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Moral and Political System as Objects of Aesthetic Beauty and the Case of Shelly

Abstract:

Researchers and critics, most of the time, have drawn the poets of revolutionary and political ideologies and ideals to the description of aesthetics qualification. Percy Bysshe Shelley's aesthetics of Romanticism tackles a new dimension in appraising and understanding the Romantic spur of poetry. The aspect is aesthetics as a moral and political system of Romantic poetry. In this study, Shelley has been studied from the lens of moral and political dimensions as to how through moral and political engagements, he resisted the prevailed system. The method used for such investigation was textual analysis. Shelley's works hold reformist, moral, political, and radical bases, thus motivating his people from within. In a similar pattern, the poet tries to shape his work in a way that intensely substantiates his idealism for the transformation of sustained rigid structure prevailed that time throughout England, especially, and Europe in general.

Key Words:

Political System, Poetry, Shelly

Introduction

To go into the background, the time from 1789 to 1830 has witnessed Romanticism in literature. The Romantic period designated a concern to value feeling and emotion rather than the human capacity to reason. This term is basically related to Romantic poetry, which is subjective, spontaneous and full of emotions. It is the product of the highly imaginative and fanciful faculties of the poets. One of the distinguishing features of Romanticism of the 19th century was what we describe as Revolutionary Idealism.

Social and political changes in any society deeply affect the literature of that particular age, and so is true of the English Romantic Era, where literature was enormously affected by the upsurge of the French Revolution. Though the French Revolution started in France, but it also actuated hope, a wave of optimism and standing for the cause of liberty and equality in the distressed people of England. The people of this age saw drastic social and political changes. They witnessed the Industrial Revolution, the modern technology used in the production and manufacturing, the decline of the Home Industry in rural areas, the class-consciousness, the gap between rich and poor class, the child-labour and rapid urbanization in the rural areas. Consequently, exploited by the elite class and inspired by the French Revolution, the people of England became determined to demand for their rights. Fearing for the loss of power, the authorities implemented brutal laws on the working class and took rather very oppressive steps to

suppress them. When the Trade Unionists revolted against the authorities in Peterloo in 1819, they were killed and tortured brutally. "This historical context heavily influenced the writing of the time" (Casaliggi & Fermanis, 2016). "They realized that by discarding traditional procedures and outworn customs, everything was possible, and not only in the political and social realm but in the intellectual and literary enterprises as well" (Abrams, 1971).

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Revolt for Shelley was the first principle. "His basic impulse was to rebel against restraint and only thereafter to suggest measures of improvement which his reading and observation afforded" (McNiece, 1969). Shelley had a passion for reforming the world with his principles of equality, liberty, and fraternity; for example, his poems like *Ode to West Wind* and *Ode to Skylark*. His religion was the religion of humanity. Of all the writers of the Romantic Era, who revolted against this economic and political exploitation, the Romantic writers, especially Shelley and Keats, are noteworthy. These Romantic writers were inspired by the rapid change, especially, French Revolution; they revolted against not only the political tyranny but also against the social and religious orthodox setup. They challenged the orthodox social, political and religious dogmas and, inspired by the writers of 'The Enlightenment', stood for freedom, equality and justice.

Literature Review

Percy Bysshe Shelley (4 August 1792 – 8 July 1822), a renowned author, playwright and poet, was one of the famous and influential romantic poets. He lived for a short span of time, that is, 29 years, but during this time, he, through his poetry, shared his social, political and radical views, which were not welcomed in his life. However, he became influential after his death. He wrote on different themes, including nature, atheism, injustice, oppression, mortality-immortality, tyranny, and revolt/revolution etc. As he believed in a godless universe about nature and the power of nature, his opinion is more concerned with majestic power. He was more likely to believe in reality in its substantiated form and evidence. Poems related to this theme are *Mont Blanc*, *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty*, *Ode to the West Wind*, *Mutability* and *To a Skylark*. Based on the theme of atheism, Shelley composed a bulk of poems. These are *England in 1819*, *The Mask of Anarchy*, *The Indian Serenade*, and *Ode to the West Wind*. The theme of a universe where there is no god continued in his poetry. Like many other Romantic poets, Shelley believed that the universe is the production of a natural process. His early poems were more concerned with religion and beliefs on atheism. Later on, he masked them under biblical absurdity, myths, and ignorance of mysteries. About oppression and tyranny, Shelley's views are more radical. He was so determined in his views that he did not care for the prevailed system. He inspired the oppressed and tried to engage them in the revolution against the institution. In this way, he fought against injustice, whether in law or government. The list of related poems includes *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty*, *The Mask of Anarchy*, *Adonais* and *England in 1819*. As far as the theme of revolt is concerned, it is believed by critics that Shelley always desired change. Shelley has considered different from his contemporary in the sense that most of the Romantics expressed injustice and tyranny, but it was Shelley who took the fight onward in the real sense. Besides the fact that he was exiled from London and Oxford, he was disowned by his family, yet he never stopped his struggle against tyranny and in favour of revolt against the miseries. He emphasized the right of men to live a life of activeness and go for change when needed. Among all Romantic poets, who stood for the revolutionary ideals of the French Revolution, Shelley is the best example. He is the most rebellious of all. He was deeply inspired by Jean-Jacques Rousseau's writings, who, according to Shelley, is 'the greatest man the world has produced since Milton'. (Letter, i. p. 494). But Shelley's ideals were slightly different from the ideals of the French Revolution, in a sense that while the former referred to freedom to liberation from authoritarian social oppression, the latter-Shelley's ideal, referred to the individual's own freedom. The poems written on this theme are *Mutability*, *Ozymandias*, *Mont Blanc*, and *Song to the Men of England*.

Shelley, besides many other qualities, that is, his associations with aesthetics and ideals, was a renowned revolutionist as Dowden (1888, p. 102) terms him as "the representative of the revolution in its pure ideal". According to Dowden:

All the illusions of the revolution, many of them generous illusions ... are to be found in Shelley. Also, all that was admirable and noble, all that was of a constructive character in the revolution is to be found-its enthusiasm of humanity, its passion for justice, its recognition of a moral element in politics, its sentiment of the brotherhood of men" (p. 33).

Dowden often refers to him as the revolutionist with a constructive side where the contrasts between his vision and dreams on the one hand, and his expectations as a reformer, on the other hand, are very important. There was something inherited in Shelley which made him a revolutionary poet, making him a reformer and a rebel. He worked for his ideals of liberty in whatever form it is. He revolted against oppression. He revolted against tyranny. He revolted against all those who suppressed people of any kind.

Methodology

The poems selected for analysis include *Victor and Cazire*, *The Wandering Jew*, *The Mask of Anarchy*, *Swellfoot*, *England in 1819*, *Ode to the West Wind*, *Queen Mab*, *Ode to West Wind*, *Zastrozzi*, *St. Irvine*, *The Poet's Dream*, *Alastor*, *Ode to Liberty*, *The Revolt of Islam*, *Mont Blanc*, *Song to the Men of England*, *Adonais*, *Prometheus Unbound*, *Ozymandias*, *The Cenci*, *To a Skylark*, and *Epipsychidion*. Furthermore, we also included Shelley's prose works, including *Defence of Poetry*, *A Philosophical View of Reform*, *The Necessity of Atheism*, *On love*, and *On life*.

For data analysis, textual analysis has been used. The selected works have been studied. These various works, as mentioned before, have been examined critically and considering the objectives of the research, relevant data has been gathered. Besides primary data, various works and opinion based on Shelley have been considered. Keeping in view the data limitations, for extensive analysis, only the selected poems and some works in prose have been considered. The available secondary data on both these poets is vast, so only a fraction has been used in the present study. However, efforts are made to access all the eminent works available on these two poets.

Analysis

. . . the hero, whose nerves strung by youth,
Will defend the firm cause of justice and truth;
With insatiate desire whose bosom shall swell,
To give up the oppressor to judgment and Hell. (Shelley, 1809)

The past two decades of Shelley's work have seen different approaches where some have brought the idealist Shelley down to earth. If New Historicism's as an approach is considered, it has looked into the historical world where the poet lived, thus creating a link between the socio-political praxis and the personal actions of the poet. In particular, Timothy Morton (1994) in *Shelley and the Revolution in Taste* depicts the revolutionary plans and projects, to mention his vegetarianism. Nora Crook and Derek Guitons (1986) studied Shelley and showed that how Shelley got obsessed with medicine and how he worked for society's health.

Philosophical and Literary Influences on Shelley

Romanticism, even being a literary movement, was against feudalism because of its way of treating the peasants and working class of the society, not as property and product but as respectable citizens of the society. Thus, social and literary movements went abreast. Not only the political brutality was the romantic poet's prime anathema, but they went against the social institutions which they had in their minds, were putting hurdles in the growth of humanity. The liberty of women is one of the social freedom of the movement. They (the leaders of the movement) revolted against things as they were, and they were revolutionized and dedicated to change the present status of things. Whatever is wrong, it became their doctrine. On 14th July 1789, the decisive time in the French Revolution was the Storming of Bastille, which later became a symbol of the tumultuous period. The French revolution had a lasting impact upon English literature, apart from the political involvement of myriad English writers at the time, those who used to write articles for magazines of the time and political pamphlets.

Being a child of the revolution and as a young boy, Shelley was inspired by the slogans of the French revolution: liberty, fraternity and equality. But brutality and inhumanity remained the ideals of English monarchs, with a perspective of suppressing the views of the French revolution and its effects. In his youth, Shelley witnessed brutality, trials for blasphemy and suspension of the right of habeas corpus and adversary everywhere. Self-promotion, adulation and selfishness were not just found in Shelley but other European writers too. *Rights of Man* (1791) by Thomas Paine, *Enquiry concerning Political Justice* by William Godwin and *Vindication of rights* became a source of inspiration for Shelley in his boyhood.

Shelley's Aesthetics as Politics

Why did Shelley write drama and poetry-related stuff in Italy that was to be consumed and published by someone else in England? Why was such stuff opposed textually? The answer to this question is the political assertion of such works. The political exhibition of such stuff has led to prohibition. Many of such works had political plots that “can be read to recommend a directly political materialization of their text's imperatives” (Simpson, 1998, p. 2). He was displaced to Italy because his works mostly recruited liberals with radical agendas.

Shelley, who took an active part in the reforms movement, started in the 1770s within the parliament by the Whigs and outside by a group of reformers, by Major Cartwright, is often quoted as a reformer (for details, see Cameron, 1945; Cartwright, 1826; Veitch, 1965). Shelley spent his time in the Whig household. His grandfather, being a supporter of the Whig, supported the Duke of Norfolk in 1798. His father, too, was a supporter of the Whig and a member of the Whig parliament. Because of this close association with the Whig, Shelley too was expected to take a role in the Whig ranks and thus make his career in politics. Because of such close connection with politics and political figures, Shelley, in the very beginning, reports Cameron (1945, p. 65), had read “the reform speeches of the Whig leaders, Fox, Sheridan, Erskine, Grey in their two great debates of 1793 and 1797”.

Shelley was inspired much by Sir Francis Burdett, whom he considered the real hero because of his courage and steadfastness. Burdett defied the anger of both Tories and Whigs till the last when all had given up. He continued to protest against all social evils, whether the spanking of soldiers or the ill-treatment of Ireland. Because of attachment with Burdett, Shelley referred to him in his poem the *Victor and Cazire* as:

Then to politics turn, of Burdett's reformation,
One declares it would hurt, t'other better the nation,
Will ministers keep? sure they've acted quite wrong,
The burden this is of each morning-call song. (Shelley, 1810)

Later on, he dedicated the poem *The Wandering Jew* as well. Shelley's goings-on in the Peter Finnerty may have also been inspired by the connection with the Burdett (Cameron, 1945). He addressed so many letters to Francis Burdett, because of which the town clerk of Barnstaple inspired to inform Lord Sidmouth, the Home Secretary.

In 1812, in his address to the Irish People, this view was most plainly stated:

... resist oppression not by force of arms, but by the power of mind and reliance on truth and justice.”
Or again, in the same address:

... if a number of human beings, after thinking of their own interests, meet together for any conversation on them, and employ resistance of the mind, not the resistance of the body, these people are going the right way to work.

Shelley's *Swallowfoot* is considered as an obvious account of his political engagements, which shows his reformist agendas. Mary Shelley views it as Percy's political-satirical drama, which is pretty much closer to the dramatic satire of Aristophanes. In *Swallowfoot*, pigs' egoism which is pitiless, is shown. In this parody, apparently, the horrendous fortunes of the *Swallowfoot* dynasty have been dramatized. Michael Scrivener, who is

one of Shelley's critics, while taking the Queen Caroline's affair, labels it as libertarian reform. Considering Tory's government and Shelley, Kenneth Neill Cameron is also of the opinion that Shelley was not defending the Queen and hence, he was not the partisan of the Queen. Shelley, Cameron says, just tried to bring the situation of the Queen observable with the hope that it might help in bringing down the Tories. In this way, Shelley worked for parliamentary reforms, a political cause. However, McNiece says that Shelley wrote the poem to make his stance clear on the Caroline party and show his partisanship. McNiece's stance is that Shelley knew that taking the cause of modern reforms and liberty could not be made possible through Caroline (McNiece, 1969). Ronald Tetrault calls *Swellfoot* a "vicious satire" where Shelley has betrayed his commitment as a true poet – a failure of moral vision and imaginative energies (Tetrault, 1987, p. 160).

Shelley himself was aware of the political implications of the happening, which were quite deeper in nature. At the end of the first act of *Swellfoot*, the pigs also echoed the address to Caroline, which were reported by the newspapers:

Hog-wash has been ta'en away;
If the Bull-Queen is divested,
We shall be in every way
Hunted, stripped, exposed, molested;
Let us do whate'er we may,
That she shall not be arrested.
(ii. i. 137-44, 147-53)

In these lines, the pig is shown as labelling their own cause with that of Iona's, like those who agitated for the cause of the Queen. The pigs have admitted that the issue between Iona and *Swellfoot* is a requirement of constitutional change. Thebes, i.e., the king, has only one choice: reform or civil war. It is further said, "QUEEN, we entrench you with walls of brawn/ And palisades of tusks, sharp as a bayonet.../ Those who wrong you, wrong us;/ Those who hate you, hate us; Those who sting you, sting us; /Those who bait you, bait us; / The oracle is now about to be /Fulfilled by circumvolving destiny; Which says: "Thebes, choose reform or civil war" The Caroline affairs was seen by Shelley as a struggle for the improvement of the political condition. Shelly talks of civil war or revolution.

It means that those who claim that Shelly was a partisan of the Queen were misleading because both, i.e., the cause of the Queen and reform are closely associated. Shelley was convinced of the Queen's sexual virtue and purity and her subsequent guilt, but it does not mean that it leads to Shelley's political actions. The accident of the Queen's maligned reputation was not an individual failure but a failure of all. It is said:

I have heard your Laureate sing,
That pity was a royal thing;
Under your mighty ancestor, we Pigs
Were bless'd as nightingales on myrtle springs,
Or grasshoppers that live on noon-day dew,
And sung, old annals tell, so sweetly too.
(I. i. 37-42)

If we look closely at the stanza, the complaint that the chorus makes is that the problem is because of *Swellfoot* and because of monarchy, if considered in general. But, Shelley equally satirizes the chorus. The claim that pigs once sang like nightingales is ridiculous. Shelley mocks the crisis when it is dealt with in the gothic-romantic sense. In this way, Shelley tried to persuade the British government to amend its policies to avoid civil war. And in this way, Shelley, instead of guarding the sexual innocence of the Queen, celebrates it as an omen of political reforms.

Shelley often addresses the ruling class. In the 'Song to the Men of England', Shelley says:

Men of England wherefore plough

For the lords who lay ye low?
Wherefore weave with toil and care
The rich robes your tyrant wears? (572-1-4)

Here the common people are made aware of the game the rich of England play with them. They are asked to awake and fight for their rights. In another poem, which is the distorted revised version of the National Anthem, Shelley expresses his thoughts. Shelley, while looking back to reality, writes “England in 1819” where the diseases of the country are presented. In this poem, the Royal Family of England is made responsible for the treason. Shelley wrote all this because of protest to the British government who made the strategies of oppression. It is said:

God prosper, speed and save
God raise from England’s grave
Her murdered Queen! Pave the swift victory
The steps of liberty
Whom Britons own to be Immortal Queen (574-1-7)
Here a request is made for the true liberty of England.
Utilized the death of Princess Charlotte

Princess Charlotte, daughter of Prince Regent, whose death on 6th September 1817 while giving birth to a child, coincided with the heinous murder of three labourers: Jeremy Brandeth (a self-educated Baptist), William Turner (a stonemason), Issac Ludhlam (a Methodist preacher), became a source for Shelley’s political fame and social realm. Shelley, in his pamphlet, pungently mourned the death of labourers who were hanged publicly and decapitated. Mont Blanc delineates the being of cultivated imaginations as political with the reason of absorbing ‘truth’ from nature. The speaker of the poem evades a superstitious response to nature while noticing Mont Blanc and its ‘awful scene’ (116). Instead, a political world of humans is interpreted based on natural law, or “an intuition of necessity informing the landscape” (119). Scientifically, the poem describes natural law as political law.

In the same veins, on the struggle of rights of inhabitants, after Peterloo Massacre, Shelley composed *The Mask of Anarchy*. There are three sections of the poem: the first section is a representation of pungent sarcasm on the government of the day. A portend deity in a medieval masque dance of death was given to the Prime minister, Lord Liverpool and his ministers, which marks a beautiful reversal of the official events. The Prime minister and his ministers were responsible for Peterloo’s trampling to death by the horses they rode. Ironically, the people who adore their own servitude were also governed by anarchy. William black trapped them as “the mind-forged-miracles of oppression. Hope is reborn as an unharmed mother who is “trampled under horses”.

Different types of freedoms are illustrated in the poem by hope. Stanza 39-51 delineates the false freedom that utilizes the poor for the benefits of the rich. From 52 to 64, a prophecy of true freedom composed of justice, peace, wisdom and equality, is highlighted. In the end, a demonstration is called on by hope across the whole of England for claiming the political rights, and the realization of its setting before “Waterloo “is important at this point. Hope augurs the sufferings of the fate of crowd at Peterloo. She implies the carnage and pogrom the crowd should suffer from to achieve the affirmation of law and justice, which will produce a violent reaction among the people and will urge the conscience of British soldiers; who will support the freedom fighters.

Shelley asks the countrymen to fight for what is made for them. You are free. But what is needed is to say these words loudly that we are free as this will add motivation to your zeal. He asks them, “Let the horseman’s scimitars,/ Wheel and flash, like sphereless stars,/Thirsting to eclipse their burning,/ In a sea of death and mourning”. Shelley says to be firm and resolute for a war like a forest holding weapons. Shelley embarks on the “Let the laws of your own land,/ Good or ill, between you stand”. For Shelley, liberty is coming back to the old laws. These laws are for those who revered it, whether young or old. Shelley asks the people of England, “And if then the tyrants dare,/ Let them ride among you there,/ Slash, and stab, and maim, and hew,/ What

they like, that let them do". To us, it would appear that *The Mask of Anarchy* was not objectionable. On the other hand, Shelley shows his way to moderation – as a teacher of the wisdom of a steady reference to precedent and a cool believer of the doctrine of revolution – quite anarchical in nature, when his country was bleeding with fiery and aggressive stuff.

Shelley sent his poem to Leigh Hunt's radical journal, *The Examiner*, for its publication in September 1819, but unfortunately, it wasn't published till 1832. Because the government didn't allow that any radical movement to hover over the country. Although Shelley hoped his poems to be published in 1819 as early as possible, it didn't happen.

Shelley's poems were against the government and its malpractices. The angry tone and hard words in the sonnet "England in 1819", like 'an old, mad, blind, despised and dying king' are considered as a pungent satire upon King George 3. Two imageries: one that of law in the phrase "Golden and Sanguine", second that of an army in the phrase "double edge sword", threatens the ruler in a hidden way that fate can reverse on them. Despite the explanation of society of living dead, the word Phantom in the hope of 'glorious of phantom' qualifies the rebirth of hope and liberty. Shelly, in his metaphysical essay, 'A philosophical view of Reform', highlights the theme of exploitation as a political essayist. The popular song form of the essay, along with its directness, implies the idea that the suppressed labourers are complicit in their subjection.

In his poem "Ode to the West Wind", which is written on the French Revolution, Shelley shows his revolutionary ideals. Using nature, Shelley represents his inner self. He is of the view that, like West Wind, he too is restless. He is sure of that like nature; the community of mankind too is overwhelmed with different negative diseases. That is why he asks the West Wind to come and help him. He believes that as the wind drives the dead leaves away, in the same manner, it would also help in cleaning the world. He requests the West Wind get him free of all the disappointments. He asks:

Oh! Lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life – bleed –

Shelley desires to be changed and regenerated. If that's not possible, he invokes the West Wind, then reforms humanity. He wants the prevailed system of tyranny and oppression to be destroyed and a new society, which is prosperous, to be built. For him, the West Wind is a symbol of change and revolution that he longs for.

Such public happiness Shelley, in common with many other advanced thinkers of his day, conceived to depend, at least in part, upon popular representation:

The advocates of universal suffrage have reasoned correctly that no individual who is governed can be denied a direct share in the government without supreme injustice. (Shelley, 1820)

And that is why Shelley stuck back to his previous opinion that he voiced in *The Mask of Anarchy*. He believed that it is patience that can help combat the unwanted situation. He used to term patience and suffering as weapons through which one can gain and maintain self-respect.

Some of Shelley's poems could be appropriated for "purity" more easily than others (Neil, 1994). Indeed, Shelley produced a body of self-conflicted poetry whose radical tendencies remain in tension both with what Reiman justly describes as its "agrarian reactionary" tendencies ("Shelley") and with its pronounced elitist prejudices. These very self-contentions opened his poetry to several sorts of appropriation while simultaneously providing resistance to any particular one. Of all Shelley's poems, *Queen Mab*, with its long prose notes arguing for atheism and against marriage, along with its extensive attacks in verse on Christianity and monarchy, was the most difficult to rehabilitate for "purity".

Shelley's sensitivity was expressed and vocalized through his works. The death of unarmed laborers due to the shooting in Manchester in 1819 influenced him to trust that revolution alone can put an end to oppression. In his poetical work 'Queen Mab', he depicts the miseries of the working-class and his resentment against their oppressors. Shelley's inner conflict over continuously being pirated for the subordinate class book

fans by what he himself called the “low” distributors might be clear in letters he composed for the publisher, Charles Oilier, and his companion John Gisborne over Clark’s piracy (Letters 2: 298, 300-01). In exploring Shelley’s confusion, Keach finishes up persuasively that “Shelley became part of working-class culture and politics despite his preference for ‘the more select classes of poetical readers’...” (9).

He was the primary writer of the growing Industrial age to demonstrate the arousing class consciousness of workers. In 1817, Shelley composed “Laon and Cythna”, which later on was known as “The Revolt of Islam”. It gave an enthusiastic image of the French Revolution and, furthermore, half a century of revolutionary law-based battles in England and Ireland. In his significant work “Prometheus Unbound” (1820), Shelley introduces the future society as one without ‘clans and countries’ and without class mistreatment. Reasonable and practical inclinations are more noticeable in the works from 1819 to 1821. While the incomplete historical drama ‘Charles I’ depict the happenings of revolution in the seventeenth century, the first outrage of the general population against the government.

Shelley’s Aesthetics as Morality

Shelley’s being a reformist and his interest in the reforms is clear from his letter that he wrote to Leigh Hunt in *The Examiner* in 1811, where he congratulates him on the occasion of victory and triumph. He terms this triumph as a special one because it is celebrated by those who love liberty. He addresses Hunt as “the fearless enlightener of the public mind”. In that letter, Shelley insists on a meeting of such enlightened members because of whose efforts the alleviated evil was restrained. He was of the opinion that such a meeting would help resist the enemies of liberty. He, while defending the cause of liberty, says, “the time will come when I hope that my every endeavor, insufficient as this may be, will be directed to the advancement of liberty” (Ingpen and Peck, 1826, p. 309). In this letter, Shelley intended to make politics his career. Although he used harsh words against politicians, he was making his way to the House of Commons either as an independent Whig or as a Whig. He considered his major task the accomplishment of parliamentary reforms for liberty in order to extend the franchise, end the corruption and highlight the enemies of liberty. His plan was to work for reforms by addressing the people, calling public meetings. All this was advocated in his writings, such as *Irish Pamphlet Proposal for an Association* and *Putting Reforms*, one of his pamphlets.

Shelley’s scheme was interrupted because of his expulsion from the city which he chose, i.e., from Oxford. It was 1817 that he entered the movement of reformists and took an active part, thereby publishing *A Proposal for Putting Reform to the Vote by the Hermit of Marlow* and later on gave the tenth of his income for the said movement. Shelley, two years later, wrote his other remarkable work, entitled *A Philosophical View of Reform*, but it was not published until 1920 (Cameron, 1945). In *A Philosophical View of Reform*, it is revealed that there is a movement away from the moderate reformers and Hunts towards the radical reformers. Here, Shelley talked of some key principles of the reform movement and linked them with world history.

All that Shelley wanted through his reform movement was to make changes in the jury system, bars, bribery in elections and other merits in the selection criteria of army and navy, etc.

Shelley read and wrote a lot for the reform movement, because of which he developed a deep capacity for political analysis. However, he remained a figure not known to many. Even well-known reformists like Hunt, Burdett, Cobbett, Wooler and Cartwright considered him a person of an annoying attitude. His efforts to create a space in the movement were not that much celebrated, and his first pamphlet went unnoticed while the second was not published until 1920. His role was considered as that of a sympathetic and talented observer. He, says Camaron (1945), was such a strong proponent of the reform movement that he was not even contented with the Reform Bill of 1832, which was accepted gladly by the moderate reformers. To him, the movement was a push of the past into the future of the democratic republic. His interest in the reform movement is clearly shown in his works.

For Shelley, a government that is considered good and is valued and that works for the prosperity of people is what brings happiness to people. It was the time when the happiness of the people was ignored, and Shelley took it as an opportunity to cash it.

These incorporate Shelley's philosophical consideration of the ability for change and, in the meantime, his acknowledgement of the powers ordered against that change and progress. And besides, this recorded knowledge that he additionally experienced the individual feeling of incompetence and impossibility, produced partly by his banishment from England at that critical time. Moreover, he also experienced a feeling of disappointment and inability to get up to the speed of the wave of history in his part as a political poet. So, what appears to be basically an expressive poetical work, one has to see an entire system of hidden variables such as chronicled, social and personal factors, prompting the poetical composition. Shelley's ode does not visualize the process of rotting and decomposition of the autumn season with fatalism, as ascribed to it by many critics. He considers fall as an essential element of the process towards prompting rebirth. 'West Wind' of Shelley is the personification of change, associating the social and natural transformation. This poem associates these changes with the role of the poet as a breath of motivation like a breeze, a freedom fighter or a hero testing melancholy, a divinatory clarion proclaiming a new bright day. Shelley considers the west wind as the life force of revolutionary chaos, encapsulating the conflicting powers of history and as the soul of poetic inspiration. Another point of opinion that is also relevant to the discussion is the same that Shelley has redesigned and created the hero of his poetical work, 'Prometheus Unbound' as the one who would not tremble before the oppressor (Jupiter) even despite the severest torments. If it is for the sake of abstract creation in literature, Shelley could not have longed for calling the battling workers to submit thoughtlessly before the oppressors. Moreover, his mood was optimistic at that time as he summoned the "West Wind" to introduce the progressive change by drifting away from the older command. With this outlook, even to envision this that he would have requested the workers to be docile is ridiculous. It could also be noted from this point that indeed, even from his school days, he detested oppression and cruelty as he opposed "Fagging" in Eton School. So, to consider calling upon individuals to be compliant before oppression is strange.

The popular and intellectual cultures are believed to be Shelley's motivation that inspired him during his youth days. Judson (2016) believes that the novels which Shelley wrote during his youth days were *Zastrozzi* and *St. Irvine*, where his love for gothic can be seen. Coming to poetry, the salient features reflected there are dreams and religion, which created grounds for his moral growth. His very poem with the name *The Poet's Dream* is a good example of how much he valued dreams – whether his own or others. Being a believer of love and beauty, in this poem, Shelley talks about the poets as the class of people without whom universal love is inseparable. The poet's mind, he says, is fertile in imaginations and thoughts – outlets to dreams.

Bradley's lyricizing of a whole period really proceeds from his religious sense of literature itself. Shelley, for him, is not a political but a religious moralist. Little inspired by the past, careful just of the present, his eyes were settled firmly on the future. To revamp the world and to realize Utopia was his consistent goal. Consequently, for this reason, he might be viewed as the poet of thoughtful and idealistic youth and a reformer. However, because of the absence of adequate comprehension of his rationality, his enthusiasm for freedom and autonomy, or because of their ideological partiality, some of his contemporary writers and critics disliked him for his perspectives passed on in the handout "The Necessity of Atheism" and his broad-mindedness and radical views in his different compositions. Some of the critics who underestimated Shelley's work included T.S. Eliot and Matthew Arnold, who were traditionalists and fundamentalists. Shelley was criticized and hated to this extent that some of the critics even termed him as 'Anti-Christ', others called him a heretic. While some were of the view that he is a visionary without fundamental duty.

Shelley's campaign to promote radical thought is, as announced, the vehement opening epigrams from Enlightenment, rationalist Voltaire's onslaught on Christianity, 'Crush the infamous thing' (p.30), a clarion call to action also adopted by the revolutionary French Jacobin of 1790, the illuminists. The declaration was reinforced by the epigrams which Lucricius, who asserted that he would free men's minds from crippling bonds

of superstition, and from Greek scientist Archimedes, who claimed that he would be able to ‘move the earth’ given the right point of leverage.

Shelley recognizes that we owe the eminent authors of the brilliant period of English Literature to that impassioned development of the mindset of the society, which made them able to leave the oldest, most unjust and tyrannical Christian religion. He focused on the fact that we owe Milton to the revolution of the same essence. Holy Milton was a Republican and a bold man who would courageously enquire into ethics and religion. The notable writers of the present day are the friends and predecessors of this incredible transformation in our social conditions and views that strengthen it. He promises that he would deliver an organized history of authentic components of human society. He furthermore promises that the believers and promoters of prejudice and falsehood could not be allowed to compliment themselves and that he should take Aeschylus as opposed to Plato as his ideal.

In *Queen Mab*, Duffy claims that Shelley does not simply get rid of the creative ability; he disapproves of the religious superstitions while readdressing the discourse of sublime to the understanding of “all sufficing Power” of nature. However, to approach the issue at this level is to get oneself trapped in the subject of religion. The poem *Mont Blanc* is an example of such a case. Wasserman's (cited in Jager, 2014) interpretation of the poem is a good one. Here he comments on the relationship between idealism and scepticism and gives his opinion as that our focus is on the outcomes of the poem and the poem's rhetorical questions, but what he claims a “thing” a religious one. Wasserman further elaborates that the poem is not religious because here, one can find the characteristics of submissiveness, which is not submission to God, rather to necessity.

Conclusion

Percy Bysshe Shelley had intense but short lives. He wrote in the post-revolutionary period, the era of disillusionment, the vicious violence of the terror and the menacing rise of the Napoleonic Empire. He is among the most prominent poets of the Romantic era. Shelley wrote in a spirit of revolt, identified the emptiness of the outworn values by asserting the dignity of the individual spirit. His poetry, the embodiment of the non-conformist spirit, is against oppression and does not tolerate any tyranny imposed on the human mind and individual self. For this distinctive cause, Shelley retained his enthusiasm for liberty in the field of their writings. Being an eager revolutionary, he rejected the enslavement of people's minds through social, religious and political establishments. Specifically, in this rebellious, bold and vigorous arbitration of human liberty, justice and equality, we find perhaps the most substantial and grand aspect of his literary existence. Various critics may have accused him on various grounds, but he had been admired as unique historical figures for not remaining silent at times demanding the revolting voices for the social, moral and political uplift of men and their mind against tyranny and oppression.

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