

**LITERARNI PROSEMINAR**  
**ANGLEŠKA POEZIJA MED 16. IN 19. STOLETJEM**

**izpiski**

# **1) THE RENAISSANCE (1485-1660)**

## **THE ELIZABETHAN PERIOD (1558-1603)**

The reign of Queen Elizabeth (1558-1603) was a time of great prosperity for England. She was a big PATRON of art, poetry, actors,... The main feature of this period was the belief in the UNIVERSAL or RENAISSANCE MAN. Texts were produced in great number – PRINT.

There is an interest in the ancient poetic forms. The function of the poetry is to teach and to delight.

In this period love poetry is based on an idealized conception on man's relation to women, therefore love in Renaissance poetry is sometimes almost unattainable. The lover suffers and begs the lady in vain to take him. He brags about the immortality of his poetry which is supposed to make the lady immortal as well. Friendship between two men is considered a nobler emotion than love between man and woman.

### **Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586)**

- APOLOGY FOR POETRY, 1595 – a poet teaches more than a philosopher
- ASTROPHEL AND STELLA, 1591

### **Edmund Spenser (1552-1599)**

- AMORETTI SONNETS, 1591/4
- THE FAERIE QUEENE, 1590/6

### **William Shakespeare (1564-1616)**

- 154 SONNETS
- VENUS AND ADONIS, 1593
- THE RAPE OF LUCRECE, 1594

1st period 1564 – 1590...the early age

2nd period 1590 – 1610...the golden age, most productive

3rd period 1610 – 1616...retired to his home

1616 – drama gradually became a new separate genre

Shakespeare wrote 154 sonnets. The first 126 were written to a man (W.H.), sonnets 127 – 154 were dedicated to a dark lady.

### **Sir Walter Raleigh (1554-1618)**

- HISTORY OF THE WORLD, 1614

### **Thomas Nashe (1567-1601)**

- THE ANATOMIE OF ABSURDITIE, 1589
- THE UNFORTUNATE TRAVELLER, 1594

### **Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593)**

### **Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-1542)**

- introduced the Petrarchan sonnet

Henry Howard (1516-1547) – introduced the Petrarchan sonnet

## **2)THE PRE-ROMANTIC PERIOD (1760-1800)**

Before the Pre-Romantic period was the Enlightenment period (1660-1770). It was the age of reason. Clarity of thought and the power of human reason were regarded highly.

The Pre-Romantic period presents the gap between the Enlightenment period and the Romantic period. It is still influenced by the Enlightenment. There is a revival of interest for the strange and exotic, for the tale of horror. Artists write about emotions, human feelings, passing away, sadness,... The pre-Romantic poets stressed the inherent "moral sense" and fostered the cult of the "noble savage" They are interested in nature, in the past, which is pure and unspoiled, and in the individual (and not society). Typical of this period is "WELTSCHMERZ". The literary ballad became very important.

### **STREAMS OF PREROMANTICISM:**

- DESCRIPTIVE POETRY OF NATURE (Wordsworth is mostly influenced by it.)
- SENTIMENTAL IDYLLIC (praising simple life)
- SENTIMENTAL NOVEL (Richardson)
- POETRY OF NIGHT AND GRAVES
- GOTHIC NOVEL (Protagonists are controlled by evil forces, forced to do evil deeds.)
- STURM UND DRANG (viharnišťvo)

### **William Blake (1757-1827)**

- "THE TYGER"
- POETICAL SKETCHES, 1785
- SONGS OF INNOCENCE, 1789
- SONGS OF EXPERIENCE, 1793
- POEMS OF INNOCENCE AND EXPERIENCE, 1794
- MARRIAGE OF HEAVEN AND HELL, 1796

Blake was a religious, political, and artistic radical throughout his life. His work is pervaded with the symbolism, imagery, and prophetic utterance of the Bible.

### **Robert Burns (1759-1796)**

- "A RED, RED ROSE"

### **Thomas Gray (1716-1771)**

- "ODE ON THE SPRING"
- ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD, 1751 (expressing meditation on death and decay)

### **Edward Young (1683-1765)**

- "COMPLAINT OR NIGHT THOUGHTS ON DEATH"
- THE COMPLAINT or NIGHT THOUGHTS, 1742/44

## **3)THE ROMANTIC PERIOD (1792-1848)**

In 1798, after the publication of the Lyrical Ballads of Wordsworth and Coleridge, the Romantic movement became fully established. The belief in man's potentialities, in his perfectibility, in his power of feeling and imagination, in his intuitive communion with nature, in his fundamental goodness becomes visible. The individual is almost deified and can find the truth in his emotions. Strong importance of feelings, sentiments; emphasis on mood and inner light.

There was an absolute artistic freedom, subjective was the absolute. The artist as a higher being should not conform and should be free. The Romantic poet sees in nature universal goodness, a manifestation of God, a reminder of man's own grateness.

They also believed that medieval man led a more perfect life than a modern man, to them the Middle Ages were a fairy-tale era, a flight from reality. They moved to the world of imagination, of the exotic, of the incredible. This escape from reality is an important aspect of Romantic poetry.

A new interest in the folk tradition arises, because it is not spoiled in form and because it is close to the people. Opposition to the artificiality of culture.

The main feature of the period was the opposition between REALITY and the IDEAL. The Romantic poets realized that an ideal can never really be reached. When an ideal is achieved it becomes reality, thus a new ideal has to be found; this "revelation" led to melancholy.

Romantic poets believed they could become immortal through their poetry. Romantic literature is generally more critical of society and its injustice, questioning rather than answering, exploring rather than defining. Poets were thought to be higher beings.

Children are innocent, pure, good. When they gather experience, they get conscious about evil; they can become evil. Evil is a necessary part of good and wisdom. There is no good without evil and experience.

The young Romantics reflect in their poetry frustrated hopes in man's freedom and individualism. The extremely conservative political regime is the reason for the contrast between sordid reality and man's ideals, which is shown in a melancholic way. The poet is often subject of his own poetry (Shelley), his desire to be immortal is often linked with his preoccupation with death (Keats), or he tries to find an escape from reality in what is strange and distant (Byron).

## **THE OLD ROMANTICS (optimists, faith in the future, simpler ideas)**

### **William Wordsworth (1770-1850)**

- "THE SOLITARY REAPER"

- "UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE"

- "SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WAYS"

- LYRICAL BALLADS, 1798

- POEMS IN TWO VOLUMES, 1807

William Wordsworth was an old romantic, obsessed with nature and its beauty, an optimist whose ideal was living in the countryside. The "poet of nature" was well respected during his

lifetime. He had a sister named Dorothy and was friends with Coleridge for some time. In 1798 they published *Lyrical Ballads*, which fully established the Romantic movement. In the preface to the second edition, Wordsworth clearly states his views and idea of poetry. Poetry was to deal with humble life in ordinary language, given importance by the emotion, accuracy, and truth, and expressed in recurring metrical patterns. For Wordsworth a poet should have a high moral and ethical purpose, superior powers of feeling and expression, and an ability to convey the highest truth of feeling. Poetry is an overflow of emotions and therefore cannot be done by a non-poet. Some of his poetry was strongly influenced by the so called "walking trips" that he took with his sister (Lucy poems).

### Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834)

- "THE RHYME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER"

- "KUBLA KHAN", 1816

An ideal for Coleridge is man's creativity. He addressed many of his poems to intimate friends. His poetry is self-examination, ending with a calm mood, full of faith and reconciliation, sometimes with a tragic undertone. He was especially interested in the exotic, the magical, the strange, the distant. He said that a poet always has to be outside society to be able to tell a story objectively (so that the bad part of the society would not influence him).

## THE YOUNG ROMANTICS (more melancholic, escape from reality)

### George Noel Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824)

- "WHEN WE TWO PARTED"

- "TO INEZ"

- *CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE*, 1812

- *DON JUAN*, 1818/20

Byron led a life of controversy. He was a well educated and well situated homosexual, who was born with a deformed foot. He influenced a large number of poets throughout the world. He travelled a lot and even financially supported a Greek liberation movement. He was unpopular in England because of his political beliefs. He wrote a lot of epic poetry but became known for his lyrical poetry. He tried to find an escape from reality in what is strange and distant. He also adapted ottava rima for English needs, shortening the number of syllables from 11 to 10, but leaving the 8 lines. His poems were written to a man. His *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* introduces the BYRONIC HERO (a melancholy and solitary figure who in his actions often defies social conventions). The book was a success and so was Byron – with the ladies, that is. He also had sex with his own sister for a couple of years before he got married. He died of malaria.

### Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822)

- *QUEEN MAB*, 1813

- "OZYMANDIAS", 1818

- *THE DEFENSE OF POETRY*, 1821 (published 1840)

- *ODE TO THE WEST WIND*

An eccentric, an aristocrat, a revolutionary, a poet. Shelley was concerned with the nature of evil. At first he believed in the external evil imposed to people by the state, church and the norms. Later he thought that people were evil in the heart, and can become like that when they

get to power. Shelley slept around quite a lot and the affairs were actually the base of his poetry; he was his own subject in his poetry. He believed that poetry could reform the world.

- a) Didactic poems (where he developed his philosophical ideas): Queen Mab, Prometheus Unbound
- b) Spiritual autobiographies: Alaster, Epipsychidion
- c) Pure lyrics: Ode to the West Wind, To a Skylark, The Cloud
- d) Confession poems: To Constantia Singing, To William Shelley
- e) Satiric poems: Peter Bell III.
- f) Miscellaneous: Adonais, Ozymandias

### John Keats (1795-1821)

- "WHEN I HAVE FEARS"

- "ODE ON A GRECIAN URN"

- POEMS, 1817

- LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI, 1820

Keats dropped out of medical school to become a poet. His first volume of poems was crap, and so was his first epic. Soon he became ill with consumption and died a respected poet at the age of 26. His desire to be immortal was often linked with his preoccupation with death. He was questioning himself and wondering if he was truly a real poet. A main theme of Keats's poetry is the conflict between the everyday world and eternity: the everyday world of suffering, death and decay, and the timeless beauty and lasting truth of poetry and the human imagination.

## 4) THE VICTORIAN PERIOD (1830-1901)

Poets of the Victorian period held the Romantics in high regard, but they reacted against the self-revelation of the romantic poet. They believed that the duty of a poet was to present the world around him/her and not his/her own soul (growth of realism). One of the distinctive poetic forms of the Victorian period is the DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE. Many of the Victorian poets are concerned with their search for identity, for the meaning of life. They were interested in classical and medieval stories where they found a means to escape from industrialized England.

New revolutionary things happened. Charles Darwin wrote On the Origin of Species in 1859 with which he challenged the accepted religious beliefs. It was also the time of the industrial revolution.

1. Early period (1840-1850): economic growth, industrial revolution
2. Middle period (1850-1870): the high of the British Empire
3. Late period (1870-1890): labour movements, instability

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892) - wrote in blankverse

- "COME INTO THE GARDEN MAUD" – tragic story of love

- IN MEMORIAM A.H., 1850

- ODE, 1852

- THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE, 1852

- IDYLLS OF THE KING, 1859

Complex melancholy, tenderness, and violence at the same time. A superb landscape painter.

**Robert Browning (1812-1889)** wrote in blankverse

- DRAMATIC LYRICS, 1842
- DRAMATIC ROMANCES, 1845
- DRAMATIS PERSONAE, 1864
- DRAMATIC IDYLLS, 1879/80
- MEN AND WOMEN, 1855 (CHILDE ROLAND TO THE DARK TOWER CAME)
- THE RING AND THE BOOK, 1869/70

**Elizabeth Barret Browning (1806-1861)**

- AURORA LEIGH, 1857
- SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE, 1850
- POEMS, 1844

**Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882)**

- THE HOUSE OF LIFE, 1881
- MOMENT'S MONUMENT
- DANTE AND HIS CIRCLE, 1861
- THE BLESSED DAMOZEL published in THE GERM

**Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830-1894)**

- GOBLIN MARKET AND OTHER POEMS, 1862
- THE PRINCE'S PROGRESS, 1866
- NEW POEMS