

SENSUOUS IMAGERY
IN SHELLEY'S PROMETHEUS UNBOUND

A THESIS

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PREFACE

This thesis grew from a tiny seed planted several years ago--a much briefer paper comparing the visual imagery in Prometheus Unbound with a film version of an Aeschylus trilogy produced by the Drama Department of Randolph-Macon College. Although it was slow in germinating, the seed finally burst into growth and produced its fruit on the pages which follow. Its principal aim is to provide nutriment for students who might otherwise starve while peering through the window at Shelley's sumptuous banquet, for the poetry of Shelley is rich food for the novice gastronome.

I extend my deepest gratitude to Dr. Autrey Nell Wiley, whose inspiring accomplishments in the field of English have taught by example as well as the more standard academic methods; to Mrs. Eva H. Mark, whose friendship and encouragement have been invaluable; and to Miss Julia Crisp, who kindly assisted in the reading of this thesis and in my final examination. I am also grateful to the members of my immediate family--my husband, George, and my son, Jeff--who patiently assumed all of my domestic duties during the interval required for the completion of this thesis. I am deeply indebted to my father, R. G.

Jordan of San Antonio, who initiated me at an early age into "The Sacred Order of Syntax." If I were to choose the single most important influence, however, I would have to select S. Hunt, who sang encouragement in even sweeter tones than Shelley's.

Leta Jordan Hunt

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

According to a Greek legend related by Aeschylus in the fifth century B.C., Prometheus, one of the Titans, stole fire from heaven and gave it to man. For this misdeed, Zeus punished Prometheus by chaining him to a cliff. Each day an eagle devoured the Titan's liver, which renewed itself each night. Believed to be a part of a trilogy, Prometheus Bound is the only surviving drama of the three. Over two thousand years later, Percy Bysshe Shelley determined to set Prometheus free. He did so in Prometheus Unbound.

According to Newman Ivey White, Shelley's interest in the language and literature of ancient Greece began while he was a student at Oxford.¹ He continued these studies for the remainder of his life, reading the works of Aristotle, Plato, Euripedes, Homer, Aeschylus, Aristophanes, and Theocritus.² In the summer of 1818, he translated Plato's Symposium.³ Shelley developed "a great admiration for the sublime majesty of Aeschylus," but he could not accept the compromise between Jupiter and Prometheus in Aeschylus's drama.⁴

¹Portrait of Shelley (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1945), p. 15.

²Ibid., p. 272.

³Ibid., p. 273.

⁴Ibid., p. 321.

White states further that Shelley began Prometheus Unbound while he was visiting Lord Byron at I Capuccini, near Venice, in the fall of 1818. Place and composition interact in Shelley's memory as he recalls, in the Preface to his drama, the place which inspired him to write: "This poem was chiefly written upon the mountainous ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, among the flowery glades, and thickets of odoriferous blossoming trees, which are extended in ever winding labyrinths upon its immense platforms and dizzy arches suspended in the air. The bright blue sky of Rome, and the effect of the vigorous awakening spring in that divinest climate, and the new life with which it drenches the spirits even to intoxication, were the inspiration of this drama."¹ White asserts, however, that the import of the drama is anticipated in Shelley's letters dated as early as 1811 and 1812. Those letters and the drama have certain common features: first, that the present state of man and society is basically evil; second, that this condition can and must be improved; third, that the fault lies in the minds of men, and only secondarily in the institutions of man; and fourth, that it is the practical duty of men to overcome these evils.²

¹Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound," ed. Lawrence John Zillman (A Variorum Edition; Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1959), p. 121.

²Portrait of Shelley, p. 339.

Shelley's choice of a classical myth as a vehicle for his protest was artistically deliberate. Because of its universality, mythology offers the writer a logical framework of essential truth. The externals applied to this framework thus bear witness to the particular genius of the writer. Says Earl R. Wasserman, "He [Shelley] seems to be fashioning his own master-myth, not by fabricating new materials and not by violating the structures of the ancient legends, but by causing his poetic idea to restructure the established legends into a pattern that is a possible interpretation of them."¹ Albert J. Kuhn, in his essay "Shelley's Demogorgon and Eternal Necessity," writes that the myths "often illustrate, always enliven truth; they animate with the vivacity of passion, character, and action, the most delightful objects of the material world."²

Certain basic differences in structure and intent exist between the two Promethean legends. Most obvious, of course, is the plot. Aeschylus's play is a tragedy; Shelley's is not. Aeschylus wrote for the stage; Shelley did not. Shelley's purpose, as stated in his Preface,

¹"Myth-Making in Prometheus Unbound," MLN, LXX (March 1955), 184.

²MLN, LXXIV (November 1959), 599.

was "to familiarize the highly refined imagination of the more select classes of poetical readers with beautiful idealisms of moral excellence."¹ Shelley put nineteen characters into his work; Aeschylus had only seven.

Shelley included extra scenes that were not in the Greek version: Prometheus's torture by the Furies (the only one that could have been in the original), the destruction of Jupiter, and the release of Prometheus.² The Promethean myth, then, allowed Shelley to embellish the ancient framework in a manner that has brought both praise and scorn from the critics.

One of the stylistic devices that Shelley employed--imagery--provides the genesis of this thesis in which I shall examine some of the problems that confront students in their study of his poetry. I shall present definitions of imagery, review what critics have said about Shelley's use of imagery in Prometheus Unbound, classify the imagery of the drama according to previously established definitions, and discuss the contribution of the imagery to the play as a whole.

One of the principal difficulties in a discussion of imagery is the matter of definition. Even among literary

¹Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound," ed. Zillman, p. 127.

²Bennett Weaver, "Prometheus Bound and Prometheus Unbound," PMLA, LXIV (March 1949), 121.

scholars the term is ambiguous. Caroline Spurgeon, in her classic Shakespeare's Imagery (1936), limits the term, for the most part, to simile and metaphor, and this makes comparison essential. Similarly, Richard Harter Fogle states that "imagery is present whenever two things are put together in order that their relationships may be seen, provided that in these relationships the element of similarity is present."¹ Such a relationship implies simile or metaphor, and it is, in this restricted sense, perplexing: "If imagery is thought of as synonymous with metaphor, however, the single poetic image is a figure of speech involving comparison or likeness. And since 'metaphor' is also ambiguous, used as it is for a single class as well as the entire species of figures, confusion is worse confounded."² Marlies K. Danziger and W. Stacy Johnson say that imagery "ordinarily means the evoking of any experience of the senses."³ Fogle reinforces this viewpoint by calling the sensuous "a mode of grasping the objective, without which the aesthetic balance would be imperfect."⁴ Robert P. Tristram Coffin implies in

¹The Imagery of Keats and Shelley (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1949), p. 13.

²Ibid., p. 3.

³An Introduction to Literary Criticism (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1961), p. 38.

⁴The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, p. 9.

The Substance That Is Poetry (1942) that images must relate to objects that can be perceived through the senses. William Flint Thrall and Addison Hibbard state that imagery in a broad sense is synonymous with trope or figure of speech. The trope signifies a writer's change in the basic meanings of words. The four major types of tropes are "images, which are literal or sensory and properly should not be called tropes at all; symbols, which combine a literal and sensuous quality with an abstract or suggestive aspect; simile, which describes by expressed analogy; and metaphor, which describes by implied analogy. Not only do these four types of tropes define the meaning of imagery, they also suggest the ranges of possible application that are to be found in the term."¹ For example, the mention of a flower brings to the reader's mind a mental picture of a blossom. This is called by some a literal image. Symbolic images, on the other hand, possess not only this literal meaning but also an extension of meaning relating to some other object or idea somewhat remote from the literal. For example, if the poet represents the flower as evidence of love in Nature, the image is then symbolic. It is through the use of this symbolic imagery that Shelley explains mental

¹A Handbook to Literature (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1960), p. 233.

phenomena in terms of the physical, and vice versa; for instance, the soul may be represented as a throne, or thought may be pictured as a cavern. Fogle provides a workable interpretation of the broad term imagery:

"To the psychologist and to many critics imagery in poetry is the expression of sense-experience, channelled through sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste, through these channels impressed upon the mind, and set forth in verse in such fashion as to recall as vividly and faithfully as possible the original sensation. In these terms, a poetic image is the record of a single sensation."¹ If, as Fogle continues, "the function of all poetic imagery is to order, relate, and unify disparate modes of physical, mental, and emotional experience,"² then it follows that the images themselves may be drawn from physical, mental, and emotional sources. White observes that "Shelley presents again and again mental phenomena in terms of the physical, physical phenomena in terms of the mental, and even fuses matter and spirit in the same image."³

In the Preface to Prometheus Unbound, Shelley forewarns his readers that he intends to deviate from

¹The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, p. 3.

²Ibid., p. 101.

³Portrait of Shelley, p. 329.

the usual physical source of imagery. "The imagery which I have employed will be found, in many instances, to have been drawn from the operations of the human mind, or from those external actions by which they are expressed."¹ Admitting that such imagery is rare in the poetry of his contemporaries, Shelley justifies his on the grounds that Dante and Shakespeare successfully employed mental imagery; but it is to the classical Greek poets that he is most indebted for his treatment of imagery.² White suggests that Shelley often found the literal language inadequate to his needs; thus the poet used images and symbols "to speak more directly to the imagination and intuition."³ White calls this Shelley's "intellectual justification" for the use of images in his poetry.⁴

With such historic justification for this singular type of imagery, why, then, did the critics belittle Prometheus Unbound? I think there were three reasons: Shelley's revolt against social convention, Shelley's philosophy as expressed through his imagery; and the type of imagery that Shelley used. His life and writings reveal that Shelley believed in freedom and despised

¹Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound," ed. Zillman, p. 121.

²Ibid., pp. 121-122.

³Portrait of Shelley, p. 194.

⁴Ibid.

hypocrisy. He considered a social environment dictated by custom and false sophistication to be essentially corrupt.¹ His life displayed his reaction to this evil.

From his youth on, Shelley had been a rebel searching for a cause.² Generally unpopular with both his schoolmates and his masters because of his extreme attempts at boyish pranks and his lack of athletic and academic skills, he spent six of his formative years at Eton. In 1810, he attended Oxford where he met Thomas Jefferson Hogg, a man who was to exert a profound influence on Shelley's life with his assertions concerning "the superiority of moral and ethical science to the merely physical." Of the greatest significance in shaping young Shelley's ideas, however, was his reading of William Godwin's Political Justice, a treatise filled with revolutionary ideas concerning morality and government. Adopting Godwin's skepticism, Shelley reflected his own ideas in a pamphlet, "The Necessity of Atheism," which he had privately printed. Refusing to answer questions put to them by the university authorities

¹Neville Rogers, Shelley at Work (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1956), p. 27.

²The biographical information in the following paragraphs was gleaned largely from Newman Ivey White's monumental work, Shelley (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1940), I, 37ff.

about the pamphlet, both Shelley and Hogg were expelled from Oxford in March 1811.

Following his expulsion, Shelley, nineteen years old at the time, eloped to Scotland with a sixteen-year-old schoolmate of his sisters, Harriet Westbrook. For a honeymoon trip the young couple journeyed to Ireland to "save" the Irish populace from the sinister effects of Christianity. Their mission failed.

Back in England, Shelley met Godwin personally and began to assume some of Godwin's financial problems that were to plague them both for the rest of their lives. He also met Godwin's daughter, Mary, with whom he fell passionately in love. Even the liberal Godwin rejected Shelley's idea that Mary come to live in the Shelley household: Mary as his wife, Harriet as his companion. Harriet also repudiated the idea. Thereupon Shelley and Mary eloped to Switzerland. Two years later, following Harriet's suicide, they were married. Returning to the continent from a visit in England in 1818, they led a life of reasonable propriety until Shelley's death in 1822.

Harriet's death was a damaging blow to Shelley's reputation. His unsuccessful suit to gain custody of their two children focused attention on him and probably swayed the opinions of the critics who were unable to

separate the man from the poet. The ideas expressed in the poetry possibly confirmed their judgment of Shelley as a dangerous radical. That he lived faithfully according to his own altruistic tenets seems to have escaped them.

Earl R. Wasserman suggests that the philosophical argument expressed in Prometheus Unbound had its origin in two earlier prose fragments, "On Life" and "Speculations on Metaphysics." In both Shelley rejected dualism of mind and matter. Thus it is the perception of an object that makes the object real.¹ Wasserman says further that "because subjective idealism defines the universe in terms of perceptions, its inherent logic tends toward the ultimate fusion of subject and object, being and perception."² Shelley believed that poetry should broaden the range of our perceptions, enabling us to "feel" vicariously. In A Defence of Poetry, he says, "But poetry defeats the curse which binds us to be subjected to the accident of surrounding impressions. . . . It compels us to feel that which we know."³ He has previously pointed out that "reason is the enumeration of quantities already known; imagination is the perception of the value of those

¹Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound" (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1965), p. 10.

²Ibid., pp. 12-13.

³Criticism: The Foundations of Modern Literary Judgment, ed. Mark Schorer and Others (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1948), p. 469.

quantities, both separately and as a whole."¹ Imagination involves the process of image-making, and the evaluation of images is a necessary component of our previous definition of imagery. Imagination, to Shelley, is certainly the higher of the two faculties. Reason suggests existence; imagination gives that existence meaning. It is through our senses that we exercise our imaginations. Or, as Shelley expressed it in line 785 of Hellas, "Nought is but that which feels itself to be."² Wasserman reasons that Shelley read widely from both ancient and contemporary philosophers, rejecting anything alien to his own beliefs and seizing upon any portions supporting his own ideas.³ Shelley's eventual philosophy, as expressed in Prometheus Unbound, was eclectic and unique. According to White, it is expressed in the central theme of the drama: "the omnipotence of mind over matter."⁴

One of our human frailties is that we disparage things we do not understand. Such has been the case with Shelley's imagery. White asserts, "The reason why Prometheus Unbound has from the first been so commonly

¹Ibid., p. 455.

²The Complete Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1901), p. 334.

³Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound," pp. 1-7.

⁴Portrait of Shelley, p. 88.

misunderstood lies in the boldness and originality of the imagery. Had the contemporary critics been entirely without other prejudices they would still have misunderstood and underestimated the poem on this ground."¹ If we were to accept Coffin's definition, previously cited, that imagery must be restricted to objects, we would be able to meet the problem of examining Shelley's imagery only half way; for the objects that he uses are in themselves almost intangible: clouds, mists, dews, sky, and distant mountains. They are mercurial and evanescent. Milton Wilson maintains, however, that these characteristics do not make the images less concrete and more abstract than the imagery of other poets.² Thus it is not the way Shelley handles his imagery that causes his readers to label him abstract; it is rather the kind of imagery that he uses. According to Fogle, Shelley's clouds, mists, and dews cause critics to confuse "his subject matter with his ability to handle it."³

With one exception, contemporary reviews of Prometheus Unbound were merciless. The London Magazine for June 1820 praised the still-unpublished poem for its originality.⁴ In the fall of 1820, that same publication

¹Shelley, II, 127.

²Shelley's Later Poetry (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), p. 107.

³The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, p. 36.

⁴Newman Ivey White, The Unextinguished Hearth (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1938), p. 217.

called it "a vast wilderness of beauty" and lauded the drama because its theme offers hope to mankind of the eventual triumph of good over evil.¹ Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, September 1820, labels it sacrilege and treason. This reviewer compares the downfall of Jupiter with the downfall of "every system of religious belief" . . . "and every system of human government."² The most scathing opinion appeared in the Literary Gazette for September 9, 1820. Here the poem is described as "inflexibly unintelligible," "absolute raving"; its author is called a "lunatic."³ One bit of doggerel appearing in John Bull, February 4, 1822, is included because its author probably thought himself more a poet than Shelley:

Shelly [sic] styles his new poem Prometheus Unbound,
And 'tis like to remain so while time circles round:
For surely an age would be spent in the finding
A reader so weak as to pay for the binding.⁴

Shelley has suffered no less at the hands of modern critics who have been involved in a renaissance of the seventeenth-century metaphysical school. William Empson states that "Shelley seldom perceived profitable relations between two things, he was too helplessly excited by one

¹Ibid., p. 217.

²Ibid., p. 232.

³Ibid., p. 227.

⁴Ibid., p. 345.

thing at a time, and that one thing was often a mere notion not conceived in action or in an environment."¹ Fogle² believes that the rejection of Shelley by modern critics was inaugurated in 1924 by T. E. Hulme's "Classicism and Romanticism" in a volume entitled Speculations.

In his essay "The Romantic Movement,"³ Fogle traces critical opinion from 1924 to the present time. He says that T. E. Hulme "identified Romanticism with political liberalism and false optimism about human nature."⁴ T. S. Eliot, who was like Hulme a reactionary, had a "taste for the seventeenth century metaphysical poets" which "precluded respect for the Romantics, particularly for Shelley."⁵ His attitude was "shared by the American Southern Agrarians, especially John Crowe Ransom and Allen Tate. Along with their political and religious conservatism, their hatred of scientism and absolute utilitarianism has led them to think of Romanticism as a compromise between poetry and science that satisfies the requirements of neither."⁶ Ransom's The World's Body (1938) "condemned Romantic poetry as a 'Platonic' poetry

¹Seven Types of Ambiguity (2nd ed.; A New Directions Book, 1949), p. 161.

²The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, p. 243.

³Contemporary Literary Scholarship: A Critical Review, ed. Lewis Leary (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1958), pp. 109-138.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 110.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 111.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 111.

which pretended to be solid and sensuous, but was actually an allegory of abstract ideas presented in images."¹

Like Ransom, Tate and Brooks took the side of metaphysical poetry against Romantic poetry. "C. S. Lewis, whose literary preferences are not Romantic, nevertheless defended Romanticism in Rehabilitations (1939) against F. R. Leavis's provocative but prejudiced Revaluation (1936). Donald Stauffer . . . invoked common sense, orthodox poetics, and historical perspective in favor of the Romantic poets in The Nature of Poetry (1946)."² Elizabeth Nitchie wrote on Shelley's craftsmanship in The Major English Romantic Poets (1957).³ Ernest Bernbaum, D. G. James, and J. W. Beach spoke out for romanticism, and Richard H. Fogle "took on T. E. Hulme, T. S. Eliot, F. R. Leavis, John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, and Cleanth Brooks en bloc in defense of Romanticism and of Shelley."⁴

Northrup Frye states that "the anti-Romantic movement in criticism, which in Britain and America followed the Hulme-Eliot-Pound ^{and} broadsides of the early twenties, is now over and done with, and criticism has got its sense of literary tradition properly in focus again."⁵ Perhaps

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 115.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Romanticism Reconsidered: Selected Papers from the English Institute, ed. Northrup Frye (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), p. v.

the mid-century critics are more sympathetic to the problems Shelley faced. His poetry is often misread, according to C. M. Bowra, because his readers try to relate every detail to the main theme; because he related abstract ideas to human feelings and human experience; because some critics think he tried to cram too much into his poetry (science and philosophy); and because he was not always able to handle successfully the technical problems that he faced: translation of abstract ideas into images, literal or symbolic speech, and lack of action.¹ Today the Romantic revival promises further insight into Shelley's rare genius.

¹The Romantic Imagination (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949), pp. 117-122.

CHAPTER II

VISUAL IMAGERY

Shelley employed literal images to suggest symbolic images. Neville Rogers, who has traced many of Shelley's recurrent images to their original sources, says, "It is vital for an understanding of Shelley's symbolism to realize at the outset that in him thought and feeling were blended through the language and that the subtlety of one is the subtlety of the other."¹ Certain words recur throughout Prometheus Unbound: dave, veil, mountain, star, moon, and darkness, to name but a few. Each has one or more symbolic meanings. Perhaps it would be possible to enjoy Shelley's verse in the drama with only a literal interpretation of his words; but full appreciation and understanding of the poem require that the figures of speech be studied.

Bennett Weaver says, "A sure way to misread Prometheus Unbound is to assume that the scenes are a matter of in consequence."² Shelley merges setting, characters, and plot to obtain unity in his drama. Act I opens in A Ravine of Icy Rocks in the Indian Caucasus. The overwhelming darkness suggests the Titan's hatred toward his captor and his lack of insight into his own problems.

¹Shelley at Work, p. 25.

²Prometheus Unbound, p. 3.

Prometheus's spiritual desolation is indicated by the visual images Shelley draws from nature:

. . . this wall of eagle-baffling mountain,
Black, wintry, dead, unmeasured; without herb,
Insect, or beast, or shape or sound of life.
(I.20-21)

References in Prometheus's opening speech to crawling glaciers, bright chains, Heaven's wingéd hound, earthquake-fiends, and genii of the storm suggest mental torture rather than physical. Nature mourns with the prisoner. Weaver observes that nature scenes allow the poet and the reader freedom of the mind. "Shelley must himself have sensed the transmutable meanings in what we call the world of nature."¹ The change Prometheus effected by his self-realization is evident in the light imagery. His mental world is utter darkness until he wills it to change. Mary Shelley wrote, after her husband's death, that Shelley believed that "mankind had only to will that there should be no evil, and there would be none."² F. A. Lea observes that Act I consists of Prometheus's catharsis, a gradual but necessary process leading to mankind's salvation. Most readers erroneously believe that Prometheus is already pure in spirit at the beginning of the play; thus they

¹Prometheus Unbound, p. 3.

²Newman Ivey White, Shelley, II, 123.

miss the point of this process of purgation, that the change requires an act of will.¹ Prometheus realizes that his suffering is vital to his freedom as he says to one of his tormentors:

Thy words are like a cloud of winged snakes;
And yet I pity those they torture not.
(I.632-633)

The Fury knows that his mission is doomed as he replies, "Thou pitiest them? I speak no more!" (I.634). Lea states that this passage indicates that the anguish of the Titan is not only inevitable, but necessary, if reason and imagination are to be reunited.² Wasserman sees Prometheus as the savior of mankind,³ a Titan who is aware of his immortality as he tells Asia of the world they will share:

A simple dwelling, which shall be our own:
Where we will sit and talk of time and change,
As the world ebbs and flows, ourselves unchanged.
What can hide man from mutability?
(III.111.22-25)

Wasserman observes also that Prometheus is the embodiment of Plato's concept of the One Mind, the unity of man and his universe.⁴ Carlos Baker says, "Prometheus is at all times a typical rather than a realistic figure, a pure mythological character uninhibited by history or by the

¹Shelley and the Romantic Revolution (London: George Rutledge and Sons, Ltd., 1945), p. 120.

²Ibid.

³Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound," p. 31.

⁴Ibid.

need of being human."¹ Lea sees Prometheus as "the imagination defying reason; he is also the weak defying the strong. The period of division within the individual corresponds to the present state of society as a whole, riven as it is by the conflict between class and class."² Dawn slowly breaks as Prometheus works out his own salvation.

A basic idea in Shelley's philosophy is intimated by his treatment of light and darkness: the Doctrine of Necessity. According to Wasserman, Shelley believed that things become good or evil only in the human mind.³ They do not have these qualities inherently. When his self-awareness reaches this conclusion, Prometheus's release is imminent. Rogers states that the Doctrine of Necessity implies that "evil must perish of its own corruption"; Shelley added to the doctrine "that out of decay comes regeneration."⁴ Shelley shows divine will as a form of tyranny over which man triumphs with love. Wasserman further states, "Good is the condition resulting from the submission of the mind to the indifferent processes of Necessity, and evil--or, rather, negation of good--must

¹Shelley's Major Poetry: The Fabric of a Vision New York: Russell and Russell, 1961), p. 92.

²Shelley and the Romantic Revolution, pp. 112-113.

³Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound," p. 34.

⁴Shelley at Work, pp. 29-31.

be any willful imposition on the human mind that diverts it from this submission."¹

The first scene in Act II is set in A Lovely Vale in the Indian Caucasus. The early morning represents the rebirth of nature and the regeneration of Prometheus. Sunrise, white star, moon, morning sun, soft light, and drops of golden light suggest the sources of illumination. Contrast this brilliance with the darkness, shadows, and shades of Act I. C. M. Bowra observes that Shelley does not include scenery just for the beauty and reality it imparts. He uses it to lend tone and atmosphere. Thus dawn signifies an awakening of the world and the soul. "To show what it means for the soul, Shelley uses the language appropriate to a visible scene, and we should not attempt to interpret each detail allegorically but respond to the whole effect and see what the awakening of the soul means."² Rogers also warns the reader not to attempt precise identification or analytical separation of Shelley's symbols, for they are often "fused in his imagination and brought to bear in conjunction upon a point in his poetry." Milton Wilson says that Shelley's

¹Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound," p. 34.

²The Romantic Imagination, pp. 117-118.

"visual images do not coalesce into scenes, they congregate and form up."¹

The characters are associated with light symbolism. The eyes of the three Oceanides--Asia, Panthea, and Ione--suggest sources of natural illumination. Rogers points out that Shelley's references to sunrise and astral eyes indicate "the light of mind awaiting the rising sun."² Eyes and stars merge into radiance, suggesting that the human spirit has become the world spirit.³ Especially significant is Asia, the daughter of the Sun, whose radiance must be veiled before anyone can see her.⁴ Asia represents Love or Beauty, in the Platonic sense. She is the "Lamp of Earth" and the "Child of Light." Baker says that Asia's sisters are intended to represent "degrees of love and perceptiveness within the human mind."⁵ It is obvious that Panthea is more perceptive than Ione, whose questions and interpretations reflect her naïveté. "It is this quality which enables her [Panthea] to act as the intermediary between Prometheus (representing the mind of man) and Asia (representing the idea of divine love)."⁶

¹Shelley's Later Poetry, p. 125.

²Shelley at Work, p. 112.

³*Ibid.*, p. 115.

⁴Wilson, p. 262.

⁵Shelley's Major Poetry, p. 103.

⁶*Ibid.*

Bowra points out that Shelley intends the characters to be only symbols: Panthea is Faith; Ione, Hope; Asia, Love. Jupiter represents brute force in man, the antithesis of man's nobility. Prometheus symbolizes "the desire in the human soul to create harmony through reason and love."¹ Demogorgon is darkness personified. Wilson calls Demogorgon "the most enigmatic figure in the play."² In Demogorgon Shelley deviates from his usual association of darkness and evil; for, as Baker states, "It is evident that he [Demogorgon] represents Necessity--an enigmatic amoral law in terms of which the struggle between the powers of good and those of evil has been carried on since the beginning."³ Necessity, then, is Fate. Bowra observes that Demogorgon is "the spirit of life" which conquers "the spirit of destruction."⁴ Baker calls him "the eternal law of amoral necessity which requires an act of mind in order to be set in motion."⁵ Kuhn suggests that Demogorgon's development is probably a result of Shelley's reading from Boccaccio, although his name comes from Spenser and Milton. Shelley, however, combined Demogorgon

¹The Romantic Imagination, p. 107.

²Shelley's Later Poetry, p. 132.

³Shelley's Major Poetry, p. 94.

⁴The Romantic Imagination, p. 110.

⁵Shelley's Major Poetry, p. 116.

and Eternity, "making the hybrid deity represent in his drama the eternal law of amoral necessity."¹ In Pro-metheus Unbound, Love (Asia) commands Fate (Demogorgon).

Colors in Act I until the moment of Prometheus's regeneration are those usually associated with the sinister: black, gray, dark purple, white (related to fire), and red (suggesting blood). Weaver notes that Jupiter's golden throne represents temporality, a tyranny of time that will be destroyed.² Ione's particular gift is that she does not see colors singly, but richly muted:³

"Orange and azure deepening into gold" (I.761); "See the pale azure fading into silver" (III.iii.71); and "A light, like a green star, whose emerald beams / Are twined with its fair hair!" (III.iv.3-4). Throughout the drama, the light of nature is perceived in many colors: orange light, roseate sunlight, crimson dawn, azure night, gray dawn, green and golden atmosphere, silver light, azure aether, red morning, and heaven's blue waste. Fire likely suggests its own purifying effects, white and blue flames indicating the most intense heat. Shelley compresses colors to indicate motion:

¹"Shelley's Demogorgon and Eternal Necessity," p. 597.

²Prometheus Unbound, p. 2.

³*Ibid.*, p. 41.

Ten thousand orbs involving and involved,
 Purple and azure, white, and green, and golden,
 Sphere within sphere . . . (IV.241-243)

He does not expect the reader to see the pure colors; instead, he employs color to excite the senses.

The range of Shelley's vision is panoramic. Fogle observes that "Shelley . . . generalizes and reduces, in order that the details of his scenes may fit within a unity of the whole."¹ He may choose as his vantage point a mountain top, looking downward, or an abyss, gazing upward. Fogle says further, "Shelley's vision is directed either up or down. . . . His gaze is earnest and painful, as if he strove to pierce the atmosphere and arrive at some ultimate vision above the air itself."²

Even as he shifts his scenes rapidly from the celestial to the center of the earth, so also does Shelley discount the reality of time. Wasserman states, "Because nothing exists until it is perceived, and because human beings cannot perceive these three elements [time, space, motion] in their pure form, Shelley says that only our perceptions of these entities alter, although time, space, and motion remain the same."³ Woodman says that Shelley

¹The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, p. 37.

²Ibid.

³Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound," p. 21.

has two reasons for beginning the drama in medias res: "to engage at the outset the audience's interest in and sympathy for the suffering hero," and to present "an image of unregenerate man bound by the 'eternal chain of causes' which makes him the passive victim of Necessity."¹ Wasserman observes that Shelley does not adhere to a strict chronology after this opening scene. Time becomes symbolic. Thus night may suggest Demogorgon's darkness.² Demogorgon asks,

. . . What to bid speak
Fate, Time, Occasion, Chance, and Change? To these
All things are subject but eternal Love.
(III.iv.118-120)

And Love is Asia. She commands Time just as she does Fate. Wilson suggests that Shelley is saying here that man is not in complete control of his own destiny. The Car of the Hour cannot move without Asia, but she cannot make it go faster. "Quite simply, Love is not enough; it needs opportunity."³ Weaver notes that the Spirit of the Hour driving Asia to Prometheus uses speech "weighted with figures made from elements of the world of time,"⁴ drawn from nature, and embracing all aspects of sensory imagery except the olfactory:

¹Ross Greig Woodman, The Apocalyptic Vision in the Poetry of Shelley (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1964), p. 108.

²Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound," p. 45.

³Shelley's Later Poetry, p. 146.

⁴Prometheus Unbound, p. 37.

My coursers are fed with the lightning
 They drink of the whirlwind's stream,
 And when the red morning is bright'ning
 They bathe in the fresh sunbeam;
 They have strength for their swiftness I deem,
 Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.

(II.iv.163-168)

In accordance with the intricacy of Shelley's plan, Demogorgon's chariot, signifying the fall of Jupiter, and Asia's, signifying the rise of Prometheus, arrive at their destinations simultaneously.¹

Shelley's visual imagery of weather and water is related to the action and the characters. Wasserman notes that "the reanimating spring is a property of Asia's symbolic nature as a condition of mind." He traces parallels between Venus, the goddess of generation (spring) and Asia. Both are sea-born. Venus is attended by the Hora (Hour of spring; whereas Asia ascends from Demogorgon's cave to find the Car of the Hour awaiting, attended by a "young spirit" with "eyes of hope" (II.iv.159-160).²

The whirlwinds, hail, polluting dust, snow clouds, lightning, and cutting hail that buffet the Titan in Act I suggest his mental torment. Nature is serene in the Indian vale of Act II: golden clouds, mountain mists, a clear spring morning, a plume-uplifting wind--all contribute to the tranquillity. Even the lightning is

¹Baker, p. 107.

²Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound," p. 72.

veiled. In Jupiter's domain, at the beginning of Act III, violent weather once again is the pattern, foreshadowing his upheaval with fiery clouds, whirlwind, and ponderous hail. Once the tyrant has been felled by Demogorgon, nature responds with serenity. Glenn O'Malley states, "For physical life . . . the great sustaining force is the earth's atmosphere. For spiritual life the great sustaining force is love. . . . Shelley treats the atmosphere and love as though they were the two corresponding aspects of a single reality."¹

Rogers believes that Shelley intends the ocean to symbolize "the barrier between Life and Death."² In Act I the sea becomes the "mirror of heaven," reflecting the turmoil above while Jupiter reigns. Waterspouts, red gulfs, perishing waters, and a howling sea indicate nature's response to the cosmic disunity. White dew, mountain mists, drops of golden light, clear lakes and pools, Ocean's dazzling spray, and a blue sea surround Asia's home. At times Shelley describes a reflected image rather than the actual object:

Beside the windless and crystalline pool,
Where ever lies, on unerasing waves
The image of a temple. (III.iii.159-161)

¹Shelley and Synesthesia (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1964), p. 153.

²Shelley at Work, p. 92.

If the sea is viewed as "the wide ocean of intellectual beauty," as Rogers believes, then the temple would seem to be, like Asia, too brilliant to behold until man wills himself to know Truth.¹ In the last act, water mirrors the human mind as "the clear reflector of its own transcendent ideal."² Shelley's almost universal symbol of time is the stream. David Perkins points out that "the stream imagery suggests not merely 'the flood of time.' It is also employed in a rather more subtle way . . . to suggest the unceasing flow of human consciousness."³

Boats and islands also figure prominently as a part of Shelley's water imagery. Since life, to Shelley, is a journey toward union with the One Mind, the boat becomes "a conveyance toward the ideal,"⁴ or "the aspiration of Man's soul in its quest for love and Beauty."⁵ Carrying boat imagery even further, Shelley includes one of the most delightful lyrics in the entire play, as Asia sings:

¹Shelley at Work, p. 97.

²Wasserman, p. 193.

³The Quest for Permanence: the Symbolism of Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), p. 118.

⁴Rogers, p. 92.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 96.

My soul is an enchanted boat,
 Which like a sleeping swan, doth float
 Upon the silver waves of thy sweet singing;
 And thine doth like an angel sit
 Beside a helm conducting it,
 Whilst all the winds with melody are ringing.
 (II.v.72-77)

Here the boat suggests Asia's reunion with Prometheus and their blissful life thereafter, in complete harmony with a world ruled by love. Boats are often the conveyances to isles that are "a realm of abandonment, a Paradise," according to Rogers.¹ Perkins observes that the boat swept forward on the current of a stream suggests a soul embarking on "an experience of rapture."² The cars, or chariots, which transport Asia on her journeys also symbolize the same boat imagery: swift movement toward the realm of Love and reality.³

The earth's topography has many symbolic meanings in Prometheus Unbound. For example, the mountains indicate the loftiness of Prometheus's ordeal and release. They also signify Asia's love, which goes from the depths to the highest, transcending intelligence. The Indian vale signifies warm loveliness. The sylvan settings show that "Fate, Time, Chance, and Change" are subject to love (Asia).

¹Shelley at Work, p. 109.

²The Quest for Permanence, pp. 140-141.

³Rogers, p. 162.

Rogers notes that chasms often separate the finite from the infinite, the "divine from the mortal."¹

Two caves figure prominently in the imagery: the Cave of Demogorgon and the cave Prometheus promises Asia. Northrup Frye states, "The Kubla Khan geography of caves and underground streams haunts all of Shelley's language about creative processes."² Rogers observes that Shelley's interest in caves and daemons was probably fostered by his reading of the popular Gothic novels in his youth.³ He calls the cave of Demogorgon "the Cave of Enlightenment" because the answers to Asia's questions show "the progress of Beauty through Knowledge toward Goodness; thereby she, Beauty, will be fitted for her union with and identification with Prometheus, who is Mind."⁴ Bowra suggests that Demogorgon lives in the center of the earth because he represents the principle of life.⁵ It is Demogorgon's duty, according to Rogers, to lead Asia from this cave to the other so that "she will be able to perceive the essential Form of Goodness." Ironically, Demogorgon knows that he must fall with Jupiter, a fact which

¹Ibid., p. 123.

²"The Drunken Boat," Romanticism Reconsidered, p. 17.

³Shelley at Work, p. 148.

⁴Ibid., p. 157.

⁵The Romantic Imagination, p. 111.

partly explains his enigmatic answers to Asia's questions.¹ When Asia cries in the cave, "The veil has fallen!" she means "that she can perceive light bursting into the Cave--the radiance, due to the lifting of the veil by Prometheus's love, is imperceptible to Panthea."² In his cave, Demogorgon makes an important statement to Asia:

. . . the deep truth is imageless;
 For what would it avail to bid thee gaze
 On the revolving world? What to bid speak
 Fate, Time, Occasion, Chance, and Change? To these
 All things are subject but eternal Love.
 (II.iv.116-120)

Harold Bloom interprets this passage to mean that Prometheus and Asia (and therefore all men and women) will have to discover reality through their shared experiences.³

White suggests that "truths could exist, and even be partially apprehended, . . . without passing through the limited medium of human language."⁴ Woodman, on the other hand, sees this as an ironic statement. He believes that Shelley is really saying that "there is the danger of the poet's mistaking the visionary world constructed by his imagination for the reality which it can only adumbrate."⁵

The fall of Jupiter occurs at the beginning of Act III. Hercules unbinds the Titan, "announcing that

¹Shelley at Work, p. 148.

²Ibid., p. 156.

³Shelley's Mythmaking (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), p. 123.

⁴Shelley, II, 119.

⁵The Apocalyptic Vision, p. xiii.

strength is subservient to wisdom, courage, and love."¹ Prometheus greets Asia as "thou light of life / Shadow of beauty unbeheld"--and thus signifies once again the assumption that Intellectual Beauty is "too bright a vision ever to be completely realized."² Prometheus then describes to Asia the cave they will occupy. The cave, Rogers observes, becomes "the destination of a voyage, for to get there Asia's soul becomes 'an enchanted boat.'"³ Northrup Frye suggests that in Prometheus Unbound everything that aids mankind comes from below, associated with volcanoes and fountains."⁴ The lovers' cave is indeed a cave of Paradise:

. . . There is a cave,
 All overgrown with trailing odorous plants,
 Which curtain out the day with leaves and flowers,
 And paved with veined emerald, and a fountain
 Leaps in the midst with an awakening sound.
 From its curved roof the mountain's frozen tears
 Like snow, or silver, or long diamond spires,
 Hang downward, raining forth a doubtful light:
 And there is heard the ever-moving air,
 Whispering without from tree to tree, and birds,
 And bees; all all around are mossy seats,
 And the rough walls are clothed with long soft grass;
 A simple dwelling, which shall be our own.

(III.iii.10-22)

Perkins observes that "in the cave, Prometheus hopes to escape the flux and decay involved in human life."⁵

¹White, Shelley, II, 119.

²Ibid.

³Shelley at Work, p. 134.

⁴"The Drunken Boat," p. 16.

⁵The Quest for Permanence, p. 147.

Paradoxically, Prometheus also explains to Asia that as long as man dwells within a mental cave, man will be unable to perceive beauty:

The lovely apparitions,--dim at first,
Then radiant, as the mind, arising bright
From the embrace of beauty . . .
(III.iii.49-51)

Shelley uses the earth's plant-life to create atmosphere and tone. The desolation of Act I is intensified by references to thin leaves; blue thistles; "black blight on herb and tree; / And in the corn, and vines, and meadow grass"; rock-embosomed lawns; snow-loaded cedar; and thorns. Two of these plants, the cedar and the thistle, are associated with sorrow. The word thorns also reminds the reader of the Biblical symbolism of the crown of thorns.

But Nature also requires a Fall and a Salvation, as Lea observes. The regeneration of nature in Act II with an end to storms and pestilence marks the end of "all that can impede the perfectibility of man's existence."¹ Beauty, softness, and pleasure are associated with the vegetation of the succeeding acts: sweet flowers, blue bells of Hyacinth, new-bladed grass, faint night flowers, pale faint water flowers, pink blossoms, bells of meadow flowers, violets, fadeless blooms, vaulted bowers,

¹Shelley and the Romantic Revolution, p. 142.

downward-gazing flowers, trailing odorous plants, lilies, veined leaves, yew, pine boughs, and the green world. Shelley often prefers the general words flower or blossom to the more specific, perhaps because, as Perkins states, "The bowers and gardens should usually be regarded as a metaphor for a state of mind."¹

Minerals and gems of the earth appeal to both the visual and tactual senses. Shelley mentions a great variety of the adamantine in nature: rocks, gold, silver, pearl, steel, diamond, iron, marble, granite, and emerald. Variously they symbolize greed, strength, or beauty.

Two broad categories of animal life in Prometheus Unbound decidedly express Shelley's symbolism: actual animals of the earth and imaginary forms in human-like shape. The terrestrial creatures of Act I are, with one or two exceptions, those usually associated with evil: hound, eagle, serpent, death bird (vulture), lean dogs, and "Death's white and winged steed." Shelley shows that these creatures exist only in Prometheus's mind, and therefore in the minds of all men, where only an act of will can exorcise them. Rogers observes that they are but another obstacle separating man from Intellectual Beauty.²

¹ The Quest for Permanence, p. 151.

² Shelley at Work, p. 59.

Some of the beasts and insects mentioned in Act II seemingly bear no resemblance to the paradise Shelley sketches and, at first glance, would suggest a curious paradox until we observe the way he presents them: death-worms could be construed as essential before rebirth can become a fact (i.16); Fate attracts the human soul instinctively, just as the faun attracts the hound (iii.65); fire only in the hands of the gods is observed as a beast of prey or a form of tyranny (iv.66); and the reptile is equal to the God as both become a part of the One Mind through Love (v.43), suggesting once again that things are not inherently evil but become evil in man's mind. Other forms of animal life in Act II are more likely to be identified with beauty: wild bees, voluptuous nightingales, and the sleeping swan. Serving like the Chorus of the classical Greek drama, the fauns in Scene ii predict the action.

Jupiter's overthrow in Act III brings in once again the sinister element: trodden worms, the vulture and the snake, the eagle, and wild-eyed coursers. Perkins points out that the blind horses leading Demogorgon's chariot suggest "the lack of direction or point in Life's forward motion."¹ The remainder of Act III contains references suggesting beauty and tranquillity: insects

¹The Quest for Permanence, p. 124.

rainbow-winged, an albino antelope with twin fauns, two azure halycons, and winged steeds. Toads, snakes, worms, and venomous and malicious beasts have lost their evil powers in the earthly paradise of Prometheus and Asia.

Shelley mentions three creatures in Act IV that have not appeared in the three previous acts: the leopard, the alligator, and the chameleon. Just as he did in Act II, Scene iii, line 97, Shelley once again presents the serpent as a symbol of Good in Act IV, ll. 565-567. His image here is that of a snake swallowing its own tail, a symbol that "signifies Eternity because it is without beginning or end."¹

The daemons and spirits in Prometheus Unbound are, paradoxically, either good or evil, for Shelley seems to identify daemons with spirits or symbolic essences. Rogers calls Love "the chief of the daemons."² Since each of the characters is a symbol, it would follow that each is a daemon of some sort. This section of my thesis is more concerned with those daemons who are not developed as characters but nevertheless serve the movement of the drama in significant ways.

Rogers notes that the very first line of Prometheus Unbound "takes Shelley with a leap into the supernatural

¹Rogers, Shelley at Work, p. 69.

²Ibid., p. 73.

regions."¹ Jupiter's minions assume various forms as they torture Prometheus: Heaven's winged hound, Earthquake-fiends, and genii of the storm use a variety of instruments to inflict pain. Fogle observes that "the Furies have form and reality only in the minds of their victims,"² as in the following passage:

So from our victim's destined agony,
The shade which is our form invests us round;
Else we are as shapeless as our mother Night.
(I.470-471)

Perhaps it is for this reason that Shelley deliberately chooses a general word like shape, shade, shadow, gloom, or phantom to refer to the daemons. Demogorgon is seen simply as a Tremendous Image. This technique is possibly an effort of Shelley's to lend magnitude to his characters, even as Milton did with the development of Satan in Paradise Lost.

The last two recurrent images to be discussed are the veil and the dome, whose symbolic meanings are related. Rogers observes that the veil traditionally is "an image for dividing the seen from the unseen, the known from the unknown."³ The veil sometimes separates the finite from the infinite; it may be the dividing

¹Ibid., pp. 278-277.

²The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, p. 225.

³Shelley at Work, p. 120.

point between life and death. Rogers notes further that as Shelley matured, the veil came to symbolize "the illusory world of impermanence that hides or half hides the ideal world of reality."¹ This meaning, then, could account for Shelley's veiling of Asia, Intellectual Beauty too brilliant to be perceived. Until he lifts Asia's veil, Prometheus's love is earthly; afterward, it is idealized. Suggesting regeneration, Earth tells Asia,

Death is the veil which those who live call life:
They sleep, and it is lifted . . .
(III.iii.113-114)

Lea observes that "in this context it is a confession that wisdom does not mean happiness."² Rogers states that Shelley believed only the elect can peer beyond the veil, "the elect for Shelley being poets and philosophers who have the vision."³ Fogle says that "in the later stages of Prometheus Unbound the image of the veil becomes more simply an opposition of the accidental and imperfect to the perfect and permanent, as Shelley depicts the world of his desire":⁴

And, veil by veil, evil and error fall.
(III.iii.62)

¹Ibid., p. 123.

²Shelley and the Romantic Revolution, p. 139.

³Shelley at Work, p. 142.

⁴The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, p. 236.

"Even in this confident speech, however," Fogle continues, "evil and error do not fall instantaneously; there is a suggestion of layer upon layer to be stripped off."¹

The veil, if not Good of itself, usually enshrouds Good or separates it from Evil. Yet in one passage in Prometheus Unbound, the veil becomes infinitely wicked, "a mask to hide the good":²

The painted veil, by those who were, called life,
Which mimicked, as with colours idly spread,
All men believed or hoped, is torn aside;
The loathsome mask has fallen, the man remains
Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man
Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nationless,
Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the king
Over himself . . . (III.iv.190-191)

Fogle, contrasting this passage with the one just previously cited, states that when the veil-mask is torn aside, "reform and revelation are immediate."³ This passage seems to reflect Shelley's disillusionment with the distorted outcome of the French Revolution.

Clouds, mists, canopies of leaves, and domes serve the same purposes as veils in Prometheus Unbound: either they shroud the figures or they provide a barrier between two levels of experience. Perkins states that

¹Ibid.

²Rogers, p. 125.

³The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, p. 236.

the dome is an enclosure for the concrete world, but it pierces the infinite, just as Shelley's mountains and temples do.¹ Rogers labels the dome "an image of all-embracing universal Beauty."² Using the scientific knowledge of his day, Shelley views "the white radiance of Eternity" through the prismatic effect of the dome made from the earth's atmosphere, which refracts the white light into brilliant colors. He is saying here that man has only a distorted or refracted view of Truth, which cannot be fully realized until the veil (dome) is torn aside.

It is by means of these recurrent images that we most easily recognize Shelley's poetry. Although they appear to be elusive and vaporous at first glance, the images have definite outlines or boundaries. Fogle says, "He [Shelley] habitually pictures objects or phenomena almost inaccessible to the senses of the average man, and he emphasizes the evanescence and ethereality of these objects; but if we look we shall usually find that he has strengthened and solidified his descriptions by reinforcing them with a thin but strong thread of

¹The Quest for Permanence, p. 187.

²Shelley at Work, p. 115.

steel, that his misty veils, his cloud-capped towers
are firm of outline and composed of visible, even tan-
gible, elements."¹

¹The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, pp. 47-48.

CHAPTER III

AUDITORY, TACTUAL, OLFACTORY, AND GUSTATORY IMAGERY

The examples of auditory, tactual, olfactory, and gustatory imagery to be examined in this chapter, like the visual, organic, and kinesthetic imagery of other chapters, result from a diligent textual analysis of Prometheus Unbound. For the most part, this evidence is unsupported by Shelley's critics, who seem somewhat more interested in his ideas than in the way he presents them.¹ Like his visual symbolism, Shelley's appeals to the other senses are firmer and more definite when they relate to the sinister than are his generalized stimuli referring to beauty.

Auditory Imagery

The auditory imagery examined in this chapter is literal imagery dealing with the meanings of Shelley's words which suggest or indicate sounds.² Like his visual imagery, Shelley's symbolism of sound supports his ideas as he relates them in Prometheus Unbound and pertains directly to plot, characters, and setting.

¹Fogle's The Imagery of Keats and Shelley is an exception, for Fogle has been particularly helpful in matters of definition.

²Another kind of auditory imagery dealing with prosody demands a separate study. Fogle classifies this kind as "motor imagery" and finds numerous examples of it in Shelley's writing (The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, pp. 97-100).

Shelley draws from nature the cacophony accompanying the torture of Prometheus. He either describes the noises directly or implies them. Direct auditory references are whirlwind, clamour, wail, scream, shrieks, sigh, and awful whisper. The roar of thunder is heard five times in Act I; groans are heard five times; and howls, six times. Together they form a kind of chain-reaction of sound imagery. Thus, as David Perkins observes, "He [Shelley] writes as a man seized and over-filled for awhile with one emotion which must be voiced, but can only be put in expressions fundamentally repetitive."¹ The voices of the spirits who taunt the Titan are described variously as inorganic, melancholy, empty, vain, loud, and dreadful. Implied sounds in Act I result from manifestations of weather: waves, whirlwinds, earthquake, and fire.

Shelley uses sound imagery to suggest good and evil. He is likely to use a concrete word for the sinister and a general or symbolic word for the beautiful. As Fogle notes, his "more agreeable auditory images are numerous but less fully realized than his discordances."²

¹The Quest for Permanence, p. 113.

²The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, p. 82.

The entrance of the chorus of spirits marks a decided change in the auditory imagery in Act I. The sounds now become soft and sweet. The morning is quiet, for Prometheus has made his decision. Nature responds with "music of the pines" (l. 669); the sweet, sad voices of two doves (ll. 753-756); and the lulling footstep and silent wing of Desolation (ll. 772-774). Words themselves become "mingled with love and then dissolved in sound" (l. 757), or else they are "drowned" and "float / On their sustaining wings" (ll. 758-760).

The power of the auditory image to convey extensions of meaning is obvious in Act II, Scene i, where Shelley uses the word music five times in the first 185 lines and voice seven times in 207 lines. He seems determined to drive his impressions of world harmony into his readers' minds. Perhaps he is stating that words are

. . . like the omnipotence
Of music, when the inspired voice and lute
Languish, ere yet the responses are mute,
Which through the deep and labyrinthine soul,
Like echoes through long caverns, wind and roll.
(I.802-806)

Throughout the act, auditory and water imagery are related: "liquid responses" (i.171); "wind and rain" (ii.5); "lake-surrounded flute" (ii.38); "sounds overflow" (ii.39); "storm of sound" (ii.59); "howl of cataracts" (iii.33-34); "clear billows of sweet sound" (iv.79); "whirlwind's stream" (iv.164); "silver waves

of thy sweet singing" (v.74); and "a sea of ever-spreading sound" (v.84).

Act III contains a curious mixture of clamour and calm directly related to the action of the drama. Jupiter exults in the approach of Demogorgon "thundering up Olympus" (i.49-50); he falls despite "his thunder-baffled wings" (ii.12), ending "the mingled voice of slavery and command" (ii.30-31). Then the world responds with

. . . music soft, and mild, free, gentle voices,
That sweetest music, such as spirits love.
(ii.33-34)

Gentle sounds prevail in Scene iii: "the ever-moving air," "whispering," "birds and bees," "sighs," "fragments of sea-music," "lutes / Touched by wind," "the low voice of love," "echo of the heart," "lulled music," and the echoing of the sea in Asia's curved shell (iii.65-67) which Woodman says "is the music of the apocalypse."¹ Scene iv is weaker in auditory imagery than are the others in Act III, concerned as it is with the Spirit of the Earth's tale about nature's reaction to Prometheus's release:

When there was heard a sound, so loud, it shook
The towers amid the moonlight, yet more sweet

¹The Apocalyptic Vision in the Poetry of Shelley,
p. 141.

Than any voice but thine, sweetest of all;
 A long, long sound, as it would never end.
 (iv.54-57)

Prometheus's final speech in Act III is strangely lacking in auditory imagery.

Music fills Act IV. All aspects of nature unite in harmony as pine boughs, billows and fountains, the woods, the silver dew, the unsealed springs, and even thunder sing. Shelley adds dancing to music for additional impact. Music not only sings, but scatters, flings, flows, wraps, drives, weaves, arises, penetrates, and darts. It is almost personified.

Fogle notes that Shelley's auditory imagery frequently has a "violin-like stridency."¹ This shrillness is possibly a result of his enthusiasm. It seems to be an overflowing of emotion through language.

Tactual Imagery

Shelley employs two basic kinds of tactual imagery in Prometheus Unbound: that concerned with temperatures and that denoting textures. Because it embraces both kinds, clothing will be discussed apart from either. The tactual imagery in the drama is almost always symbolic. Cold is penetrating evil to Shelley, who sought warm climes in both his life and his poetry. Fogle states

¹The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, p. 79.

that "in Shelley cold is akin to hard surfaces, imper-
vious brightness, sharp-faulted mountains, stillness.

It is somehow deathly."¹ In Prometheus Unbound the
Titan refers to his

. . . wall of eagle-baffling mountain,
Black, wintry, dead, unmeasured; . . .
(I.20-21)

as he recounts his anguish:

The crawling glaciers pierce me with the spears
Of their moon-freezing crystals, the bright chains
Eat with their burning cold into my bones.
(I.31-33)

Prometheus also mentions the "keen hail," "the hoar frost
of the morn," "icy springs," and "wrinkling frost." The
whirlwinds shrink back into "frozen caves," as Jupiter
heaps his tyranny on the world. Leaves tremble in the
"frozen air." "Crystal-wingéd snow" clings to the prison-
er's hair even as the sun splits his parched skin. Cold-
ness expresses Shelley's disillusionment with the govern-
ments of men, as suggested in the Fury's speech:

Kingly conclaves stern and cold,
Where blood with gold is bought and sold.
(I.530-531)

Shelley frequently mentions the wrinkling and withering
effects of cold.

Paradoxically, heat at times seems as oppressive
as cold, and the two are even fused, as in the burning
cold previously mentioned. Relentless sun daily burns

¹The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, p. 74.

Prometheus's skin. Volcanoes fling their molten lava. Stars burn and roll. Jupiter occupies a throne of burning gold. Prometheus's curse, as reported by the Phantasm of Jupiter, calls for "alternate frost and fire" and "a crown of pain, / To cling like burning gold round thy dissolving brain" (I.290-291).

Cold does not invade the idyllic Indian vale. According to Fogle, "The action in Prometheus Unbound is a symbolic struggle between Cold, representing Evil, Reaction, and Death; and Warmth, the emblem of Good, Life, and Liberation. Warmth conquers through the life-giving touch of Prometheus the Fire-Bringer."¹ Asia's smile "makes the cold air fire" (II.v.51). In Jupiter's domain

The soul of man, like unextinguished fire,
Yet burns toward heaven . . . (III.i.5-6)

The wheels of Demogorgon's chariot are fiery. Jupiter's curses fall like snow, "flake by flake" as he dares Demogorgon to

. . . Let hell unlock
Its mounded oceans of tempestuous fire.
(III.i.74-75)

They fall "from a rent among the fiery clouds" (III.ii.8), like an eagle

¹The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, p. 76.

. . . his thunder-baffled wings
 Entangled in the whirlwind, and his eyes
 Which gazed on the undazzling sun, now blinded
 By the white lightning, while the ponderous hail
 Beats on his struggling form, which sinks at length
 Prone, and the aëreal ice clings over it.
 (III.ii.12-17)

Asia's touch (Scene iii) shoots the warmth of youth
 through Prometheus's "withered, old, and icy frame"
 (iii.88). The coursers of the Spirit of the Hour eat
 "vegetable fire" (iv.110).

Music is described in Act IV as icy and keen
 tones piercing the sense and living within the soul,
 "As the sharp stars pierce winter's crystal air" (ll. 191-
 192). Love penetrates the frozen moon with the warmth of
 flame, melting its snows and uniting it once again with
 its Brother Earth.

Shelley employs tactual imagery also to suggest
 texture. Objects may be hard, soft, smooth, or rough.
 The glassy smoothness and the strength of marble, dia-
 mond, emerald, and steel contrast with soft arms, smooth
 ocean, glassy thrones, soft and waving wings, glassy
 lakes, crystalline pools, and marble smiles. These smooth
 surfaces also contrast with the sharply-faulted mountains
 of the Caucasus, the spears of glaciers piercing the Titan,
 sharp fear, the sharp stars that pierce winter's crystal
 air, swords of azure fire, jagged clouds, arrowy lashes,
 and beaks of ships.

Much woven imagery is in Prometheus Unbound.

Shelley often contrasts two textures, as in the passage, "The emerald light of leaf-entangled beams," suggesting solidity in "emerald" and softness in "leaf-entangled."¹ Fogle observes that this passage is an excellent example "of the use of a tactual image to give body and firmness."² Flowers do not merely grow in the earth of Shelley's world; they are inwoven with the soil (III.i.27). Bowers of leaves are frequently woven together, suggesting like the veil and the dome that their structures separate the finite from the infinite. They provide shelters for man in his ideal world, screening out the harshness of untruth. Weaving of melodies in Act IV implies harmony of the senses. Folding, like weaving, affords this same protection. The passage

. . . Henceforth the many children fair
Folded in my sustaining arms . . .
(III.iii.90-91)

implies the security of mankind in an idealized world. Night flowers and sea shells are folded. Other words related in meaning and carrying the same implications are intertwining, coiled, sculptured, entangled, twisted, and overtwined.

Imagery of clothing is also classified as tactual. Prometheus's curse implies that Jupiter's future will be

¹The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, p. 68.

²Ibid.

like "a robe of envenomed agony" (I.289). Strictly metaphorical, Shelley's imagery of clothing may also be stated as shrouding, wrapping, covering, or spreading. Thus it may mean almost the same veiling, as the Voice of the Air indicates:

I had clothed, since Earth uprose,
Its wastes in colours not their own.
(I.82-83)

Shelley often suggests clothing as a form of hiding: "Clothe it [the secret] in words, and bid it clasp his throne / In intercession" (I.375-376) and "The desert of life is clothed with golden clouds" (II.i.11-12). Prometheus clothes Jupiter with "the dominion of wide heaven" (II.iv.46). Darkness wraps "heaven's kingless throne" (II.iv.49). Asia's vest (veil) cannot hide her radiance (II.v.54-59). Showers are "rainbow-skirted" (III.iii.116). Faded flowers become the shroud "Spread on the corpse of the King of Hours!" (IV.18-20). The enveloping effects of music will be discussed in the section of this thesis devoted to synaesthetic imagery.

Olfactory Imagery

Olfactory imagery is infrequent in Prometheus Unbound, and when it does occur it is more often implied than directly stated. The suffering earth in Act I speaks of "the polluting dust" (l. 160) and the "thin air" (l. 177).

Panthea mentions a "sulphurous cloud" (l. 333). The Furies "scent life," suggesting that trouble finds those who look for it. Their pleasure in hurting Prometheus is compared with the odor of "a heap of corpses to a death-bird after battle" (ll. 339-340).

Of the flowers that he specifies--the violet, the hyacinth, the rose, and the anemone--only the anemone has no odor. Usually the images have more visual impact than olfactory. Shelley writes fairly frequently in general terms of flowers, blossoms, and odors but avoids the specific.

He implies olfactory imagery in his references to the dankness of caves and deep forests, the odors of rain-washed air or an approaching storm, and the smoke of volcanoes. The penetrating effect of odor is implied as earth tells how Love has permeated his "granite mass," passing through "tangled roots and trodden clay" into "the utmost leaves and delicatest flowers" and is spread "upon the winds, among the clouds" (IV.370-373).

In presenting his sensations of smell, Shelley again demonstrates his tendency to use concrete words to denote evil and more abstract terms for the agreeable. Fogle notes that Shelley's "most vivid olfactory descriptions are repulsive, while his pleasurable images

convey merely a vague emotional ecstasy."¹ Perhaps the artist in Shelley is recognizing that the olfactory is one of our weakest senses.

Gustatory Imagery

Shelley's gustatory imagery is plainly symbolic.² It exists in two patterns: (1) that which eats or drinks is incapable of eating or drinking, or (2) that which is being devoured is not consumable. Several images of the first type occur in Act I: the chains eat into Prometheus's skin (l. 33), as do alternate frost and fire (l. 269); he is both food and sport to the Furies and the Hounds of Hell (ll. 341-343). The city "vomits smoke into the bright air" (l. 552), suggesting the effects of the distortion of Truth. Human hearts are gorged on raven (ll. 618-618),³ implying that mankind during the reign of Jupiter has lost all sense of moral decency and is plundering and pillaging throughout the earth. To comfort Prometheus after the tirade of the Furies, Earth sends a chorus of spirits. One spirit finds hope on the battlefield; another, in personal heroism; a third, at the bedside of a sage

¹The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, p. 86.

²Ibid., p. 90.

³The Zillman edition shows ruin instead of raven in this passage. Others show ravin.

who feeds on books (l. 725); and the fourth, in poetry. Dust is pictured as thirsty (l. 811), a meaning that is barely anthropomorphic.

In Act II the morning sun "drinks some cloud of wandering dew" (l. 78). Noon cannot quench the "stars of golden dew" in the cloud leading Asia and Panthea to the cave of Demogorgon (l. 131). Scene ii contains only two lines that can be construed as gustatory imagery of the first type: the fauns say that the delightful spirits live in

The bubbles, which the enchantment of the sun
Sucks from the pale faint water flowers . . .
(ll. 71-72)

Telling Asia of Prometheus's humane efforts, Demogorgon recalls that Disease drank and slept (l. 85) as a result of the herbs and springs (medicines) that could not have been produced without fire. Demogorgon refuses to answer more of Asia's questions, although he implies that he knows the answers:

If the abysm
Could vomit forth its secrets. But a voice
Is wanting, the deep truth is imageless.
(II.iv.114-116)

Various entities are conceived of as sweet in Scene v: words (l. 38), love (l. 39), singing (l. 74), and music (l. 90).

Fewer examples of this type of gustatory imagery occur in the remainder of the drama. Rain feeds the quick growth of the serpent vine (III.iii.135) in the blissful setting shared by Prometheus and Asia. Man's soul consumes itself (III.iv.146), suggesting that evil recognized as such by conscience provides the means for its own destruction. In Act IV, Shelley sees the world of time as "hungry Hours," yearning for unity. Springs feed the great sea (l. 285).

Two passages containing both types of gustatory imagery occur in Act III, Scene ii, in the dialogue between Apollo and Ocean, who says,

The loud deep calls me home even now to feed it
With azure calm out of the emerald urns
Which stand forever full beside my throne.

It is the unpastured sea hungering for calm.
(ll. 41-49)

The consumption of substances palpably impossible as food or drink constitutes the second type of Shelley's gustatory imagery. The first example of this kind occurs when Prometheus recalls "drinking life" from Asia's loved eyes (l. 123), indicating that Love is the all-sustaining force for man. Jupiter's tempest-walking hounds are glutted with both groans and blood, having been also fed on new pangs (ll. 331-336). Prometheus's impertinent

theft has a profound metaphorical effect on Man's
taste buds:

Then was kindled within him a thirst which outran
Those perishing waters; a thirst of fierce fever,
Hope, love, doubt, desire, which consume him forever.
(II. 543-545)

In Act II Shelley seems to be contrasting the
exuberance of youth with the cynicism of age when Pan-
thea says that here in the realm of Fate

. . . the oracular vapour is hurled up
Which lonely men drink wandering in their youth,
And call truth, virtue, love, genius, or joy,
That maddening wine of life, whose dregs they drain
To deep intoxication . . . (II.iii.4-8)

Asia questions the omniscient monster about the origin
of evil. She asks who made

Abandoned hope, and love that turns to hate;
And self-contempt, bitterer to drink than blood.
(II.iv.24-25)

Asia recalls further that during Jupiter's reign men
thirsted for

The birthright of their being, knowledge, power,
The skill which wields the elements, the thought
Which pierces this dim universe like light,
Self-empire, and the majesty of love.
(II.iv.39-42)

The chariots arrive, and Asia observes the rainbow-
wingéd steeds, which

. . . with burning eyes, lean forth, and drink
With eager lips the wind of their own speed.
(II.iv.135-136)

Three of the most beautiful lines in Prometheus Unbound owe a part of their aesthetic appeal to the gustatory imagery, as the Spirit of the Hour says,

My coursers are fed with the lightning
They drink of the whirlwind's stream.
(II.iv.163-164)

They shall drink the hot speed of desire.
(II.v.8)

In Act III, Scene iii, Earth speaks of the unity prevailing in all aspects of nature which shall from her bosom "take / And interchange sweet nutriment" (l. 96). In this idyllic setting "night-folded flowers / Shall suck unwithering hues in their repose" (l. 102). Aëreal dew shall be "the drink of spirits" (ll. 143-144). Panthea recalls that formerly the Spirit of the Earth drank "the liquid light" of Asia's eyes (l. 17). In the paradise created by love, even the berries of the deadly nightshade (belladonna) lose their poisonous effects. Horses cease their toil, "pasturing flowers of vegetable fire" (l. 110). Love has changed to sweetness man's envy, jealousy, and shame, "the bitterest of those drops of treasured gall" (l. 162).

Shelley fuses his interest in astronomy with his gustatory imagery in Act IV when he cites the earth's gravitational pull on the moon. The personified moon expresses its gratitude:

Sheltered by the warm embrace
Of thy soul from hungry space,
Drinking from thy sense and sight
Beauty, majesty, and might.
(ll. 479-482)

The amount of gustatory imagery compared with the amount of olfactory imagery seems somewhat incompatible, considering the interdependence of these two senses. It is undoubtedly more difficult to express odors symbolically than tastes, and Shelley's gustatory images, though they do not stimulate the appetite, do provide an excellent medium for the statement of his ideas.

CHAPTER IV

KINESTHETIC AND ORGANIC IMAGERY

The imagery to be presented in this chapter is related to two of man's more subtle senses, the kinesthetic and the organic. Responses of these senses are often induced by one of the other senses, and these responses function on a more sub-conscious level than do those of the five basic senses. The kinesthetic and organic reactions relate to motion, and Shelley's world is constantly in motion.¹ Objects that ordinary men perceive as stationary--mountains and stars--tremble and dart at the touch of his poetic pen.

Kinesthetic imagery in Prometheus Unbound denotes movement involving muscles, tendons, joints, ligaments, or bones; and it is expressed in words denoting swift and violent action.² These images, Fogle says, "are peculiarly swift of action, forceful but fleeting in their effect, so that sensation is soon past, although momentarily violent."³ Organic imagery is that dealing with the bodily organs and their functions, as well as images of rising and falling.⁴ Often it is difficult to separate the kinesthetic from the organic in Shelley's verse.⁵

Kinesthetic Imagery

Act I, with its torture scene, is particularly rich in kinesthetic imagery. Bodily movements that Shelley

¹Perkins, p. 117.

²Fogle, p. 95.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., p. 93.

⁵Ibid., p. 95.

mentions are knee-worship (l. 6), crawling (l. 31), trampling (l. 51), trembling (l. 155), running (l. 156), shaking (l. 168), writhing (l. 155), springing (l. 214), clasping (l. 287), stretching (l. 324), crouching (l. 352), plunging (l. 415), struggling (l. 577), rocking (l. 709), fleeing (l. 710, and speeding (l. 751). This list is not meant to suggest that the characters perform all these actions, for Shelley often employs the terms symbolically. It is, however, a list of possible kinesthetic responses the reader can make to these words.

Crawling glaciers pierce Prometheus (l. 31); Heaven's winged hound tears his heart (ll. 34-36); the Earthquake-fiends wrench the rivets from his quivering wounds (ll. 38-39); and the rocks split and close (l. 40). The Titan wishes he could trample Jupiter (l. 51) and see the tyrant's soul "cloven to its depth with terror" (l. 55). The Echoes fling the thunder of his half-remembered curse (l. 61). Under the impact of that curse, the mountains trembled (l. 77), the springs ran mute (l. 80), and the air was cloven by Prometheus's groans (l. 85). The sound of his curse tingles through Prometheus's frame (l. 133). The Phantasm of Jupiter arrives, driven on a storm, to repeat the curse, which includes "legioned forms / Of furies, driving by upon the wounding storms" (ll. 270-271). Prometheus is attacked by those same Furies whom he willed to torture Jupiter. He laments that his "race is trampled

down" (l. 386). The Furies threaten to rend him "bone from bone" (l. 475). They shake the hills with their joy (l. 498). More tormentors join them, but despite their efforts, Prometheus's resolve is firm:

See a disenchanted nation
 Springs like day from desolation;
 To Truth its state is dedicate,
 And Freedom leads it forth, her mate;
 A legioned band of linked brothers
 Whom Love calls children.

(ll. 567-572)

Earth sends a Chorus of spirits to comfort Prometheus. A rainbow stands on the rocking sea, the storm flees, the clouds are riven by lightning after the storm has done its worst. Nature brightens to the promised reunion of the lovers.

As I observed in Chapter II, one of the recurrent visual images is the veil, separating the finite from the infinite or the imperfect from the ideal. Shelley tears many veils in Prometheus Unbound, implying that the only way to penetrate the barrier is by violent action, symbolizing an overt act. These veils will not disintegrate. Perhaps they can be cut neatly, but man's soul is eager for the knowledge that can lead him to perfect unity, and tearing signifies that impatience.

The dismal tone established in Act I does not prevail in Asia's domain. The kinesthetic imagery in Act II is not less forceful than in the preceding act, but it seems benign. Prometheus's spirit blasts its way into

Asia's presence (i.1). Time crawls for her, even as it does for Prometheus. Both the stars and the roseate sunlight quiver (i.17-25). Shelley's pictures here concern bodily movements rather than violence. The arms of the Oceanides are locked (i.47), linked (i.60), and intertwining (i.106). Music clings, and footsteps fall gently (i.186). Earth now reposes after her previous spasms (i.203). Manifestations of gentle nature attempt to pierce the forest (ii.6). A "plume-uplifting wind" drives the spirits (ii.53).

The "oracular vapour is hurled up" near Demogorgon's cave (iii.4). The mountains in Scene iii are sky-cleaving (iii.28), and they fling the dawn (iii.29). The mountainsides are cloven by the spring thaw, making deep ravines (iii.34). As the Spirit of the Hour guides Asia to the cave, he notes her weakness but urges strength (iii.93-94). Speaking in a patently symbolic manner, Shelley mentions the thought "which pierces the universe" (iii.41).

Scene v contains one significant kinesthetic image, that of Asia's birth:

. . . The Nereids tell
That on the day when the clear hyaline
Was cloven at thine uprise, and thou didst stand
Within a veined shell, which floated on

Over the calm floor of the crystal sea
 Among the Aegean isles, and by the shores
 Which bear thy name; love, like the atmosphere
 Of the sun's fire filling the living world,
 Burst from thee, and illumined earth and heaven.
 (II.v.20-28)

Close examination and explication of kinesthetic imagery in Acts III and IV show Shelley repeating with dramatic excitement most of his kinesthetic words. Jupiter rejoices in his conquest of all the world except the soul of man, which is "hurling up insurrection" (III.i.8). He orders that exultation "burst in one wide voice / Like music from Elysian winds" (III.i.32-33). Demogorgon arrives and pronounces sentence on the oppressor: " . . . 'tis the destiny / Of trodden worms to writhe till they are dead" (III.i.59-60). Apollo tells Ocean that when Jupiter and Demogorgon fell, the solid stars shook (III.ii.3), and Jupiter fell like a blind eagle "while the ponderous hail" beat "on his struggling form" (III.ii.15-16). Now Ocean's waves can heave freely (III.ii.19). In the cavernous home of the lovers, a fountain "leaps in the midst" (III.iii.14). Time is also liberated as his "chariot cleaves the kindling air" (III.iii.79). "The keen sun's / All-piercing bow" shoots its arrows of warmth and light into the thawing earth (III.iii.118-119). The Spirit of the Earth tells Asia of his fear during the tyrant's reign when men walked with "cold, staid gait" (III.iv.42), then of the release from tyranny which came with a sound so loud that "it shook / The towers" (III.iv.54-55) and caused people to leap from their beds (III.v.1-2). "All things had put off their

their beds (III.iv.58). "All things had put their evil nature off" (III.iv.77). The Spirit of the Hour closes Act III with a warning:

The painted veil, by those who were, called life,
Which mimicked, as with colours idly spread,
All men believed or hoped, is torn aside;
The loathsome mask has fallen, the man remains
Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man
Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nationless,
Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the king
Over himself; just, gentle, wise; but man
Passionless?--no, yet free from guilt or pain
Which were, for his will made or suffered them,
Nor yet exempt, though ruling them like slaves,
From chance, and death, and mutability,
The clogs of that which else might oversoar
The loftiest star of unascended heaven,
Pinnacled dim in the intense inane.

(III.iv.190-204)

Act IV is filled with music and beauty expressed in kinesthetic terms. The air is pierced with song (l. 70), flying fish leap (l. 86), and the spirits "break the dance and scatter the song" (l. 159). Shelley jams one kinesthetic sensation on top of the next in a part of Panthea's explanation to Ione of the burial of Time. Time in the past, she says, has witnessed the ruin and destruction brought on by man's own actions, by his lack of feeling for others. She sees the works of man

Huddled in gray annihilation, split,
Jammed in the hard, black deep; . . .
The serpents, bony chains, twisted around
The iron crags, or within heaps of dust
To which the tortuous strength of their last pangs
Had crushed the iron crags; and over these
The jagged alligator, and the might
Of earth-convulsing behemoth . . . (IV.299-310)

Organic Imagery

Organic imagery in Prometheus Unbound denotes bodily organs and their functions; it also includes "rising and falling images."¹ Occasionally, difficulty exists in determining whether or not an image should be classified as kinesthetic or organic. For example, the phrase "wound-worn limbs" (I.62) contains organic appeal in the words wound-worn and kinesthetic stimulation in the word limbs. I have classified this particular phrase as organic because I believe wound-worn has more impact, reinforced as it is by a visual stimulus, than the word limbs. Another reader might disagree, and I should respect his right to do so because, as Fogle points out, "A study of sense-imagery is necessarily subjective and introspective in method."²

Act I is replete with organic imagery. Although the human bodies he pictures lack "three-dimensional realism,"³ Shelley does make the reader feel their pains. The suffering of Prometheus is real enough, as is his consummate weariness in his opening speech. Much blood flows in this scene: Jupiter's triumph brings "Darkness o'er the day like blood" (l. 103); Earth remembers how "Joy ran, as blood within a living frame" before the Titan's bondage began (l. 155); Mercury's plumes resemble "rose-ensanguined ivory" (l. 321); Jupiter's hounds are glutted with blood

¹Fogle, p. 93.

²Ibid., p. 26.

Ibid., p. 59.

(l. 332); the Furies circulate through the blood in Prometheus's "labyrinthine veins / Crawling like agony" (ll. 490-491); fire bursts "in bloodier flashes" (l. 508); men's blood is bought and sold with gold in their political machinations (l. 529); "Drops of bloody agony flow" from Prometheus's wounds as he withstands the tirades of the Furies (l. 565); and "Blood, like new wine, bubbles within," desiring freedom (l. 575). Panthea relates to Prometheus the injustices committed in Christ's name. The Titan prays:

. . . let that thorn-wounded brow
Stream not with blood; it mingles with thy tears!
Fix, fix those tortured orbs in peace and death,
So thy sick throes shake not that crucifux,
So those pale fingers play not with thy gore.
(ll. 598-602)

The volume of tears almost equals the volume of blood in the drama; sometimes the weeping is tearless. Sleep and insomnia, like bleeding and weeping, are frequently mentioned in Act I. Throughout the play, sleep seems to signify either tranquillity of spirit or philosophical naïveté. Prometheus and Jupiter are the only creatures in the universe who are sleepless (ll. 1-4), and Prometheus has endured three thousand years (l. 12) of sleepless agony (l. 280). Prometheus's renunciation of his curse only causes Jupiter to heap new torments on him because

Kindness to such is keen reproach, which breaks
 With bitter stings the light sleep of Revenge.
 (ll. 393-394)

His resolve unshaken and Jupiter's defeat inevitable,

Prometheus tells Panthea:

All things are still: alas! how heavily
 This quiet morning weighs upon my heart;
 Though I should dream I could even sleep with grief
 If slumber were denied not. (ll. 812-815)

Panthea consoles him with the reminder of

. . . one who watches thee
 The cold dark night, and never sleeps but when
 The shadow of thy spirit falls on her.
 (ll. 821-823)

Shelley obviously accepts the traditional meaning that the heart is the seat of love and the most important organ in the body, for he uses the word heart seven times in Act I. He also speaks of eyes, veins, bosom, breast, lips, eyes, ears, head, and brain. The brain is often sinister and evil, "dissolving" (l. 281) or "all-miscreative" (l. 448). Shelley seems to suggest that Good originates in the heart and Evil in the brain, that men should be guided more by emotion and feeling for others than by intellect alone. He implies through his imagery that he wishes "no living thing to suffer pain" (l. 305).

Asia and Spring awaken in Act II. The sister-Oceanides recall their dreams and anticipate the reunion of the lovers. After Scene i, the characters do not sleep, for they and nature are responding to Prometheus's regeneration. Asia feels Prometheus's presence "flow and mingle"

through her blood (i.80), for Panthea has brought to her from Prometheus "the warmth / Of the life blood, for loss of which I faint" (i.104-105). Music makes the bosom pant (ii.29); its "sounds overflow the listener's brain" (ii.39). The vapour separating the cave of Demogorgon from the rest of the earth dims the brain (iii.18) and makes it dizzy (iii.49-50). Asia's tears no longer fall; now they are only a memory (iv.15). Shelley again says that deep truth comes from the heart, as Asia tells Demogorgon,

So much I asked before, and my heart gave
The response thou hast given.

(iv.121-122)

The radiant Asia's lips enkindle her breath (v.48-49), and her "limbs are burning" through her raiment (v.54).

Shelley's bodily images in Act III are no longer evil. Pain is only a memory. Jupiter has fallen through his own "sanguine light" (ii.5), and the "heaven-reflecting sea" is now "unstained with blood" (ii.18-19). The Nereids, "their white arms lifted," rejoice in Prometheus's triumph. (ii.46). The mountain's tears are now frozen in the cave of the lovers (iii.15). Asia's kiss restores the warmth of the Earth (iii.85), whose "wan bosom" now fills with "sweet nutriment" (iii.94-96). The Spirit of the Earth, Asia's child, is reunited with his mother and hides his eyes in her soft arms (iv.26).

Winds die "On the bosom of their own harmony" in the musical Act IV (l. 29). The eyes of the spirits are "as love which is veiled not" (l. 92). Man's mind becomes a temple enclosing the fine arts, "Sculpture and Poesy" (ll. 111-113). Every aspect of man's being, every part of his body, is in complete harmony:

Our feet now, every palm,
Are sandalled with calm,
And the dew of our wings is a rain of balm;
And, beyond our eyes,
They human love lies
Which makes all it gazes on Paradise.
(ll. 123-128)

This particular passage generated much concern among Shelley's contemporary critics who misunderstood the method of his imagery and believed "feet, sandalled with calm" to be a rather ridiculous symbol.

Shelley sweeps his readers from dizzying heights to almost impenetrable depths throughout the drama. One feels almost the effect of an "air-pocket" of plane travel. Some of the images--"eagle-baffling mountain" (I.20), "fall through boundless space" (I.301), "I sink / Dizzily down, ever, for ever, down" (III.i.80-81); and "Pinnacled dim in the intense inane" (III.iv.204)--are almost painful to anyone afflicted with acrophobia.

A variety of objects rises, soars, floats, hovers, glides, falls, sinks, or descends in the drama: whirlwinds, sound, spirits, music, coursers, storms, clouds, mists,

dews, veils, Furies, defence, iron wings, realms, thoughts, doves and other birds, Desolation, eyes, voices, light, hair, song, strain, notes, stars, plumes, air, Ocean's dazzling spray, Asia, time Prometheus, darkness, shadows, veined shell, boats, love, snow, harmonies, lightning, the soul of man, Thetis, chariots, and the mind. Almost all of these images symbolize the ennobling and indomitable human will that reaches toward heaven. Man's weapons and comforts are from the earth as he battles toward the celestial and his union with Intellectual Beauty.

CHAPTER V

SYNAESTHETIC IMAGERY

Synaesthetic imagery is intersense analogy in which a stimulus to one of the senses is expressed in terms of another sense. Glenn O'Malley defines synaesthesia as "language which best describes one sense experience in terms that 'belong' to one or more of the other senses."¹ Richard H. Fogle accepts this definition but adds to it that synaesthesia is also "instantaneous fusion of the concrete and abstract."²

Shelley's synaesthesia is a manifestation of his efforts to fuse all sensation into a complete whole. He chooses images that suit his purposes, seeking similarities rather than differences.³ His images illustrate subtle and artistic merging of water and sound, light and sound, color and motion, and other combinations that will be considered in this chapter.⁴

¹Shelley and Synesthesia, p. 3.

²The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, pp. 102-103.

³Ibid., p. 137.

⁴Of interest to the reader, I think, is an explanation of the method I have followed to classify Shelley's imagery. I listed and grouped the images according to the broad categories traced in the preceding chapters of this thesis. Entries in the lists were cross-referenced if the image alluded to more than one sense. Then by circling these entries with colored pencils to represent the possible combinations, such as red for a visual-auditory stimulus and green for a visual-gustatory stimulus, I was able to reach the conclusions evident in this chapter.

O'Malley limits his examination of Shelley's synaesthesia largely to the combination of visual and auditory images, which he calls the "stream of sound" imagery of Prometheus Unbound.¹ Finding sense analogies in Shelley's visual symbols that are expressed in terms of sound, O'Malley traces this symbolism from the Pythagorean concept of the harmony of the spheres² and the influence of Newton's Optics (1704),³ which "was a rich source of enchantment and befuddlement throughout the eighteenth century."⁴ Shelley, O'Malley says further, adapted the spherical music to his own needs, selecting the planet Venus as his focus and creating "the Venus complex" which dominates much of his later poetry.⁵ Building on Venus as the morning and evening star and also as the seaborne goddess of love, Shelley thus creates around Asia an almost literal "stream of sound."⁶

¹Shelley and Synesthesia, p. 33.

²Pythagoras believed that the arrangement of the heavenly bodies depends on intervals regulated by musical harmony, and that in their motion they produced music.

³Newton held that octave intervals are proportionate to the spaces between the seven spectral colors.

⁴Shelley and Synesthesia, p. 19.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 151.

Holding more than just visual and auditory appeal, Shelley's water-sound imagery often embraces the organic, with its references to floating and soaring, and less frequently, the kinesthetic, with sound flung from vapors and fountains. The first example of water-sound analogy occurs in Act I when Prometheus asks whether the sea's "deaf waves" have heard his agony (l. 29). The voice of the springs replies that it has "run mute" since the Titan's imprisonment (l. 80). "Ocean's purple waves" howl (ll. 109-110). Jove's tempest-walking hounds are "Like vapours steaming up behind, / Clanging loud" (ll. 329-331). Mercury orders them back to their "streams of fire and wail" (l. 345). Panthea and Ione, at Prometheus's feet, take heart from his courage and from the Chorus of Spirits, whose "sweet, sad voices" are "mingled with love and then dissolved in sound" (ll. 756-757). Panthea's words are "drowned" (l. 758), but Ione observes that they "float" (l. 759). Prometheus recalls Asia, waiting in that far Indian vale "haunted by sweet airs and sounds which flow / Among the woods and waters" (ll. 830-831).

As Asia and Panthea await Prometheus's release, "the white dew on the new-bladed grass" hangs silently (II.i.148-149). The song of the spirits floats through the caverns (II.i.178-179), calling Asia, the Child of Ocean. The sisters follow the spirits into a forest where

. . . there is heard through the dim air
 The rush of wings, and rising there
 Like many a lake-surrounded flute,
 Sounds overflow the listener's brain
 So sweet, that joy is almost pain.
 (II.ii.36-40)

Echoes are driven along "Down streams made strong with
 mountain-thaw" (II.ii.47),

And so they float upon their way,
 Until, still sweet, but loud and strong,
 The storm of sound is driven along.
 (II.ii.57-59)

The "oracular vapour is hurled up" at the portal of
 Demogorgon's cave (II.iii.4).

In relating his ideas concerning the importance
 of the arts, Shelley employs the "stream of sound" pattern
 in clusters to express abstract imagery in concrete terms.
 In his speech to Asia about the noble deeds of her lover,
 Demogorgon says,

. . . the harmonious mind
 Poured itself forth in all-prophetic song;
 And music lifted up the listening spirit
 Until it walked, exempt from mortal care,
 Godlike, o'er the clear billows of sweet sound.
 (II.iv.75-79)

Shelley's tendency to cluster images is nowhere more evident
 than in Asia's lovely lyric. Because of the impact of
 the water-sound analogies in its lines and Shelley's in-
 clusion of stimuli to all human senses, this lyric should
 be studied carefully. Throughout its three stanzas,
 music glides over stream and sea:

My soul is an enchanted boat,
 Which, like a sleeping swan, doth float
 Upon the silver waves of thy sweet singing;
 And thine doth like an angel sit
 Beside a helm conducting it,
 Whilst all the winds with melody are ringing.
 It seems to float ever, for ever,
 Upon that many-winding river,
 Between mountains, woods, abysses,
 A paradise of wildernesses!
 Till like one in slumber bound,
 Borne to the ocean, I float down, around,
 Into a sea profound, of ever-spreading sound:

Meanwhile thy spirit lifts its pinions
 In music's most serene dominions;
 Catching the winds that fan that happy heaven.
 And we sail on, away, afar,
 Without a course, without a star,
 But by the instinct of sweet music driven;
 Till through Elysian garden islets
 By thee, most beautiful of pilots,
 Where never mortal pinnacle glided,
 The boat of my desire is guided:
 Realms where the air we breathe is love,
 Which in the winds and on the waves doth move,
 Harmonizing this earth with what we feel above.

We have passed Age's icy caves,
 And Manhood's dark and tossing waves,
 And Youth's smooth ocean, smiling to betray:
 Beyond the glassy gulfs we flee
 Of shadow-peopled infancy,
 Through Death and Birth, to a diviner day;
 A paradise of vaulted bowers,
 Lit by downward-gazing flowers,
 And watery paths that wind between
 Wildernesses calm and green,
 Peopled by shapes too bright to see,
 And rest, having beheld; somewhat like thee;
 Which walk upon the sea, and chant melodiously!
 (II.v.72-110)

Jupiter's realm in Act III hears the tyrant pro-
 claim:

Ye all-triumphant harmonies arise,
 As dew from earth under the twilight stars.
 (III.i.28-29)

Ocean, discussing Jupiter's fall with Apollo, hears "the loud deep" calling (III.iv.41). The lovers are united, and Prometheus tells Asia of a fountain "in the midst of an awakening sound" (III.iii.14). Asia's wedding gift from Proteus merges a product of the sea with sound: it is a "curved shell," which looks "like lulled music" (III.iii.73).

Shelley provides a wealth of water-sound analogy in Act IV. Lullabies that die "on the bosom of their own harmony" (l. 29); clouds, dew, and waves that sing mirthfully (ll. 40-46); and billows and fountains that fling fresh music (ll. 50-51) provide a continuous liquid serenade. The "unsealed springs" murmur the mysteries of Science (ll. 114-116). The Chorus of Spirits and Hours breaks forth in joyous song and dance,

As the waves of a thousand streams rush by
To an ocean of splendor and harmony.

(Iv.133-134)

One passage in Act IV is particularly effective as a measure of Shelley's synaesthesia, for it is visual-auditory imagery heightened by tactual, organic, and kinesthetic appeals. Panthea hears the music of the earth as it revolves in its orbit. Ione replies,

. . . every pause is filled with under-notes,
Clear, silver, icy, keen, awakening tones,
Which pierce the sense, and live within the soul,
As the sharp stars pierce winter's crystal air
And gaze upon themselves within the sea.

(IV.189-193)

Panthea sees

Two visions of strange radiance float upon
The ocean-like enchantment of strong sound.
(IV.202-203)

In her conversation with the Earth, the Moon says that
once again her "solid oceans flow, and sing" (l. 358).
Earth responds in its wisdom, voicing Shelley's views
on the infinite beauty of the universe, where Man is

. . . one harmonious soul of many a soul,
Whose nature is its own divine control,
Where all things flow to all, as rivers to the sea.
(IV.400-402)

Time has been buried, mankind has been redeemed by Love,
and nature responds to Shelley's union of earth and
heaven in a vast cosmos.

As with water, Shelley links light and color with
stimuli to the other senses. A firm tactual appeal occurs
as the Furies tempt Prometheus to "Leave the bed, low,
cold, and red" (I.504). Spring comes in Act II "clothing
with golden clouds / The desert of our life" (i.11-12).
The "interwoven bowers" of the forest are almost impene-
trable to light (II.ii.5-6). The spirits of the forest
live "Under the green and golden atmosphere / Which noon-
tide kindles through the woven leaves" (II.ii.75-76).
Shelley almost overwhelms the senses in the profusion of
visual, auditory, olfactory, and tactual synaesthesia
when one faun tells another that the spirits live

Under pink blossoms or within the bells
 Of meadow flowers, or folded violets deep.
 (II.ii.84-85)

Gemstones and crystal merge their smooth textures and their reflected rays. Darkness wraps "heaven's kingless throne" (II.iv.149). Horses bathe in sunbeams (II.iv.166). Showers are "rainbow-skirted" (III.iii.116). Moonbeams "clothe the forests and the fields" (III.iii.120-121). "The brightness of white light" is "Scattered in strings" (IV.224-225). Panthea suggests that the harmony of the universe is like "The emerald light of leaf-entangled beams" (IV.258). Fogle regards this passage as paradoxical because the rays of light "both offer and receive . . . resistance."¹ An atmosphere of light wraps the earth (IV.323). Prometheus's strength is a robe of many colors (IV.414). Panthea rises from "A bath of azure light" (IV.504).

Perhaps in an effort to present abstract ideas in somewhat commonplace terms, Shelley merges light and gustatory appeals. The sun's fire eats into Prometheus's skin throughout Act I. Its light drinks "a cloud of wandering dew" (II.i.78), but, paradoxically, its noontime rays cannot quench the stars of golden dew in the forest (II.i.130-131). The "coursers are fed with the lightning" (II.iv.163). Containing stimuli to the visual, olfactory, tactual, and gustatory senses, "Night-folded flowers /

¹The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, p. 126.

Shall suck unwithering hues (III.iii.101-102) has strong synaesthetic appeal. The Spirit of the Earth drinks "the liquid light" from Asia's eyes (III.iv.17).

Fogle states that Shelley's synaesthesia makes "no use whatever of the powerfully physical kinesthetic."¹ In my studies of Shelley's imagery, I have not found this to be true. Fire and lightning frequently cleave air, trees, or mountains in Act I. Light cannot pierce the interwoven bowers of the pathway Panthea and Asia walk (II.ii.6). In the words "the oracular vapour is hurled up" (II.iii.4) to which I have already called attention for their visual and auditory suggestion, the kinesthetic imagery is obvious. Shelley merges the visual and the kinesthetic in the lines "rays of gloom / Dart round" (II.iv.3-4). Thought "pierces this dim universe like light" (II.iv.41). Another example of the blending of the visual and kinesthetic occurs when Jupiter feels Demogorgon's imminent approach to "trample out the spark" of life (III.i.24). The lines "shafts of the keen sun's / All-piercing bow" (III.iii.118-119) seem to me an example which meets Fogle's definitions of both kinesthetic and synaesthetic imagery. Because veils often obstruct the

¹The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, p. 123. Fogle examined only 220 lines of Prometheus Unbound: II.iv.1-110 and II.v. In these lines, I found only two examples of the fusion of visual and kinesthetic imagery.

light, the tearing of veils is a fusion of the visual and kinesthetic as well as the abstract and concrete. The stars flee the sun in Act IV. The line "Pierce with song heaven's silent light" (IV.70) contains visual, auditory, and kinesthetic imagery. "Swords of azure fire" and "golden spears" suggest sharpness mingled with purifying light (IV.271). Shelley contrasts the sun-like lightnings of a star with the darkness of the soil it pierces (IV.270-278). These examples seem to me to be clear evidence that Shelley did include kinesthetic stimuli in his synaesthetic patterns.

Fogle further asserts, "The single element most prominent in Shelley's synaesthesia is motion."¹ He refers to the rising and falling motion, an almost roller-coaster effect, in Shelley's lines. Both water and light are subject to this movement. "Ocean's purple waves" climb the land (I.109-110). Climbing the wind, vapors steam up, "Clanging loud" (I.327-330). The descent of a cloud screening out the light is evident in the line "Heaven lowers under thy Father's frown" (I.409). Peace sits serene in Prometheus's mind "As light in the sun, throned" (I.431). Asia observes that her sister arrives after "The spheréd sun had climbed / The sea" (II.i.32-33).

¹The Imagery of Keats and Shelley, p. 125.

Demogorgon warns Jupiter to "Lift thy lightnings not" (III.i.56). The stars disappear "In the depths of the dawn" (IV.4). "Bright clouds float in heaven," indicating the beauty of man reunited with Love (IV.40). The spirits wear "sandals of lightning" to bear them aloft" to a "heaven of serene and mighty motion," the human mind (IV.90-98). Motion and color are blended in a dizzying movement as Panthea describes the

Ten thousand orbs involving and involved.
 Purple and azure, white, and green, and golden,
 Sphere within sphere. (IV.241-243)

Other synaesthetic combinations which omit the visual entirely are less frequent, but they do occur. These examples, again, represent Shelley's efforts to resolve all sensations into one of perfect harmony. For example, the phrase "flung the thunder" (I.61) holds both auditory and kinesthetic appeal, as does "let a sufferer's curse / Clasp thee" (I.286-287). Shelley blends the auditory and tactual when the Spirits say that Asia's voice "folds" her from sight (II.v.61-63), and when the Spirits "Weave harmonies divine" (III.iii.38). The Spirits of the human mind are "Wrapped in sweet sounds" (IV.82). The gustatory and auditory are combined in the phrase "hungering for calm" (III.ii.49).

Certain examples support Fogle's assertion that Shelley's synaesthesia is fusion of the concrete and abstract. In the torture scene in Act I with its strong visual and kinesthetic appeals, Shelley presents mental anguish in the more concrete terms of physical pain. Individual lines within the act also suggest bodily motion: "bend thy soul in prayer" (l. 376), and "Let the will kneel" (l. 378). In yet another passage, Shelley compares thought with a thawing and sliding avalanche that has accumulated

Flake after flake, in heaven-defying minds
 As thought by thought is piled, till some great truth
 Is loosened, and the nations echo round,
 Shaken to their roots as do the mountains now.

(II.iii.39-42)

The entire fourth act explains the abstraction of the One Mind in physical terms.

Shelley's synaesthesia coordinates sensuous and intellectual experience.¹ It represents his efforts to explain the reality of his ideas in terms from the literal world of his readers in an almost compulsive urge toward unity of sensation.

¹O'Malley, p. 176.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have dealt mainly with Shelley's literal sensuous imagery in Prometheus Unbound, according to the definition of literal imagery established in my first chapter. I have deliberately inserted into my discussion only those parts of Shelley's philosophy that relate to his imagery. Interesting in its own right, Shelley's philosophy as revealed through his imagery in Prometheus Unbound might prove to be a subject for a thesis. Materials are available to aid such a study, the most useful, I believe, being Neville Rogers's Shelley at Work. No critical work that I read, however, was limited solely to the dialectic of Prometheus Unbound.

As I wrote this thesis, and as I thought of both imagery and philosophy, I found myself reflecting upon Shelley's attitude toward the Christian doctrine. Editors of school texts and anthologies err when, like Shelley's contemporary critics, they perpetuate opinions based upon Shelley's immature assertions about Christianity as stated in Queen Mab and "A Necessity for Atheism" and fail to mark the change in attitude of the mature Shelley. Although we still cannot call him orthodox, in Prometheus Unbound Shelley does show that he radically modified his youthful beliefs.¹ David Perkins observes that Shelley

¹ Adonais offers even stronger evidence than does Prometheus Unbound of Shelley's acceptance of some of the Christian principles.

became an astute reader of the Bible and believed "that he and Christ were fighting on the same side against tyranny."¹ Some of Shelley's imagery does suggest this attitude on his part toward Christianity.

Related to what I have said is a philosophical comparison of Queen Mab and Prometheus Unbound based on the imagery in both. The themes of the two works are so radically opposed that it might be of interest to determine why Shelley changed. According to White, "A note to Queen Mab practically denies the freedom of the will, which is asserted in the text, whereas Prometheus Unbound makes freedom of the will the one quality that bulwarks humanity against an eternity of oppression."² An examination of the imagery in the two works could provide the unifying feature for determining their similarities and differences.

Whether enough material is available within the drama for a thesis relating the imagery to Shelley's scientific knowledge I cannot say. His preference for the general term rather than the specific seems to me to make such a study difficult. Samuel A. Chew says, "Shelley arrived at a synthesis of his youthful radicalism, his mature Platonism, Christian ethics, and modern science."³

¹ The Quest for Permanence, pp. 276-278.

² Shelley, II, 126.

³ "Percy Bysshe Shelley," A Literary History of England, ed. Albert C. Baugh (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1948), p. 1236.

As I suggested in the section of this thesis discussing his auditory imagery, a study of Shelley's motor imagery in Prometheus Unbound is justified on the grounds that such imagery is, it seems to me, almost a kind of synaesthesia, for the rhythm of the lines has certain auditory and kinesthetic appeal somewhat like the stimulation one gets from a foot-tapping march. White observes that "the poem contains thirty-six different verse forms, all handled perfectly."¹ How Shelley's prosody is coordinated with other aspects of his imagery would be a useful and profitable study, for the exquisitely lyrical quality of the poem has never been in doubt.

So unified is Shelley's imagery, so woven into the fabric of Prometheus Unbound, that it seems to relate to every aspect of composition, as he intended it should. This is the artist speaking to the world. For, although we can recognize faint murmurings of Shakespeare, Spenser, Milton, and Blake in some of the lines, Prometheus Unbound is still one of the most original literary accomplishments in English. Bowra says, "Prometheus Unbound is not a prophecy but a challenge.

¹Shelley, II, 133.

It is concerned not with events in time but with the eternal situation of man and the universe."¹ To Shelley the universe is man's mind as he climbs to become

The loftiest star in unascended heaven
Pinnacled dim in the intense inane.
(III.iv.203-204)

Remote as he is, however, his rays pierce our universe, and we can still hear his awesome music.

¹The Romantic Imagination, p. 124.

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