr)

The Satyavadi school is a trend, an idealistic model for the people of Odisha. Says Dr. Mansingha, “the Satyavadi High School became and remained the cultural centre of Odisha for about two decades.”[23] But Mansingha was far away from that. He had his own spell in his own style, in own way. Romantic poets or people always object against the wrong. They never tolerate the wrong going on around them. This is one of the great symptoms of a romantic poet or a romantic man. Undoubtedly, one, who has read Mansingha or has gone through his life or biography, can easily and surely say, this was a prominent nature and attitude of Mansingha. Keats, one of the famous figure of the younger romantics has always wanted to separate himself from the mundane earth. Mansingha too has tried this to express. He, like



Tagore the great poet of the world, has told not to die here and not to live next to the god in the heaven even.

Death and art, both are the golden scopes to escape from this mundane and dismal earth. Like Keats and W.B. Yeats, Mansingha was also having this kind of concrete credence. Yes, of course, Mansingha, later on turned realistic, though was a nostalgic person for ever. Dr. Welleck argues that all romantic poets have same philosophy. He says that they deal with a great height of philosophy which is also seen in Mansingha. All of us know that the famous French Revolution (1789), the voice of common man, was a stimulus beyond the thresh-hold intensity as well as a powerful catalyst to set on the romantic revolution, not revival, in literature. Similarly, we can sketch the nature of the fights and movements brought for the freedom and for the free voice of the common man, like the Non-co-operation Movement, the Quit India Movement, the Civil Disobedience Movement and the fatal World Wars of course in order to ignite the mind of Mansingha and similar many others' head and heart to rebel, to go for a revolt with their pen which is ever proved mightier than thousand swords. Romantic poets protest against the bondage of rule that paralyses the head, heart and humanity of mankind. We can designate the non cooperation movement as an official beginning or inauguration of the romantic manifesto of Dr. Mansingha. Surprisingly, the independence of India, of course, for which though the entire freedom fight was not at all interested, was the official death of his romantic temper.

From "How do I love thee ? Let me count the ways" of Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861) and other romantics and even to the prose of Scott, Jane Austin, Lamb

and de Quincey while reading Mansingha. And how can we forget the lines of Hugo, "Romanticism is a liberalism of literature." Yes, of course, romanticism is the rumination of life in true sense. For each and every romantic poet this is cent percent true. They are human loving people. For this they reject and do not accept the God even sometime. The Romantics do experiment with vowels where the classics do that with the consonants. Hence the romantics are much free and adopted the free verse. Mansingha and other romantic poets could be examined in this light. Mansingha has always dealt with the cardinal values of human being. The poetic permanence was created by the romantics. For this only they could give birth to several works of all time. In Mansingha we see many interesting aspects. Wherein English literature the elder romantic poet S. T. Coleridge naturalizes the super-natural (for example in *The song of an ancient Mariner*) and William Wordsworth super-naturalizes the nature (e.g. in *Daffodils*), in case of Mansingha in this light we find the happy blend of both the techniques. Of course, we see Mansingha in his original impulses and natural flavour in the words of Rousseau. That, he has traded with, are the flowering garden, the living air, the blue sky and the mind of man. He always wanted to come back to the lap of the nature and the human heart. We see the emphasis on the individual genius in his writings. An important feature is seen in the works of Mansingha, and that is the tendency to return to the age of Music (*Sangeeta Juga*), that is, to the time of Abhimanyu, Gopalkrishna, Gaurahari and Banamali just like the English romantic poets, who wanted to return the Milton and Elizabethan age instead of Dryden and Pope. To Mansingha, we can find in various colours of romanticism and always like a butterfly of humanism, a divine messenger in deed.



CONCLUSION

Mansingha was a poet who did not follow neither the trend nor the social setting or demand of the time of Odia literature of his time. He made his own inning in his own style. In fact till today he is regarded as a trend setter. He wrote romantic poetries in his taste and later this not only became his style but his identity also. Starting right from loving human being he wrote on his personal love, its density and intensity. He was seen as a mystic piper of poetry and a realistic artist at the same time. Mansingha has turned himself into a myth; a legendary figure in the social and literal history of Odisha.

Truly Mansingha is a good human being and a good translator of the wills and feelings of human soul to words and hence is a good poet. The cry of his soul for the countless human souls turn into the special words, phrases and sentences. We say that poetry. This is why Mansingha's poetry is so heart touching. He feels full-fledged with contentment while writing poetry. Because this is the platform only where he can express his deepest grief, love, pain, sufferings, feelings etcetera. Hence he wanted to be a poet in life and after. He wanted to live or die as a poet only. This was, therefore, his ultimate dream of life. In fact, his pen has moved his personal and pure life. And his life has become productive for our literature. Many have started writing and are following these writings keeping him as their ideal.

Notes:

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- [8] Ibid – pg. 10.
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- [10] Ibid- pg. 11-12.
- [11] Ibid – pg. 12.
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- [17] Ibid- Pg. 223-24.
- [18] Patrick, David- Encyclopaedia of English Literature (Vol.- III)- Reprint- 1995- Atlantic Publishers and Distributors- B-2, Vishal Enclave, New Delhi- 27- Pg.- 01.



- [1] **Ibid**-Pg. 1123.
 [2] **Ibid**-Pg. 1123.
 [3] **Ibid**-Pg. 1123-24.
 [4] Daiches, David, – **A Critical History of English Literature(Vol. II)** - Third Indian Edition-2013 – Supernova Publishers, New Delhi. Pg. 857-58.
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