Immobility as a means to non-violent resistance in the poetical works of Percy Bysshe Shelley

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Immobility as a Means to Non-Violent Resistance

in the Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley

by

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B.A. Indiana University of Pennsylvania, 1999

presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Arts

The University of Montana

April 2002

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May 16, 2002
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This paper proposes to establish the theme of non-violent resistance as an essential component of Shelley's poetic legacy. In doing so, it explores the ways in which Shelley employs the concept of immobility as a means to achieve the inward contemplation necessary to bring oneself to a state of mind in which a non-violent ideology can flourish.

In order to demonstrate these themes, I have selected three of Shelley's best-known works and offered an extended treatment of each with non-violence and immobility as the central concern. The poems are "Queen Mab," "The Mask of Anarchy," and Prometheus Unbound. They were chosen for two reasons: they most clearly articulate the themes of non-violence and immobility as I wish to explore them, and they represent a progression and maturation in Shelley's career. The themes first established in "Queen Mab" grow and crystallize throughout Shelley's life, receiving their most nuanced and memorable treatment in the later poetry.

In addition to the poems themselves, I have consulted a considerable number of critical works on the poems in particular and British Romanticism in general. This research spans a great deal of the writings on Shelley from the 1950's to the present, and takes into account the differing views of Shelley that have been advanced in that time. Ranging from the time-tested insight of Harold Bloom and Earl Wasserman through the most recent psychological and feminist explorations of Thomas Frosch and Barbara Judson, the research was varied enough to prevent a myopic focus on any particular school of thought and allow a dynamic interplay of ideas.

Shelley's poetry has remained vital for nearly two hundred years, and the idea of non-violent resistance is similarly both historical and contemporary. In examining one in terms of the other, this paper introduces a window into Shelley's work that will help it maintain its relevance in the future as well.
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Section I: The Argument

Introduction and Definition of Key Terms

One of the few claims one can make about Percy Bysshe Shelley that will not elicit fierce debate is that he is, in many ways, a radical and apocalyptic poet. In this exploration of his work, I would also like to add his extraordinary regard for the right of all people to live free from the fetters of violence and oppression as a self-evident property of his poetry. Throughout much of his best work, and not least the poems discussed here, there is an overriding sense of optimism that humanity will someday live in peace and freedom; it is not coincidental that all of the poems discussed here end with an idyllic vision of the future. The fact that this optimism seems to be giving way to a loss of faith in humanity in his death-fragment, "The Triumph of Life," does not overshadow the beliefs he held throughout most of his greatest creative period, but can give the reader an idea of how powerfully these beliefs shaped his work and the extreme pain caused by their loss. Any poet who has left behind a substantial body of work is obviously open to many points of departure and discussion, and Shelley is no exception. However, given his lifelong interest in freedom and peace, it seems appropriate to examine his views on the obstacles he felt humanity must overcome to achieve its preferred end.

A key idea throughout much of Shelley's major work is the problem of domination and violence. Shelley sees domination in several forms, ranging from overt violence to the ability of institutions to dictate a way of life to people. In addition to this sort of external tyranny, Shelley is also very aware of the implications of internalized
violence and domination, and it is both internal and external agents of domination that he takes as his subject matter in his greatest work, *Prometheus Unbound*. Shelley's radicalism exhibits a "tendency to abolish existing institutions or principles" in an "aim to establish new institutions or to propagate new principles" (McDonald, 7). Shelley is not seeking, then, new leadership of the current ideology, but a completely different ideology of humanity free from the causes of tyranny, violence, and oppression. In his view, to destroy one's oppressors is to enter into a never-ending cycle of violence, and he feels this must be avoided at all costs. A key to understanding Shelley's idea of a new ideology is to explore the idea of non-violent resistance throughout some of his major works. In this exploration, the idea of immobility becomes central to Shelley's conception of non-violent resistance; it becomes the ultimate example of pacifism, a necessary condition of the end of tyranny.

The terms immobility, non-violent resistance, tyranny, and the rest mean many things to many people. In order to avoid ambiguity or vagueness as much as possible, I would like to begin by defining these terms as I will use them in this discussion.

"Immobility" is certainly the central term on which this argument rests, and also the most open to interpretation. For the purposes of this paper, immobility denotes the inability to move the physical body. Immobility can be imposed on someone, as in the case of Jupiter binding Prometheus to a rock. It can be an inevitable immobility, such as sleep or death. Finally, immobility in this sense can also be voluntary, as in the prostration of the character of Hope before the murdering hordes in "The Mask of Anarchy." In the world of practical experience, there seems to be a huge difference
between death, prostration, and being tied to a rock by your oppressor; however, in Shelley's work these are only differences in degree. What is most important in his conception of immobility is the opportunity it affords for internal reflection and revolt. The kind of motion that immobility is contrasted with here can be exemplified in a spectrum ranging, in its grossest sense, from a massed body of troops moving across the land with a violent end in sight to the simple refusal to pause, look inward, and recognize the aspects of one's psyche that sustains violence and oppression. Immobility is not automatically a passive act, nor does it imply an absolute abandonment of earthly concerns; in fact, the contrast between physical immobility and the lightning-quick motion of ideas it releases is striking, and the language of Shelley tends to favor the latter over the former. It is the motion of this sweeping creative energy that most clearly needs to be delineated from the motion of the tyrant described above. The aspect of immobility that is most important to this argument is the ability of the immobile individual to transform physical immobility into active mental and emotional change. A standard example of the kind of immobility suggested here is the image of Christ on the cross, wherein suffering becomes action that affects positive change. Suffering is not a necessary component of immobility in this argument; many other sensations and emotions may be substituted for it with much the same result. Through a positive internalization, immobility can be transformed into non-violent resistance.

"Non-violent resistance" is seen in this argument in the tradition of the great civil rights leaders of the twentieth century, leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr. and Gandhi, in the sense that it involves active petition for social change without the use of
violence. Immobility may seem rather difficult to reconcile with non-violent resistance in light of the great peace marches that have occurred in this century, but Shelley does not valorize the journeys that characters in his poems undergo as much as he does their actions upon arrival. For example, the call for a gathering in "The Mask of Anarchy" necessarily entails motion, but it is motion towards a specific place so that the non-violent resistance of standing strong in the face of slaughter may be emphasized. While it may seem anachronistic to read the doctrines of these contemporary leaders back into Shelley's time, the general message of a poem such as "The Mask of Anarchy" seems very much in keeping with the current understanding of the term; in fact, hunger marchers in Toronto in the 1930's chanted its verses during their protests. Non-violent resistance in this sense is very active; it is pacifist, not passive. Although the works of Harold Bloom will be quoted at length in this paper and form much of its guiding influence, the idea set forth here of non-violent resistance is not completely identical with Bloom's theory that all Romantics eventually turn away from an active role in political struggle. The crucial distinction is between the non-interest that Bloom seems to suggest as a result of withdrawal from the political sphere (outlined briefly below) and the non-violent resistance that Shelley seems to be quite clearly lobbying for; although both entail a withdrawal from external concerns to concentrate on the internal, the desire for revolution continues to burn brightly throughout Shelley's poetry.

"Tyranny", "oppression", "domination", and "violence" are used in this exploration as terms that differ only slightly in degree, not at all in kind. They are used almost interchangeably to denote a situation where the existing power structure and social
order is maintained not by the express will of the people governed, but by a repression of that will. Immobility is a tool imposed by these powers as a means of "keeping the rabble in line"; the ability of the heroes of Shelley's poetry to transcend this tool and co-opt it for their own benefit is again best exemplified by the Christian tradition of the Crucifixion.

In essence, Shelley is setting up an opposition aligning tyranny, violence, and outward physical motion against freedom, non-violence, and outward physical immobility. Although not the main concern of this argument, Shelley also typically aligns the first set of elements with masculinity and the second with femininity. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to examine the positive and negative effects of Shelley's valorization of the feminine, the astute reader will no doubt sense the presence of this question hovering about the periphery of this argument. To conceive of the order of the universe as patriarchal and violent is to play the oppressors' game; to re-imagine this order as essentially matriarchal and protective of her charges is to allow ideas of non-violent resistance to flourish. As Barbara Judson notes in her essay "The Politics of Medusa: Shelley's Physiognomy of Revolution," Shelley "attempted to forge an oppositional language untainted not only by violence but also by power, of which he was profoundly nervous in the aftermath of two decades of war" (Judson, 136). Shelley has realized the futility of a never-ending cycle of violence followed by violence, and has come to the realization that even the language of the oppressor must be subtly changed in order to escape the ideology of aggression. In Shelley's view, then, physical immobility can become a means for the oppressed to undergo the internal changes necessary to throw off the mental shackles of oppression. This amounts to using the weapon of the oppressor
against him, a theme made most explicit in Prometheus Unbound.

While motion and immobility seem only superficially connected with the other elements of their respective binaries, there have been proposals of such oppositions in British Romanticism which help bring Shelley's opposition into sharper focus. In his seminal essay, "The Internalization of Quest Romance," Harold Bloom sets up a broad definition of a somewhat similar opposition that he feels is in play throughout most major Romantic poetry.

"The Internalization of Quest Romance"

Bloom feels that the major movement in Romantic poetry is from an outward projection of the poet's feelings onto the world to an inward contemplation in which the poet is somehow transformed, thus letting feelings of love and creativity free to loose themselves upon the world. As he describes it, the manifestation of the desire to project results in "the poet-as-hero in the first stage of his quest, marked by a deep involvement in political, social, and literary revolution" (Bloom, 11). To understand how Shelley differs from this first stage, it is vital that the reader view Shelley's poetry not only as political allegories, but also and more importantly as descriptions of the struggles within the self to free one's self from the never-ending cycle of violence. The fight against tyranny cannot be won before one has defeated the tyrannical elements within one's self; this defeat of internal tyranny can be described as "refusing to play Jupiter's game," to make an analogy with Prometheus that will be crucial to this argument.

To gain a better understanding of this internal struggle, it is helpful to refer to
Bloom's description of the second phase of the poet's maturity. He sees this as emerging "after terrible crises in the major stage of the Romantic quest, [the second stage] is typified by a relative disengagement from revolutionary activism, and a standing aside from polemic and satire, so as to bring the search within the self and its ambiguities" (Bloom, 11). Bloom holds fast to his opinion that Shelley develops only partially in this direction, citing his short life as the primary reason. He likens Shelley and Keats in this regard, claiming, "Keats died at twenty-five, Shelley at twenty-nine; despite their fecundity, they did not complete their development, but their death fragments...prophesy the final phase of the quest in each of them" (Bloom, 17). More interestingly, Bloom cites another reason for Shelley's inability to fully develop along the lines set up for Romantic poets, when he states,

For Shelley, the Selfhood's strong enchantment, stronger even than it is for the other Romantics, is one that would keep him from ever completing the Prometheus stage of the quest. The Selfhood allies with Prometheus against the repressive force Shelley calls Jupiter...This temptation calls the poet to perpetual revolution, and Shelley, though longing desperately to see the tyrannies of his time overturned, renounces it at the opening of Prometheus Unbound, in the Imagination's name. (Bloom, 17)

It is not coincidental in terms of this argument that Bloom has difficulty fitting Shelley neatly into his equation. It seems that Bloom is suggesting the second movement of his theory takes the poet out of the sphere of active political involvement, and that is not quite true in the case of Shelley. While the concept of immobility as defined in this paper does imply a withdrawal from the world of physical motion, it has been stated already that for Shelley this does not equate to a lack of interest in the political sphere. Rather, it
is, to use Bloom's term, "bringing the search within its self and its ambiguities" for the express intention of adapting the self to non-violent resistance specifically because non-violent resistance is a better tool than physical confrontation and struggle to bring down the tyranny Shelley so detests. In fact, Shelley specifically and viciously denounces the "Real Man" Wordsworth's loss of interest in things political in Shelley's poem "To Wordsworth." In this poem, Shelley begins by lauding the great achievement of Wordsworth's early "Songs to consecrate truth and liberty" and ends with the admonition that "Deserting these, thou leavest me to grieve;/ Thus having been, that thou shouldst cease to be" (lines 12-14).

This continuous struggle between outward and inward rebellion is what gives Shelley's poetry both its emotional edge and occasional sense of self-contradiction. Shelly constantly walks the line between self-control and a violent lashing out against the external tyrannies of his time. It is almost as though the element of immobility is as necessary for Shelley as it is for his characters; one constantly feels the necessity for self-possession and control in the face of overt tyranny in "The Mask of Anarchy," as the three main characters of the poem are all rendered immobile in one way or another to allow a force outside of them to do its work of justice. In this way, Bloom is pursuing a somewhat irrelevant idea when he claims that Shelley never really progresses beyond the stage of Prometheus Bound, acknowledging with seeming confusion the tension at the beginning of Prometheus Unbound. Bloom seems to be suggesting that the more introspective Shelley's characters become, the closer he edges toward the "Real Man" of Blake or Wordsworth, as already shown, this would not be seen as positive in Shelley's
eyes and seems to be a misguided notion.

Of course, to claim that Shelley's poetry is devoid of allegorical content and outward projection is ridiculous in the face of such overtly topical poems as "The Mask of Anarchy," and it is not the point of this argument to suggest that such an element is not strongly in play throughout a majority of Shelley's poems. Bloom is certainly correct in recognizing this constant desire on the part of Shelley to lash out and tear the whole system violently down, necessitating the construction of an alternate system of thought that does not privilege motion/violence over immobility/non-violence.

The Choice of Poems

This exploration of Shelley will focus almost exclusively on three poems: "Queen Mab", "The Mask of Anarchy", and Prometheus Unbound. While many of Shelley's poems deal extensively with the themes explored here, each of these poems has a unique justification for inclusion.

"Queen Mab" is Shelley's first major work, and it is unquestionably the work of the quintessential angry young man. It is undeniable that Shelley paints with a rather large brush in this poem; this, in large part, accounts for the almost universal dismissal of it. It is noteworthy, though, in that it contains the seeds of the ideas that will later bloom in a more mature and coherent fashion in his greatest period. To examine "Queen Mab" in its entirety is to receive a cursory introduction into several of Shelley's views of the world, but a close examination of some key passages will establish this narrower focus on non-violent resistance and its ties with the idea of immobility. As Ross Woodman notes
in his book, *The Apocalyptic Vision in the Poetry of Shelley*, "the materials contained in 'Queen Mab' are those which Shelley shaped in future years into a genuine and coherent vision of man's struggle to transcend that world of his senses and discover that ideal world to which he properly belongs. Thus, what is implicit in 'Queen Mab' becomes explicit in *Prometheus Unbound*" (Woodman, 78). The juxtaposition of the world of sensory experience and the world of ideal being fits rather well with the idea of a world of motion and a world of contemplative immobility, as well as with Bloom's outward and inward projections of the Self. All three involve a quest for realization that moves from the external to the internal.

"The Mask of Anarchy" is significant in that it is very much grounded in an actual historical event that its readers would have been familiar with. Perhaps more than any other of his great works, this poem refutes the common charge against Shelley of being too concerned with the metaphysical. Here the ideal of non-violent resistance is put into play in the exact way it would be in reality; in fact, Shelley calls for a replay of the brutal Peterloo Massacre that inspired the poem in order to enact a huge demonstration of non-violent resistance. Unlike most of his poetry, the language here is very simple and the formal concerns serve to make the poem accessible to his widest possible audience. First published anonymously, "The Mask of Anarchy" is the closest to pure propaganda Shelley would ever write in verse, and should more than any other poem be seen as explicit instruction for the masses to enact a non-violent revolution.

C.S. Lewis referred to *Prometheus Unbound* as the greatest epic poem of its time; while not universally accorded that kind of glowing praise, it is consistently ranked as his
greatest work. In itself, that would be enough to merit its inclusion in an exploration of Shelley's poetry, but it also resonates very well with the themes expressed in this argument. Prometheus is the embodiment of the psychic revolution Shelley calls for; he progresses from a hate-filled revolutionary to an emissary of the love and non-violent resistance that brings the entire system toppling down. Furthermore, Shelley's reworking of myth is at its greatest here; his transformation of Aeschylus' "Prometheus Bound" typifies the entire re-figuration of the tyrannical mindset he so desperately wants to see overturned.

Section II: The Poems

"Queen Mab"

From the first lines, "Queen Mab" establishes themes of non-violence that will remain prevalent throughout Shelley's career. He begins by likening Death and Sleep, posing a fraternal relationship between the two. They are like the twins of Gemini, one "pale as yonder waning moon/ With lips of lurid blue;/ The other, rosy as the morn...Yet both so passing wonderful" (I.3-6,8). Thus Death and Sleep are shown as two possible means of achieving significant immobility. By placing Ianthe, his heroine, in a state of sleep, Shelley establishes the dream state as an important ally in undergoing significant internal change and, by virtue of this close association, gives death the same power. The idea of major importance here is the idea of immobility being connected with internal change. Ianthe is placed in a state in which she can no longer actively affect the physical world around her, mirroring Woodman's idea of a withdrawal from the world of senses and Bloom's idea of an inward manifestation of the Self. Later in Book One, Shelley
further expounds the idea of immobility as a condition for the realizations needed to effect non-violent resistance. The idea of soul as distinct from body certainly does not begin or end with Shelley, nor does the idea that the body is perishable while the soul is eternal. However, he envisions a connection between physical immobility and realization of universal understanding, as Ianthe's exposed soul is seen to be "The perfect semblance of its bodily frame" (I.133), while her body without her soul inhabiting it merely exists as "animal life...every organ yet performed/ Its natural functions" (I.142-144). Shelley is stressing here the ability of the soul and mind to realize their full potential even while, especially while, the physical being is robbed of the ability to perform any action whatsoever. Woodman mentions the presence in this poem of "a vision of man as a divinity imprisoned in flesh, gradually releasing himself from a restless wheel of life, and finally, when purified, returning to his original state" (Woodman, 77). The voyage that Ianthe undertakes in the poem is somewhat emblematic of this idea, as her spirit transcends the immobile constraints of her body to achieve realization under Mab's guidance and returns to her body, presumably to instruct others of the way towards the ideal life Shelley presents at the end of the poem.

This ability to achieve realization in a state of immobility stands in stark contrast to the picture of the tyrant King whom Mab reveals to Ianthe in Book Three. The tyrant King is shown to Ianthe in a vision, and his lament is for his inability to achieve immobility and therefore, realization and peace. He cries out

No cessation!
Oh! must this last for ever? Awful death,
I wish, yet fear to clasp thee! Not one moment
Of dreamless sleep! O dear and blessed peace!
... Oh visit me but once. (III.64-66, 68)

The tyrant is trapped without peace by his fear of immobility. Having used immobility as a means of violence, indicated by his reference to peace's ability to "shroud thy vestal purity/ In penury and dungeons" (III. 68-9) of his own construction, he is unable to escape his fear of it and thus unable to achieve it. It is through his adherence to the ideology of the oppressor that he is unable to take the opportunity of immobility as a means of inward reflection and must only view it as something to be both feared and desired. Peace, then, is withheld from the oppressor. It is in "Queen Mab" that Shelley first begins to depict tyrants as being tortured by their adherence to a system of thought that cannot admit the ideas of peace and equality. It is in their desire to solidify their hold on humanity through violence that the noose of unrest and psychic trauma begins to solidify itself around their own necks.

Political tyranny is not the only kind of tyranny to come under fire in "Queen Mab." Shelley also explicitly links the tyranny of religion with immobility in the poem, and by doing so shows his concern with the ability of institutions to foster a tyrannical mindset that is easily internalized, approved, and passed on as tradition. Shelley's attack on Christianity in this poem is possibly the most virulent in all his works, and it is possibly the most in keeping with his attempt to move away from a violent ideology. Although Shelley's ideas about religion are a topic of frequent and sometimes heated debate, it is most in keeping with the kinds of ideas explored in this paper to consider the
thoughts of Gerald McNiece, who writes "it was organized religion as a prop of tyranny and the tendency of religious doctrine to harden into blind dogma that he really attacked...Outmoded ideas of order are clutched desperately by profiteers who believe in nothing except maintaining their power over enslaved humanity" (McNiece, 147).

Perhaps this ambivalence leads Shelley to present two views of Christianity in the poem: while Ahasuerus, the Wandering Jew of legend, presents a view of a vengeful god who enslaves humanity, Mab denies the very existence of the deity. As Mab is presented throughout the poem as the guardian of the knowledge of the universe, her idea seems to have precedence, although the views of Ahasuerus are also worth more than a cursory glance.

Ahasuerus and his conception of the order of the universe exemplifies the need for a new ideology. If his comments on God are examined as a critique not of the deity but of the ideology the deity represents, it is plain that the cause of the evil in the world is a faulty system of thought. When Ianthe asks him if there is a God, Ahasuerus demonstrates his belief in "an almighty God,/ And vengeful as almighty!" (VI.84-5). He thus claims himself as belonging completely to the ideology of vengeance and violence, the ideology of the oppressor. Despite all the horror he has suffered at the hands of this ideology, he clings to it as a way of defining himself. Ahasuerus is, in Christian legend, the man who taunted Christ on his way to the cross, and it is in this taunting that he allows himself to join the oppressor's ideology. He tells Ianthe,

Indignantly I summed
The massacres and miseries which his name
Had sanctioned in my country, and I cried,
'Go! go!' in mockery. (VI.176-9)

There is much to examine in these words of Ahasuerus. He first places himself in the condition in which we find many of the protagonists of Shelley's poetry: he feels himself and his people wronged in the name of religion, politics, power, etc. In such a position, he is faced with a choice between self-immobilization, a retreat from the hatred of the world, or overt aggression in the face of aggression. It would seem that the means of resistance he chooses are innocent enough, but mockery is nonetheless a form of aggression. By availing himself of the opportunity to fight violence with violence, Ahasuerus has allowed himself to adopt the ideology of his oppressor and exposed himself to the torments and terrors that lie therein. Even in the depths of his torture, Ahasuerus is unwilling to separate himself from the ideology that holds him down. His wandering is seen here as a conscious decision, the very opposite of passive immobility.

He tells Ianthe this when he explains to her

Therefore I rose, and dauntlessly began
My lonely and unending pilgrimage,
Resolved to wage unwearable war
With my almighty tyrant, and to hurl
Defiance at his impotence to harm
Beyond the curse I bore. (VI.196-201)

He has unwittingly hit upon the very heart of his problem in this passage. The fact that the deity cannot harm Ahasuerus beyond his emotional unrest is a clue that it is not the deity that enslaves him, but rather his adherence to the ideology that can only answer
violence with violence. His wandering is depicted as his choice, yet it is also his curse, just as his hatred is both his choice and his curse. The condition of Ahasuerus is applicable to most of humankind. The most contemptible among the human race are stirred by the power offered them in this ideology, and thus the human race has been reduced to "cold-blooded slaves, who did the work/ Of tyrannous omnipotence" (VI.92-3). Those who praise the deity do it not for loving compassion and worship, but rather because it is an ideology that can easily be corrupted for their nefarious aims. Thus they "built temples for the omnipotent fiend,/ Gorgeous and vast: the costly altars smoked/ With human blood" (VI.97-9). It is also this ideology that allows the institution of the military to run rampant; countenanced by such authority,

God's worshippers unsheathe
The sword of his revenge, when grace descended,
Confirming all unnatural impulses,
To sanctify their desolating deeds;
And frantic priests waved the ill-omened cross
O'er the unhappy earth. (VI.225-230)

This idea of God, when connected with the earlier view of the earthly tyrant, is in keeping with what McNiece believes to be the progression of authority in this poem. He claims, "First men have kings, then a god in the age of kings, and finally, the true god of men in a commercial age, Gold--the god who unites the three tyrannies" (McNiece, 147).

The reader is led to believe that the viewpoint of Mab should be privileged above others in the poem, and there is no doubt that the opinions she presents here about God are the ones Shelley is espousing at this point in his life in his attempt to fashion a new ideology (hence a possible reason for its rather unpopular legacy). When Iantne asks,
then, "Is there a God?" (VII.83), Ahausureus answers as one must who has not yet quit "playing Jupiter's game"; he is "oppressed by the very being to whom he himself has given power" (McDonald, 80). Mab, on the other hand, provides an answer through which humanity may escape the cycle of violence when she claims

\begin{quote}
let every seed that falls  
In silent eloquence unfold its store  
Of argument; infinity within,  
Infinity without, belie creation;  
The exterminable spirit it contains  
Is nature's only God; but human pride  
Is skillful to invent most serious names  
To hide its ignorance. (VII.19-26)
\end{quote}

In this rather heady passage, Mab is suggesting that the concept of "God" has not fundamentally shifted purposes from earliest times; it still serves as a catchall to explain natural cycles and phenomena that humanity is at a loss to otherwise explain.\(^1\)

Furthermore, with the idea of the blossoming seed, Mab is suggesting a quiet growth and acceptance; Shelley uses the idea of plants or trees in some poems such as "The Sensitive Plant" and "Alastor" to suggest an immobility that is blessed in its perseverance. Here, God is contemplation of the ever-changing cycles of life; while ascribing the name God to these cycles is perhaps an attempt by humanity to quantify and control what it cannot understand, it does not seem that there is any harm done. In her next lines, however, Mab demonstrates that from this both numbing and comforting idea of God, tyrants have

\(^1\)In fact, Shelley claims just this is a note to "Queen Mab": "It is probable that the word God was originally only an expression denoting the unknown cause of the known events which men perceived in the universe. By the vulgar mistake of a metaphor for a real being, of a word for a thing, it became a man, endowed with human qualities and governing the universe as an earthly monarch governs his kingdom". He makes a similar claim in a June 1812 letter to Lord Ellenborough- "To attribute moral qualities to the spirit of the universe...is to degrade God into a
fashioned another ideology to further their imperialistic ends, this one built entirely and unashamedly on the idea of control. This God is the god of massacre, of war, of priests who seek only power and control and tyrants who curry favor with the construct of humanity's collective unconsciousness, until "The name of God/ Has fenced about all crime with holiness" (VII.27-8). Having presented these ideas of God, Mab is willing to further characterize God as "Himself the creature of his worshippers,/ Whose names and attributes and passions change" (VII.29-30). The idea underlying this entire discussion seems to be that humanity has created a vengeful, tyrannical God to mirror its own power-hungry desires, and "Shelley provides a sketch of the process by which men in the 'untutored infancy' of the race created a demonic God, the 'prototype of human misrule'" (McNiece, 146). However, the obvious implication of this line of thinking is that if humanity could create a brutal and enslaving deity, it also possesses the ability to dispose of it. Shelley is not calling for a replacement god, then, but a shift from assigning blame for tyranny to an external construct to an internal revolution that accepts responsibility for the evil of tyranny and strives to change to eliminate it.

Therefore, "Queen Mab" fits well with Shelley's idea that a positive ending is in store for humanity once it has undergone the necessary internal turn from violence. Having pointed out to Ianthe the necessity of a revolution within the self to throw off the shackles of tyranny and having also demonstrated the incredible distances toward a new conception of the self and of non-violent ideology one may travel while remaining motionless, Mab then reveals the possibility of the golden age, a time of idyll that Shelley man".

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will return to at the end of *Prometheus Unbound*. Mab's most important message to Ianthe seems to be that "freedom and enlightenment of individuals should come first, and it is only when that is accomplished that tyrannical institutions will disappear" (McDonald, 70). The last two books of the poem describe this golden age, but most interestingly for the purposes of this exploration of immobility, the theme of immobility is once again shown by Shelley to be inextricably linked with the overthrow of tyranny. In Book X, Mab compares two kinds of immobility and suggests that it is by turning the tyrant's version of immobility against himself that the golden age may be realized. Mab first speaks of "that sweet bondage which is freedom's self,/ And rivets with sensation's softest tie/ The kindred sympathies of human souls" (X.76-9). She then likens this kind of blissful immobility and bondage with the "fetters of tyrannic law" (X.80) that have been cast aside. Although both images speak of bondage and immobility, it is clear here that Shelley is suggesting that these traditional tools of tyranny can be turned to the good of humanity. The bondage that will result after humanity has undergone the same kind of psychic transformation that Ianthe undergoes in the poem will be a soft and comforting linkage between all people. Although this bondage is inescapable, the suggestion is that no one would want to escape from their essential connections to other people once the hatred that poisons the human race is dispelled. This bondage is the same as other immobilities; whether voluntary or not, immobility seems to be what humanity makes of it.
"The Mask of Anarchy"

"The Mask of Anarchy" is another poem that shows immobility as a condition of successful non-violent resistance on twin levels. Shelley opens the poem in a first person account of a dream the speaker of the poem had while in Italy; as in "Queen Mab," the reader recognizes the visionary power of dreams, the ability of humankind to forge revolutionary changes while physically remaining immobile. Shelley is also establishing "The Mask of Anarchy" in a tradition of dream-allegory prominent both in his own canon and much of Western literary tradition, ranging from "The Pearl," to Chaucer's late work through Shelley's own "The Triumph of Life." The dream-allegory is an especially effective technique for Shelley to choose for a piece that is propagandistic in nature; as Harriet Goldberg points out in her essay, "The Marques de Santillana," from real-life experience, the poet-author knows that dreaming and relating of a dream to another is an essential part of human fanciful matter becomes more than a technique to present the fantastic. The dream report itself (because of its personal nature) enhances the message. The poet-dreamer's narrative touches the reader more closely than if he/she were merely relating an imaginary adventure. Reader and poet have shared a close personal moment. (Goldberg, 246-7)

The use of dream-allegory also allows Shelley the freedom to base his allegorical terrors very closely on current members of British government, specifically Castlereagh, John Scott, and Henry Addington, going so far as to liken the members by name to his allegorical characters. Fantastic as the characters and actions in the poem may seem, however, they were based upon a very real tragedy, the "Peterloo Massacre" of 1819, "when a vast but orderly concourse of working men and women assembled on St. Peter's
Fields, Manchester, to demand Parliamentary reform, the magistrates, seized by sudden panic, let loose a charge of yeomanry which killed a dozen and seriously injured hundreds of both sexes" (Trevelyan, 623). The effect of such a massacre on a delicate sensibility such as Shelley possessed was tremendous and put his doctrine of non-violent resistance to its absolute test. Therefore, the dream state of the speaker may be interpreted as forced inactivity; the speaker must render himself immobile to reflect upon the situation without giving in to the immediate rage such a horrific massacre would inspire. It is in the seclusion of the solitary dream state that the speaker can determine the proper action to take when faced with overt and devastating aggression. The continued importance of the dream state in both this poem and "Queen Mab" suggests that Shelley, like other Romantics, is exploring the operation of dreams long before Freud would publish his revolutionary work on the topic. While Harold Bloom disputes with Freud at times in "The Internalization of Quest Romance," he is reacting against Freud's comments on poetry; if we examine Shelley briefly in terms of Freud's comments on dreams, the issues Bloom takes with Freud would seem to dissolve. Freud and Shelley both seem to see that "Detachment from the external world seems thus to be regarded as the factor determining the most marked features of dream-life" (Freud, 85). While "The Mask of Anarchy" is indisputably related to real world events, the immobilization of the speaker in sleep allows him to discard this outer world and turn his view inward. This internalization fits very well with Bloom's theory of the "Real Man;" in a dream world, the speaker is free to undertake the internal revolution necessary to escape the constraints of a tyrannical mindset. A Freudian mindset also helps explain the elements of violence that will occur
later in the poem and that seem to upset the idea of non-violent resistance; these problems will be discussed in their proper turn.

The poem progresses from its opening to recreate a second instance of violence, a dream correlation to the "Peterloo Massacre." Shelley's speaker visualizes a procession of Murder, Fraud, Hypocrisy, and other Destruc- tions identified strongly with members of the British government implicated in some way for their role in the "Peterloo Massacre." These abominations commit horrible atrocities on the public that believes them to be their protectors; Fraud, for example, cries tears that turn to mill-stones "And the little children, who/ Round his feet played to and fro,/ Thinking every tear a gem,/ Had their brains knocked out by them" (18-21). These horrors parade around under the cover of the Bible, indicating yet again Shelley's aversion to organized religion and the brutality committed in its name. Shelley also identifies other Destruc- tions in the guise of bishops, and brings lawyers, peers, and spies to account as well. Chief among these characters, however, is the character of Anarchy, who is also portrayed in relation to Christianity as "Like Death in the Apocalypse" (34) and identifies himself with Shelley's three biggest aversions by proclaiming "I AM GOD, AND KING, AND LAW" (37), the unholy trinity of Shelley's world view. As Thomas Frosch points out, "this Anarchy embodies not an absence but a hypertrophy of authority. The real anarchy is not the civil rebellion feared by authority but the corrupt and destructive authority that in the name of leadership and order provokes rebellion" (Frosch, 10). This sounds very much like the revolt Bloom feels "calls the poet to perpetual revolution," in the passage quoted above. Shelley is clearly drawing a parallel between real-world events, which are typically combated by more
violence, and his dream state; Shelley is very obviously referring not only to the Peterloo Massacre but the entire way of life in England when he describes the procession ravaging the countryside and slaughtering innocent people by the hundreds in the name of God, the monarchy, and law, while at the same time identifying these elements as features of the human psyche that must be overcome before the problems in the "real world" can be non-violently addressed. Shelley explicitly condemns both the internal qualities of violence and the military of England as institutions unworthy of a civilized people, pointing to their intoxicating joy of slaughter and referring to them as "hired Murderers" (60). This adds further support for non-violent resistance; in Shelley's view of the military, the term "peace-keeping force" is a grotesque and tragic oxymoron.

Shelley then gives a vision of a perverse practice of worship, in which soldiers, bankers, priests, lawyers, and politicians kneel before Anarchy in a rapture of evil. The willingness of the Bank of England and the Tower of London to yield to Anarchy reinforces once more Shelley's vision of the English government as open to the most violent bidder.

At this point the poem begins its shift toward the power of non-violent resistance and introduces its second example of the connection between non-violent resistance and immobility. The character of Hope is introduced as running in front of the ghastly procession and throwing herself prostrate upon the ground. She prefaces this action with a speech in which she identifies her father as Time, grown old and weak "With waiting for a better day" (91). This identification is curious, as in Prometheus Unbound the Demogorgon rises up to destroy Jupiter upon an appointed Hour.
resolves this dilemma in a way that furthers Shelley's call for non-violence when he asserts "The original Father Time, Kronos, was hardly a helpless and decrepit old man who suffered the deaths of his children at the hands of some external tyrant; he was the tyrant who devoured them himself" (Frosch, 11). Frosch seems to be recognizing Shelley's tendency to re-work myth to suit his own ends in this passage. Time can certainly be seen as an agent of the aggressor; like other institutions, it is nothing more than a construct imposed upon humanity to further subordinate them to the absolute will of those in power, in this case parceling out their very lives into convenient units in the name of "keeping the trains running on time," to use a phrase from the language of governmental self-praise. By weakening and humanizing Time and wresting it from institutional control, Shelley is attempting to deflate another sacred cow. Whatever the role of time, however, it is time that will bring the moment of redemption and transformation. While it may be debatable how effective this particular example is in furthering his point, Shelley seems to be suggesting that by refusing to situate our mindset in the Western tradition of violent oppression, we take important step in achieving a peaceful world order when we discredit the mythologies and institutions that perpetuate such violence. The idea at bottom, then, is that non-violence must try to escape the ideology of the oppressor, or, failing that, must at least empower itself by appropriating and re-figuring that ideology until it is compatible with non-violent aims. Shelley's re-working and appropriation of traditional mythological figures such as Prometheus will become the cornerstone of Prometheus Unbound, but it is seen here that this technique is not limited to that poem; in fact, such a re-figuring occurs in a number of poems in which
Shelley is advocating a new world order based on, but not subservient to, accepted views of tradition. Earl Wasserman sees such re-figuring as central to Shelley's purpose as a poet, as "Shelley conceives of the poet as not merely an assimilator of beautiful mythic forms: inasmuch as he is creative, he is a mythopoeist, not by inventing myths, but by reconstituting the imperfect ones that already exist" (Shelley: A Critical Reading, 275).

It is at this point in the poem that problems begin to emerge with Shelley's conception of what will happen when the oppressed come to a full realization of immobility. "The Mask of Anarchy" shares this scene almost exactly with Prometheus Unbound: after full non-violence and immobility are achieved, a mysterious shape or force rises up and violently destroys the oppressors. In Prometheus Unbound, this shape is identified as the Demogorgon, and has characteristics that differentiate it from the Shape that forms in "The Mask of Anarchy"; hence it will be explored in full depth in the exploration of that poem. However, it does share a number of characteristics with the Shape; namely, it is formless and apocalyptic. Gerald McNiece identifies this shape as "the Spirit of Liberty and Love" (McNiece, 64), Seymour Reiter as "the intervention of Love" (Reiter, 210); other commentators are not quite so ready to reduce the Shape to anything so simple, but the interpretations above are in keeping with Bloom's idea of a creative force within the poet set loose upon the world to effect positive change and work well with this discussion.

This apocalyptic entity undoubtedly comes to the rescue of humanity in "The Mask of Anarchy," but raises troubling and apparently contradictory ideas concerning Shelley's conception of the ultimate ends of non-violence. There seem to be two distinct
yet somewhat interconnected explanations of how this ultimate active destruction does
not flagrantly contradict the doctrines of immobility and non-violence Shelley went to
such pains to construct.

The first of these is found at the close of "The Mask of Anarchy" and is echoed in
Prometheus Unbound. In this simplest of theories, the Shape represents the shame of the
oppressors. The last eight stanzas of the poem deal explicitly with the shame that tyrants
and mercenaries must feel after slaughtering passive victims; the voice addressing the
gathered crowd admonishes them to "Look at them while they slay/ Til their rage has died
away" (lines 346-7). It then advises the crowd that the blood spilled by the oppressors
will make an indelible mark of shame on their cheek, much in the manner of the biblical
mark of Cain, and with similar results. The slayers of innocent victims will be
recognized by this mark and scorned by society; "Every woman in the land/ Will point at
them as they stand" (lines 352-3) and the mightiest and rugged "true warriors," those who
have fought against armed opponents for a discernible purpose, will consider the
murderers as base and regard them with utter contempt. This shame will infiltrate the
murderers themselves, to the point where they cannot even face their closest friends and
acquaintances on the street. According to this line of explanation, the violence that
destroys the oppressors comes from inside of them, and is wholly separate from any
violence or animosity the passive crowd would cause. To summarize, "The Mask of
Anarchy" read in this light rests on the assumption that when the true horror of tyranny is
revealed to itself, it will destroy itself in shame; thus the revelatory nature of the Shape.
As Gerald McNiece succinctly states in his book, Shelley and the Revolutionary Idea,
"there remains an English tradition of liberty which will teach the wisely passive multitude never to return violence or nurse thoughts of hate and revenge. The contagion of their example must reduce their slayers to inert shame" (McNiece, 65). The aims of modern non-violence to take the moral high ground and gain support through love and understanding to topple the tyrannical powers of the world in a peaceful manner is a useful analogy.

The second realm of possibility is made believable by the dream state of the speaker. In this view, the reader must understand that no actual external violence is taking place in the poem; the poem must be read solely as an account of inner struggle and turmoil against anger and tyranny. In this scenario, Anarchy and his entourage represent elements of the mind that are readily subservient to order and tyranny. It is important not to attempt to break elements of the poem into Freud's theory of the id, ego, and superego, however, because there is no neat one-to-one correspondence; if one takes Anarchy as the super-ego, then one is left with a contradiction between the order-imposing qualities of the superego and the gratification of base desires symbolized by Anarchy that would seem to be more closely associated with the Id. Freud is useful, though, in taking into account once again the importance of the dream-state of the speaker of the poem. Assuming that the kind of violence which destroys Anarchy is considered immoral and inconsistent with any doctrine of non-violent resistance, it is tenable that "immoral impulses possess a degree of power even in waking life, though it is an inhibited power, unable to force its way into action, and that in sleep something is put out of action which acts like an inhibition in the daytime and has prevented us from being
aware of the existence of such impulses" (Freud, 104). This kind of reading of the poem is certainly justified; one can therefore read the poem as the safe "acting-out" in another realm of the rage and disgust Shelley felt upon hearing of the Peterloo Massacre. While a justifiable and credible reading of the poem, this reading seems overly apologetic and not necessarily compatible with the idea of non-violent resistance that Shelley is espousing, especially considering the suggestions that are made by Mother Earth later in the poem that the people of England should invite another massacre to further display their moral superiority and force Anarchy and his legions into the self-destructive shame described above. So while the destruction of Anarchy in the dream state may seem to be a "safe" realization of a violent revenge fantasy, to see it as such seems to make it difficult to fashion a reading of the entire poem that does not collapse into inconsistency.

However, this dilemma can be resolved without the inconsistency if the reader considers the violent impulses not as directed outward, but rather as the destruction of an element of the speaker's psyche. This internal defeat of the aspects of the mind that are subservient to Anarchy, Jupiter, or any of the "real-world" institutions that Shelley characterizes as evil seems to be a confirmation once again of Bloom's idea that the Romantics eventually turn away from such considerations to inward contemplation. It would again be difficult to claim that Shelley does not have these outward considerations always near the forefront of his mind, but he can be seen as also turning inward to transform himself in such a way as to not be susceptible to their control. In this case, the destruction of Anarchy would not seem immoral or inconsistent with a doctrine of non-violence; in fact, it is this internal revolt that allows the speaker to embrace the ideas of
Mother Earth when "the speech of the maternal voice that follows both suggests new kinds of weapons for the people to use and seeks to control actual violence" (Frosch, 16-7). These new weapons are, of course, not actual swords or muskets, but the raised consciousness of people who have undergone the kind of internal revolution that Shelley describes in the poem and destroyed the Anarchy that resides within themselves. These people are amenable to the idea of a second massacre to unleash these new weapons upon their oppressors, leading to shame on the part of the tyrants and liberty for the oppressed.

If the reader then no longer sees the destruction of Anarchy as immoral or inconsistent, another of Freud's ideas on the dream state can begin to be applied. Freud first paraphrases Immanuel Kant when he claims, "dreams seem to exist in order to show us our hidden natures and to reveal to us, not what we are, but what we might have been if we had been brought up differently" and then follows this with his own musing, claiming "dreams have access to ideational material which is absent in our waking state or plays but a small part in it" (Freud, 103). To adapt these statements to the ideas of immobility and non-violence being explored here is not difficult. Sleep has been shown both in "Queen Mab" and "The Mask of Anarchy" to be a kind of immobility; in this line of thinking, dreams are means of acquiring knowledge brought about through the condition of immobility. When a physical body is rendered immobile, its perspective on the world is shifted enough that the "typical" ideas one must usually be concerned with, the kinds of ideas that are ingrained into the Jupiter and Anarchy facets of consciousness, recede into the background and ideas that have always been in place but never truly considered rise to the fore. In this context, immobility and the kind of radical thinking
that enables effective non-violent resistance are inextricably linked. As the speaker of the poem undergoes the transformation resulting from the destruction of his "inner Anarchy" to become an effectively non-violent agitator against tyranny, the implication is that if enough other people undergo the same transformation, tyranny will be utterly doomed. Seymour Reiter notes both the importance of the dream state and its possible effect on a wide range of society in A Study of Shelley's Poetry when he claims that "the secret of the poem's structural strength is that the ineluctable dream-logic of the allegory in the first part of the poem makes seem inevitable the triumphant outcome of the revolutionary passive resistance that Earth incites the populace to in the second part" (Reiter, 209). Mother Earth echoes this sentiment in the last stanza of the poem when she exhorts the people of Britain to

Rise like lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number-
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you-
Ye are many- they are few. (367-72).

The references to sleep and the ability of people to easily escape from the oppressors' chains of immobility once they have turned these chains into a means for their own empowerment blend very well with the numerous other instances of immobility and non-violence in "Queen Mab" and "The Mask of Anarchy", forming a significant pattern that will be carried on into Shelley's later works on the subject of non-violent resistance. Reiter illustrates the importance of immobility in this poem when he notes, "Flight or active resistance would incite the soldiers to violence. Passive resistance would reduce
them to 'impotence and indecision,' make them realize the nature of their acts, and might convert them to allies" (Reiter, 212). It seems that non-violent immobility allows even the most bloodthirsty of adversaries the opportunity to undergo their own internal revolution and come around to the side of non-violence.

Once the dilemma of Anarchy's destruction is resolved by either of the two readings given above, or a combination of both, the possible inconsistency of the poem resolves itself and "The Mask of Anarchy" can be read as a moving and eloquent statement of Shelley's ideas on immobility and non-violence. The need for the reader to shift from outward to inward contexts in order to understand the importance of immobility and non-violence will become even more important in an examination of Shelley's greatest and most involved work on the topic, Prometheus Unbound.

**Prometheus Unbound**

*Prometheus Unbound* involves the kind of re-working of traditional mythology Shelley has employed in his earlier poems, but on a much larger scale. Earl Wasserman feels that "Shelley was engaged in reforming and reinterpreting the myth of god-fearing Aeschylus at least as radically as he did that of Spenser...to the same end of perfect order. Recasting that myth...meant the purging of error and the attainment of truth" ([Shelley: A Critical Reading, 270](#)). *Prometheus Unbound* picks up where Aeschylus' drama *Prometheus Bound* ends, and is a radical departure from where Aeschylus' sequel appeared to be headed based on the very fragmentary remains of that text still extant.

Aeschylus seems to have imagined a reconciliation of Jupiter and Prometheus, based on
the fact that Prometheus would use his foresight to warn Jupiter that the child he would have by Thetis would rise up to destroy him. In return for this saving prophecy, Jupiter sends Hercules to free Prometheus; this is how Shelley explains his understanding of Aeschylus' intentions in his Introduction to the poem. Shelley is very explicit about the extent of his re-figuring of Aeschylus' traditional myth and his reason for doing so when he claims,

in truth I was averse from a catastrophe so feeble as that of reconciling the Champion with the Oppressor of mankind. The moral interest of the fable which is so powerfully sustained by the sufferings and endurance of Prometheus, would be annihilated if we could conceive of him as unsaying his language, and quailing before his successful and perfidious adversary. (Introduction, 133)

Even before these strong words arguing against the idea of reconciling Prometheus with his oppressor, Shelley has boldly stated in the epigraph to the poem of his intention not to do so. This epigraph reads "Audisne Haec, Amphiarae, Sub Terram Abodite?" (Do you hear this, Amphiarus, in your home beneath the earth?)-- a reference to the legend of Amphiarus, who was saved by Zeus because of his piety. When Amphiarus was being pursued by the legions of Thebes, Zeus opened up the earth and consumed him, later blessing him with the gift of prophecy. It has already been seen that Prometheus has access to a prophecy of sorts in Aeschylus' version of the play; he knows of the disastrous results of Zeus consummating his marriage to Thetis. Unlike the servile and worshipful Amphiarus, however, Prometheus refuses to accept the salvation offered him by his oppressor for revealing his knowledge. As Bloom states in *Shelley's Mythmaking,*
'Amphiaraus' can be read as a multiplicity of orthodox poets (how farfetched would it be to see Shelley as classing the Lake poets as well as Aeschylus within that multiplicity, as former, rather half-hearted rebels become time-serving oracular gods?) or perhaps best of all as simply the pious prophet of Zeus. Prometheus, if he were to yield, would become Amphiaraus, and the defiant epigraph is therefore heavily ironic: 'Hear this, Amphiaraus, and contrast it with your history.' (Bloom, 48)

Shelley is already making the case, then, that although his play will unfold along non-violent revolutionary lines, it will nonetheless be extremely revolutionary in its message. The epigraph suggests immediately that the "game of Jupiter" absolutely must not be played, under any circumstances, be they constant torment and torture or promise of great reward.

Of course, Shelley is already re-figuring the story of Prometheus at this point; Hesiod reveals that Prometheus fought on the side of Zeus, against his own people, because his foresight had shown him that Zeus would be the victor. This lust for power places Prometheus squarely in the middle of the Jupiter mindset; the curse he utters against Jupiter after his punishment and just prior to the point where Shelley picks up his story has him still situated in that mindset at the beginning of the play. This is important because it stresses the internal revolution towards non-violence that Prometheus' immobility allows him to undergo: he will change from Prometheus Bound to Prometheus Unbound precisely because of his immobility and the opportunity it affords him for inward contemplation. This is perhaps the most revolutionary aspect of the poem, and it allows Shelley to break free of the revolutionary cycle envisioned by another poetic radical, Blake, in which, as Bloom interprets it, "Orc always ends by becoming
Urizen, Jesus by becoming identified with Jehovah, Prometheus one with Zeus; or, on the
historical level, all revolutions becoming reactions, that is, in Blake's time the French
revolution becoming first the terror and then Napoleonic despotism" (Shelley's
Mythmaking, 61). As the epigraph and Introduction make clear, Shelley refuses to
portray a Prometheus that could ever be identified or reconciled with his oppressor or his
oppressor's ideology. In Prometheus, the departure from the mindset of the oppressor is
radical enough to allow him to turn the weapon of the oppressor, immobility, into his own
greatest asset for overthrowing that oppressor.

The poem proper begins with Prometheus bound to a ravine of icy rocks in the
Indian Caucasus, according to Shelley's stage directions. More restraining than his
physical bondage, however, is the spiritual bondage he has enveloped himself in through
his curse of Jupiter. Although he is quite clear that he does not consider himself as a
subject of Jupiter, this kind of hate and disdain aligns him quite closely with Jupiter. In
spite of the way he has internalized the mindset of his oppressor, Prometheus is also
displaying the qualities that his immobility has given him the opportunity to develop.
Patience is obviously a key to turning immobility from a constraint into a benefit, and
Prometheus refers to this when he cries, "No change, no pause, no hope!— Yet I endure." (I.24).

Regardless of this herald of the direction his thoughts will take in the near future,
at this point Prometheus is very much focused on revenge, and, like Ahasuerus in "Queen
Mab", Prometheus cannot better his situation until he has given up this dream. He moves
towards a more positive outlook in quick steps in this opening sequence, first claiming
desire for the hour which "Shall drag thee, cruel King, to kiss the blood/ From these pale feet, which then might trample thee/ If they disdained not such a prostrate slave" (I.50-2). In these words, Prometheus is identifying himself with Jupiter in the way Blake thought it inevitable he must; he seems to be advocating not a destruction of the existing order, but a re-ordering of it with himself at the top. In the very next lines, however, Prometheus begins to distance himself from this attitude and thus move towards a realization of the necessity of non-violent resistance. He begins by renouncing his disdain in the name of pity, realizing that, as Mab demonstrated to Ianthe, all tyrants are themselves persecuted and victimized by the very tyranny they propagate. As Reiter claims, "The thought of disdain brings to a sudden-seeming realization the wisdom that misery has made, and hate changes to pity for the hell of terror that will gape within the dictatorial God. For many minds the change from hate to pity for an afflicting enemy is a psychologically valid experience" (Reiter, 99). Prometheus realizes the inevitability of Jupiter's overthrow (after all, this is the very knowledge that saves him in Aeschylus' version of the drama) and the horrible consequences it will have on Jupiter: "What Ruin/ Will hunt thee undefended through wide Heaven!/ How will thy soul, cloven to its depths with terror,/ Gape like a hell within!" (I.53-5). In his sympathy for his oppressor, Prometheus is able to recant his disdain and hate for the present moment and future, but the troublesome power of the curse he once unleashed on Jupiter remains to sully his new attitude of non-violence. Barbara Judson finds these thoughts of Prometheus on the undesirability of his curse consistent with the language Shelley himself uses to fashion the poem: "as a poet committed to democratic change, he is looking for innocent forms of
engagement, and his suspicion of power extends to linguistic regimes based on intentionality, especially those of fiat and curse, genres complicit with absolute authority" (Judson, 141). Therefore, if Prometheus is to fully break with Jupiter's mindset, it is necessary for him to renounce the manifestation of that mindset in language, his curse of Jupiter. Although Prometheus cannot recall the exact wording of the curse, he is very aware of the necessity of recanting it, lamenting "If then my words had power//--Though I am changed so that aught evil wish/ Is dead within, although no memory be/ Of what is hate- let them not lose it now!" (I.69-72).

It is interesting that Prometheus cannot recall his curse; this shows how far he has managed to distance himself from the kind of mindset that Judson points out is epitomized by absolute language. It is also interesting that Prometheus asks the natural world around him for help in recalling it, rather than turning to Ione and Panthea, who are seated beside him. While the easy answer for this is simply to conjecture that Ione and Panthea were not present when Prometheus uttered his curse, Jerome McGann has noted that the desire to seek comfort in nature is a typical desire in Romantic poetry, analogous in fact to turning inward for truth through contemplation. Although openly skeptical of the desirability of such inwardness and identification with nature he rightly asserts "amidst the tottering structures of early nineteenth-century Europe, poetry asserted the integrity of the biosphere and the inner, spiritual self, both of which were believed to transcend the age's troubling doctrinal conflicts and ideological shifts" (McGann, 68). The implication of this is while there is probably a perfectly legitimate practical reason Prometheus turns to nature to help him recall his curse, it can also be conjectured that this
combination of turning inward and trusting to the biosphere is a way for Prometheus to take shelter from the turmoil he must feel as a result of abandoning the ideology of Jupiter for a different way of thinking.

Although Mother Earth and the elements are fearful and will not reveal Prometheus's words to him directly, Earth eventually does explain to Prometheus how he can have the curse revealed to him. Earth first suggests that she speak to Prometheus in the language of the dead, which is a language Jupiter cannot understand. This is important, as it shows the necessity for Prometheus to separate himself even from the language of his oppressor. Unfortunately, Prometheus cannot understand his curse in the language of the dead; he hears only "through my brain like shadows dim/ Sweep awful thoughts, rapid and thick" (I.146-7). He can only grasp the feeling, not the literal words, of his curse when Earth relates it to him in this way.

The next speech of Earth is interesting for a number of reasons. Earth remarks to Prometheus that she cannot speak his curse in the language of Jupiter, lest he should hear "and link me to some wheel of pain/ More torturing than the one whereon I roll" (I.141-2). Like Ahasuerus, Earth is trapped in a cycle of desiring vengeance; regarding the curse, she claims, "We meditate/ In secret joy and hope those dreadful words/ But dare not speak them" (I.184-6). Earth is unable to escape her torture because she refuses to give up her desire for vengeance, although, like the Wandering Jew before her, she is capable of helping others attain knowledge that she herself cannot. The final sign of her adherence to the mindset of Jupiter is her woeful response when Prometheus renounces his curse; she laments, "Misery, O misery to me,/ That Jove at length should vanquish
thee" (I.306-7). Although ultimately she will reap its benefits, in her current mindset she
cannot help but see Prometheus forsaking vengeance as an act of weakness and defeat.

As for Prometheus and the curse itself, he realizes the necessity to distance
himself from the language of his oppressor. Being unable to understand the language of
the dead, he is advised by Earth to summon a spirit from the netherland to speak the curse
in the language of the living. Prometheus realizes the importance of complete
renunciation; he goes so far as to insist "Mother, let not aught/ Of that which may be evil,
pass again/ My lips, or those of aught resembling me" (I.218-220), so as not to have any
more connection with the tyrannical mindset. It is fitting, then, that it is the phantasm of
Jupiter, the absolute embodiment of the tyrannical aspect of humanity in Shelley's work,
that repeats the curse of Prometheus back to him.

The way the curse is structured hints at its self-defeating nature. It is recounted in
four stanzas, the first two of which call down the wrath of Jupiter on Prometheus himself.
This is a mocking form of aggression, a means of waging a war of attrition against evil
that will ultimately consume Prometheus without improving the lot of anyone. Although
he is bound and cannot act, this type of invocation of harm upon himself is a very
aggressive linguistic act, and is tantamount to fighting fire with fire. Bloom sees these
first two stanzas as "couched in the rhetoric of simple defiance" and equates them to an
assertion of power on the part of Prometheus, setting himself up as the more powerful of
the two. The lines "Thou art omnipotent./ O'er all things but thyself I gave thee power,/
And my own will" (I.272-4) are pointed to by Bloom as an example of Prometheus
attempting to usurp Jupiter's role, as Prometheus seems to cry out, "In a cosmos of two,
you have power neither over yourself nor what has primacy in me. Not power at all but a contrary-status is what I gave and give you" (Shelley's Mythmaking, 106). While this thirsting for equality or primacy over tyranny places Prometheus still in the mindset of his oppressor, Bloom has a take on it that is very much in keeping with the idea of an internal revolution that has been in play throughout this entire exploration of non-violence in Shelley's poetry. In Bloom's view (and the view of this paper as it relates to internality and non-violence), "the mind of man does not make Jupiter; rather it contains him as a component, as it does Prometheus and a number of other energies" (Shelley's Mythmaking, 106). This idea of Prometheus and Jupiter being components of humanity's psychic make-up speaks directly to the idea that an internal revolt can displace Jupiter with Prometheus; while the poem is not reducible to strictly allegorical terms, the repeated insistence that Prometheus is the champion of humanity seems a call to this internal revolt among humanity. Later in the first act, Prometheus will be tied explicitly to humanity's notion of love, an equation that does nothing to hinder this kind of reading of the poem.

The next two stanzas of the curse involve punishments of tyrants similar to those seen already in "Queen Mab" and "The Mask of Anarchy". He first hopes that "thine Infinity shall be/ A robe of envenomed agony;/ And thine Omnipotence a crown of pain/ To cling like burning gold round thy dissolving brain" (I.288-91); this is very similar to the image in "Queen Mab" of the attributes of tyranny causing their possessor extreme torment and unease. In the next stanza he desires the hour to come "when thou must appear to be/ That which thou art internally" (I.298-9), reminiscent of the idea at the end
of "The Mask of Anarchy" that tyranny will destroy itself in shame when it is confronted
with its true reflection. Finally, Prometheus curses Jupiter to a "lagging fall through
boundless space and time" (I.301); perpetual motion, shown again and again to be the
ultimate punishment in Shelley's poetry. Although the ends Prometheus wishes for are
frequently visited on Jupiter-like characters throughout Shelley's poetry, his very desire
for them puts him squarely in the camp of the Wandering Jew and Mother Earth;
therefore, it is only his renunciation, his ability to say "It doth repent me: words are quick
and vain;/ Grief for awhile is blind, and so was mine./ I wish no living thing to suffer
pain" (I.303-5), that save him from the eternal torment the others are damned to.

Jupiter is aware of the act of Prometheus; his phantasm has spoken in the
language of the living that Earth was afraid to speak, and thus Jupiter becomes aware of
it. Reiter points out, though, "as it will turn out, Jupiter will react not with wrath, but
with a sense of triumph; like Earth, he will think that Prometheus has weakened" (Reiter,
103). It is in his mistaken confidence in the defeat of Prometheus that Jupiter will send
the Furies to torture the prophecy out of Prometheus that Jupiter knows he possesses.

Mercury is the first to speak to Prometheus of the procession that Jupiter sends,
and he functions as a tempter to lure Prometheus back into the realm of action on the
oppressor's terms. Perhaps of all the gods of the Greek pantheon, Mercury is most closely
associated with motion; it is fitting, then, in this argument that Mercury is also the bearer
of Jupiter's tyrannical message. Although Mercury points out to Prometheus the ceaseless
torment he will undergo until Jupiter is overthrown unless he capitulates, Prometheus has
come to realize the righteousness of his position of immobility and replies, "Pity the self-
despising slaves of Heaven,/ Not me, within whose mind sits peace serene/ As light in the
sun, throned" (I.429-31).

When the Furies have their turn, they reveal themselves to be undoubtedly of the
realm of tyranny and motion. The First Fury points out their ceaseless travels when she
tells Prometheus that they pursue the enemies of Jupiter "as lean dogs pursue/ Through
wood and lake some struck and sobbing fawn,/ We track all things that weep and bleed
and live/ When the great King betrays them to our will" (I.454-7). In fact, one of the
gravest threats the Furies make is to deny Prometheus his immobility and the opportunity
for inward contemplation that goes along with it. The Third Fury articulates this threat of
taking away Prometheus' newfound shield of immobility when she says,

and though we can obscure not
The soul which burns within, that we will dwell
Beside it, like a vain loud multitude
Vexing the self-content of wisest men-
That we will be dread thought beneath thy brain
And foul desire round thine astonished heart
And blood within thy labyrinthine veins
Crawling like agony. (I.484-91)

However, Prometheus is certain enough of his sovereignty over his inner self through the
trials he has undergone while immobile that he scorns the Furies when they make these
threats. This notion of the interior will stand in contrast to the use of motion by the
Furies towards an evil end.

The Furies unleash their ultimate torment upon Prometheus in the form of a vision
of humanity's evil ways and fall from grace. Mobility and immobility are once again
opposed to each other in a very subtle way in the vision, and their opposition remains
consistent with the binary Shelley has been developing throughout his poetry of inner revolution. The Furies invoke motion in their summoning of the vision, crying in their chorus lines such as "From the ends of the Earth! From the ends of the Earth!/...Come, come, come!/...Who with wingless footsteps trample the Sea" and Ione marks their approach with the another observation of motion, claiming, "Sister, I hear the thunder of new wings." This vision of motion is also a vision of the evil that has taken hold of humanity, for whom Prometheus has sacrificed so much, and it is replete with images of thronging hordes and nomadic motion. Contrasted with all of this, however, and the sight which throws into the starkest contrast the opposition of motion and immobility as concerns non-violence and tyranny, is the vision Panthea sees of "a youth-/ With patient looks nailed to a crucifix" (1.584-5). This is described by her as a woeful sight, and is indicative of her failure to come to the realization of Prometheus that such immobility used as a weapon of tyranny can ultimately be turned into a means of empowerment, even in the midst of such a nightmarish vision of the world as the Furies have provided.

Regardless of Panthea's ability to interpret the crucifixion of Christ, it is plain in this section that immobility is explicitly tied with positive notions and excessive motion is explicitly connected with ideas of decay and torment. Further, the connection between the immobility of Christ and that of Prometheus is strengthened by the Furies final attempt to tempt Prometheus to despair. The words she uses echo the words of Christ on the cross (as well as foreshadowing Yeats' "The Second Coming," as Bloom is quick to point out). The Fury tells Prometheus,
The good want power, but to weep barren tears.
The powerful goodness want: worse need for them.
The wise want love, and those who love want wisdom;
And all the best things are thus confused to ill.
Many are strong and rich,-and would be just,-
But live among their suffering fellow men
As if none felt: they know not what they do. (I.625-31)

These lines seem to speak to the fact that humanity is confused; it cannot reconcile its inherent desire to do well with the tyrannical mindset with which it has been indoctrinated. Shelley indeed felt humanity to be, at its deepest level, inherently good; the idea of "original sin" was abhorrent to him, as it had to be if he was to be able to hold fast to his belief that humanity could transform itself through the kind of psychic revolution that Prometheus undergoes in the poem. Prometheus sees this need for internal revolution as well, and indicates the importance of co-opting the tools of the oppressor to achieve it when he tells the Furies, "Thy words are like a cloud of winged snakes/ And yet, I pity those they torture not" (I.632-3). Prometheus understands that he would not have been able to cast off the mental shackles of his oppressor had he not been restrained by physical shackles, and despairs of people being able to achieve this kind of revolution until they realize the horrible repression they are subjected to every day by their own thoughts and unquestioning acceptance of the tyrannical mindset. In fact, Reiter reads this passage as the most important moment in the play, claiming, "at this moment in the drama Prometheus, who is wise and good, Asia, who is love, and Demogorgon, who is powerful, are not conjoined; but when Prometheus expresses pity to the Fury who has spoken these lines for those its words do not torture, pity for those who
can live at ease with the evil of the world, he triumphs" (Reiter, 111). Whether or not the reader agrees with Reiter that this is the most important moment of the poem, it is undeniable that in the kind of reading being done here it is very significant as a blueprint to a successful non-violent overthrow of tyranny.

The remainder of the first act is taken up with Earth's summoning of the internal spirits of Earth, the symbols of humanity's efforts to undergo inward contemplation and free itself from tyranny. This is obviously meant to be a comfort to Prometheus; contrasted with the frenzied motion of the Furies' vision, the quiet reflection of humanity is a soothing balm to his wounds and lifts him from the verge of despair. These spirits identify themselves as non-violent enemies of Jupiter, as is Prometheus, when they say "From unremembered ages we/ Gentle guides and guardians be/ Of Heaven-oppressed mortality" (I.672-4). These thought-spirits are humanity's efforts to break free of the mindset that causes them to be oppressed by Heaven and Jupiter; they are signs that the internal battle has been engaged by some among humanity and is being waged at that very moment. The types of thoughts and people fighting this battle should come as no surprise to anyone familiar with Shelley's work; there is the spirit of love arising on a frenzied battlefield, reminiscent of the Shape from "The Mask of Anarchy" and here connected explicitly with Prometheus himself in the lines "'twas the soul of love;/ 'twas the hope, the prophecy,/ Which begins and ends in thee" (I.705-7). The second spirit symbolizes compassion and sacrifices made even for one's enemy, represented by "one who gave an enemy/ His plank-then plunged aside to die" (I.721-2). The third spirit is that of wisdom that has come to one in a dream (again reinforcing the idea of sleep as a state of
immobility where knowledge can be realized), teaching the dreamer "Pity, eloquence, and woe" (I.730). The fourth spirit is, of course, poetic inspiration, that quality that Shelley lauds in "A Defence of Poetry" as making poets "the unacknowledged legislators of the World" (Shelley, 508), while the fifth and sixth are elements of despair made positive by love, again centered in the figure of Prometheus. Through Prometheus, the spirits of humanity are "certain in their knowledge: moral law and natural law are alike: just as natural signs are the sure prophecy of spring, so when 'Wisdom, Justice, Love, and Peace...struggle to increase' in human thought, they will invincibly transform the moral world" (Reiter, 113). While Prometheus is repeatedly identified as the agent of love for humanity, and his revolution set as the standard for that of humanity, the agent of love for Prometheus at the end of Act I is identified as Asia. If Prometheus is the emissary of love that will allow humanity to cast off its oppressive mindset, Asia is the emissary of love that will allow Prometheus to rise above Jupiter in his own struggle against tyranny.

Much like the motion of the internal elements of the spirits of humanity's thought, Asia's apparently external journey is a result of the internal revolution of Prometheus that allows love to do its work. She typifies, in fact, Bloom's "creative force" that is let loose by Prometheus' inward turn, free to do her healing work on the world. In fact, Panthea also becomes emblematic of this force; in many ways, much of the good that comes to humanity in the poem is the result of the work of these two female characters. Whether Shelley is valorizing the feminine, reinforcing harmful stereotypes, or reducing the role of women in the play to mystical aspects of Prometheus' new creative force as Bloom may suggest by doing so is a sticky question that falls somewhat beyond the scope of this
paper. While I prefer to see it as a gesture of equality between the sexes, an example of how all humanity is afforded equal chance to perform heroic acts of non-violence in the face of tyranny, Judson and others are not quite so willing to champion Shelley as a proto-feminist; this issue will be referred to again in the conclusion of the paper.

Act II, scene i begins with a speech of Asia from her solitary exile away from Prometheus. Many of the themes of inward contemplation and non-violent resistance that Shelley has already established in his earlier poetry are repeated or invoked here. First is the idea of Asia, representing love, being forced away from Prometheus. In keeping with Bloom's theory of the internalization of quest romance, it is when one has progressed beyond the desire to project upon the physical world that an inner force can be set free to act. By renouncing his curse, Prometheus has cast away the mindset that prevented his union with love; she is now free to be set in motion to effect positive change. Again, this can either be viewed as Asia following the positive example of Prometheus and becoming his equal in heroism, or a veiled implication that the feminine aspect Prometheus is preferable to the femininity of any "real" woman because it is tempered by his masculinity, and again, I defer on this issue to those more inclined to pursue it.

The means by which this knowledge comes to Asia is also consistent with themes that Shelley has established in "Queen Mab" and "The Mask of Anarchy". It is revealed to her by Panthea, to whom it has come in a dream. As evidence for the actual humanity of Panthea and Asia, Goldberg's passage on the significance of dreams in imparting a human element to a message quoted above is equally relevant here. Panthea seemed the closest of all characters to understanding what Prometheus was undertaking by
renouncing his curse; while her sister comforted Earth with the words, "Fear not-'tis but some passing spasm, / The Titan is unvanquished still" (I.314-5), Panthea is slightly more perceptive in observing "The Titan looks as ever, firm, not proud" (I.337). Panthea realizes that Prometheus is now beginning to own his immobility and undergo the necessary internal revolution, rather than thinking, with Ione, that he still desires to overcome them and gain the place of Jupiter. As she is closest to joining Prometheus' new mindset, it is fitting that when she is rendered immobile by sleep a full realization of her part in the quest is revealed to her in her dreams. Barbara Judson notes the importance of Shelley's decision to incorporate Panthea and Asia prominently into the recurring idea of inward contemplation, claiming, "for his revolutionary ideal Shelley chooses to evoke a charismatically introspective femininity, which can induce others to self-examination, influencing them by a kind of moral hypnotism" (Judson, 140). While "moral hypnotism" hints at the issues Judson has in the implications of Shelley's use of the feminine, it seems that she is recognizing his desire to present internal revolution as contagious.

Specific aspects of Panthea's dreams are also in keeping with ideas of immobility and wisdom. In recounting her first dream, Panthea recalls that Prometheus has shed his physical body and, like Ianthe in "Queen Mab", is represented purely by spirit as "the azure night/ Grew radiant with the glory of that form/ Which lives unchanged within" (II.i.63-5). Even more interestingly, when she and Prometheus enact their physical manifestation of inward love, Panthea says, "I saw not--heard not--moved not--only felt/ His presence flow and mingle through my blood" (II.i.79-80). By the wisdom she has gained through her dreams, Panthea is able to connect with Prometheus' new mindset and
join him in his non-violent struggle against tyranny, uniting with his spirit of love both physically and mentally in her dream. When she recounts this dream to Asia, she becomes aware of the change that has taken place within her; this self-realization allows her to remember her other dream, which she could not previously. Interestingly, this second dream is the one that tells of the eventual fall of Jupiter, emphasizing once more the need for non-violent contemplation to show the way to a positive defeat of tyranny. Wasserman is persuasive on this subject, claiming, "Panthea is unable to remember her other dream until the first has been conveyed to Asia, and the implication is that it can appear only in consequence of the first and is dependent on it" (Wasserman, 115). This dream not only tells of the defeat of tyranny, it also adheres to another Shelleyan theme by appearing as a shape, surprising Asia so that she cries out "What shape is that between us" (II.i.127), only to be told by the shape/dream to "Follow, follow!" (II.i.132). This formless shape that is external to the characters and is inextricably linked with the defeat of tyranny both hearkens back to the Shape from "The Mask of Anarchy" and foretells the Demogorgon of this poem. The web of immobility, dreams, and shapes as factors defeating tyranny is here weaving itself into its most cohesive whole of any of Shelley's works on the topic. Wasserman also notes the significance of the almond tree that sheds the imploring leaves in the dream, claiming "the command on the petals, 'O Follow, Follow,' calls on Panthea and Asia to submit to the course of Necessity and be driven by it...Because it is symbolic of this irrepressible course of Necessity...even the wound the

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2 This citation and the one in the following passage are from Wasserman's *Prometheus Unbound*, also included in his *Critical Readings*; the page numbers here refer to the former edition.
almond branch has received from lightning cannot prevent its spring rebirth, any more than moral regeneration can be repressed by the evil inflicted on the mind by Jupiter" (Wasserman, 117).

Wasserman's observations help resolve the apparent contradiction of inciting the forces of non-violence to mobility. As with the spirits of internal thought that the Earth summons to comfort Prometheus, distinctions between actual, physical, external motion and the internalization of quest romance and psychic voyages are blurred by the dream-like character of the shape. Panthea and Asia could be reduced to the "creative force" of Prometheus referred to by Bloom, and this would neatly resolve the contradiction, but I have resisted this reduction throughout the paper and do not wish to cave to it here. Rather, I prefer to see it as the release of their own "creative force," a primary spiritual although necessarily physical quest. The echoes of the shape implore Panthea and Asia to follow to discover that "In the world unknown/ Sleeps a voice unspoken" (II.i.190-1). This kind of self-negating language, coupled with the image of an echo of a voice of a remembered dream, certainly allow for conjecture that the voyage being undertaken by Panthea and Asia is fundamentally more like the dream quest of Ianthe than a quest through actual distance, space, and time, although it is undeniably that. Much like the call for the masses of England to journey once again to the site of the Peterloo Massacre in "The Mask of Anarchy," it is what happens when the non-violent agents reach their destination that is important, rather than the journey they must undertake to arrive. Compelled by the release of their creative force, the physical motion of these agents transcends the motion of armies, much in the way that in some of Wordsworth's greatest
poetry his travels are halted by a scene that serves as a catalyst for internal contemplation; the traveler that continues after the introspection is fundamentally different from the traveler before it occurred. It is a "summons to Asia to fulfill her role in effecting Prometheus' release by the revolution of love" (McNiece, 220).

Act II, scene ii does nothing to dispel this notion. The two semi-choruses and the two fauns describe a vision-scape that is idealized and archetypal, rather than actual. They constantly refer to Panthea and Asia as "spirits" who "float" through the area, and speak of the possibility of worlds within worlds, wondering "If such live thus, have others other lives" (II.ii.83). None of these elements or descriptions seriously damages the vision of the reader who wishes to see the journey of Asia and Panthea as internal; in fact, the sole purpose of this scene in this reading is to set a tone of difference, of otherworldliness, to further emphasize the radical departures humanity must make to free themselves of the horror of tyranny.

Asia's description of the landscape surrounding the entrance to Demogorgon's lair at the beginning of Act II, scene iii further underscores a reading of this journey as an explanation of the kind of internal journey humanity must undergo to cast off Jupiter. She explicitly links her physical surroundings with internal contemplation when she describes

The sun-awakened avalanche! whose mass,
Thrice sifted by the storm, had gathered there
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.37-42)
This image is a very apt description of the mental process that Shelley consistently depicts in his works against tyranny: immobility causes the quiet accumulation of reflective thoughts to build to such a volume that a violent shift is undergone in the psyche. When this has occurred within a great enough number of a nation's inhabitants, the system of oppression and violence fostered by Jupiter-like institutions will crumble and a revolutionary new way of thinking will become dominant; McNiece notes that this revolution "must occur within the mind of man, perhaps within the mind of every man before the true change can be expressed in nature and society" (McNiece, 221).

The spirits that then reveal themselves to Panthea and Asia sing a song that illustrates some of these themes. They, too, are explicitly connected with the mind; Asia speaks of perceiving them at the same time she feels a change occurring in her brain. The spirits invite Panthea and Asia to continue their inner voyage; in the first stanza of their song, the wisdom they can bestow lies near the realms of Sleep and Death, connected here as they are at the beginning of "Queen Mab" with each other and the attainment of enlightenment. There are many other images of sinking and darkness in the song, constantly putting the reader in mind of an inner retreat or withdrawal from the world that is governed by Jupiter's way of thinking. The spirits speak of the place where knowledge can by found as where "the cavern-crags wear not/ The radiance of Heaven,/ Nor the gloom to Earth given" (II.iii.76-8). Therefore, the source of the defeat of tyranny does not lie in adherence to the mindset of Jupiter (Heaven) or in external physicality (Earth), but rather in an exploration of neglected areas of the human psyche. The frequent allusion to mines and mining in the song also speak to the idea of unearthing a treasure buried deep
within. The final stanza of the song concludes the scene and synthesizes many of the ideas that Shelley expounds as the answer to tyranny. The spirits tie together themes of immobility, non-violence, interiority, and the defeat of tyranny when they sing,

We have bound thee, we guide thee  
Down, down!  
With the bright form beside thee-  
Resist not the weakness-  
Such strength is in meekness-  
That the Eternal, the Immortal,  
Must unloose through life's portal  
The snake-like Doom coiled underneath his throne  
By that alone! (II.iii.90-8)

The song of the spirits seems to conclude, then, with the idea that only after Panthea and Asia have undergone their internal journey and come to the point where they are willing to be bound and completely submissive to the spirit (I would claim it to be the spirit of non-violence, with its reference to strength in meekness) can they enact the defeat of tyranny.

Act II, scene iv is the ultimate example of Shelley's vision of love being set loose upon the world and enacting the destruction of tyranny. The inner journey has now been undergone by Prometheus, Panthea, and Asia, like the avalanche from the previous scene, enough characters are undergoing the psychic journey that the force of their will is about to set loose a wonderfully destructive cleansing of the old systems of thought and usher in a new golden age. This act is important as the turning point where tyranny gives way to liberation, but as with all of Shelley's destructive/cleansing shapes, there is some confusion and ambiguity about the role of Demogorgon in a non-violent cosmology.
Demogorgon is not an overly talkative entity, yet there is a great deal in its words relevant to Shelley's conception of the universe. It communicates to Asia that it can answer any question that she dares to ask, and through its brief answers reveals much about Shelley's changing conception of God in a non-violent universe. The fact that Demogorgon rarely gives any sort of complete answer is confirmation of a point to be made shortly, that Asia already knows the answers and merely must be made to realize that. Bloom goes even farther in claiming, "Demogorgon does not equivocate or evade—he simply does not know the answers to Asia's questions" (Shelley's Mythmaking, 123).

In response to Asia's question concerning the maker of the world and all that is good in it, Demogorgon answers, "Merciful God" (II.iv.15). However, in response to her questions concerning the creator of all that is evil in the world, Demogorgon answers only "He reigns." Demogorgon refuses to assign blame for tyranny and evil to an external force, where only moments before it was very clear in asserting that praise for the good in creation be assigned to God. A possible inference that could be made from these statements is that Demogorgon is assigning the blame for tyranny to the mindset of humanity that allows it to flourish. This separation of oppression from a heavenly tyrant or external force enforces the necessity of internal revolutions to transform circumstances.

All of this may seem a far cry from "Queen Mab", but it is not as much of a stretch as it seems. Mab herself claimed that the idea of God was an excuse for those in power to torment those without power and that humanity had no true conception of the power that ruled the universe. The reference to Jesus earlier in Prometheus Unbound is certainly a positive one, and as Robert Ryan points out in his book The Romantic Reformation,
By 1814, his feelings about Jesus had become ambivalent, if not contradictory...As the years went by, the 'malignant soul' scorned by Ahasuerus began to assume the appearance of the 'youth with patient looks nailed to a crucifix' who is honored and pitied in Prometheus Unbound. For Shelley, it was a case of one misunderstood benefactor of mankind coming to discover how much he had in common with another. (Ryan, 203)

With all this taken into consideration, it is hardly a stretch to be much of a stretch to see that it is not Jupiter, but the component of the human mind that allows the logic of Jupiter to dominate, that is responsible for the evil in the world. Thus, Demogorgon in this sense is nothing more than the gathering tide of thought that refuses to accept an ideology which countenances the oppression of one group of people by another, and Jupiter's eventual overthrow is nothing more than the rise to power of enlightened public opinion.

Further support for this idea can be found in the fact that Demogorgon does not ever provide Asia with actual information; as she comes to realize, not only is a heavenly external construct not the cause of humanity's woes, but she has known this all along without asking Demogorgon. Demogorgon hints to her to look inside for the answers she seeks, asking, "For what would it avail to bid thee gaze/ On the revolving world?"

(II.iv.117-8); the answers must be found through an internal contemplation rather than

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3 Ryan further makes the case that even in "Queen Mab" this ambivalence can be seen, pointing to Shelley's notes that describe Jesus as "a man of pure life, who desired to rescue his countrymen from the tyranny of their barbarous and degrading superstitions" and acknowledge the importance of distinguishing 'between the pretended character of this being as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, and his real character as a man who, for a vain attempt to reform the world, paid the forfeit of his life to that overbearing tyranny which has since so long desolated the universe in his name" (Ryan, 203). These notes seem to further resolve the apparent contradiction in Shelley's religious views as they are expressed in his poetry, and also to explain Demogorgon's discretion in not confusing a creative deity with a tyrannical belief system that
external projection. Bloom is quite succinct in pointing out, "Demogorgon can only tell her what she (and Prometheus) have already realized for themselves. All else that can be known she (and Prometheus) will have to discover through relationship, through a sharing in reality" (Shelley's Mythmaking, 123). Asia has already hinted at having this knowledge when, like Mab before her, she speaks of even the tyrant Jupiter being a slave, and, having already undergone sufficient internal examination, quickly realizes, "So much I asked before, and my heart gave/ The response thou hast given; and of such truths/ Each to itself must be the oracle" (II.iv.121-3). It is through Asia's realization of this necessity for internal contemplation that Demogorgon is able to exclaim that the hour for Jupiter's fall is at hand. The coming of the hour of Jupiter's fall concludes the scene, bringing further support to the idea that it is only in the mind of humanity that tyranny can flourish or be destroyed with the Hour who claims that on the strength of Asia's realization it "Shall wrap in lasting night Heaven's kingless throne" (II.iv.148).

Act II, scene v is a brief description of the changing aspect of Asia in the time following the end of tyranny. She has set loose the force of love that will overcome oppression and wears a countenance that reflects her empowerment through internal reflection. Panthea notes this change in the character of Asia, remarking,

How art thou changed! I dare not look on thee;
I feel, but see thee not. I scarce endure
The radiance of thy beauty. Some good change
Is working in the elements which suffer

pays mere lip service to its own tenets.

The poem certainly allows for a reading that interprets almost all the action in Acts II-III as occurring nearly simultaneously with Prometheus' renunciation of his curse. However, simultaneity is nearly possible to depict in a dramatic form, so the illusion is of time passing throughout the play. I stick with terms that have connotations of chronology for simplicity and convenience.
Thy presence thus unveiled. (II.v.16-20)

In terms of the poem, Asia is becoming less of a "real" figure and more of a natural force, as her connection with the elements would suggest. I would still like to resist the idea of Asia being subsumed into an element of Prometheus' psyche, however, and see her as an example of the transformation of humanity that can occur when the mindset of Jupiter has been cast off. Demogorgon will later speak of love as the force that can always conquer tyranny should it return, and in the act before he spoke of "Fate, Time, Occasion, Chance, and Change. To these/ All things are subject but eternal Love" (119-20). While Asia remains a "real" character, Shelley is stressing her association with love to illustrate the power of an internal reformation based on love rather than an externally constructed patriarchal ruling system. Wasserman sees a definite pattern appearing at this point in the poem, one very much in keeping with this reading, when he suggests,

This simple formulation--the retraction of evil by Demogorgon upon being awakened by love, and the immediate release and guarantee of the "natural" order of events by love--is the heart of Shelley's millennial vision, and its model is the spring that is born in the death of that autumn...Prometheus' revolutionary withdrawal of his curse in winter is directly followed by the journey of Love to Demogorgon's realm at the very beginning of spring; and Demogorgon's revolutionary flight to withdraw Jupiter is immediately followed by Love's flight to reunite with Prometheus. (Wasserman, 324)

Act III, scene i reveals Jupiter to the reader for the first time, in all his evil tyrannical infamy. Jupiter is relatively immobile throughout the whole of Prometheus Unbound, but he makes no attempt to use this opportunity for useful internal reflection, rather, he is tyranny in all its terrible opulence, reflecting only upon his own external
power over others and his means of increasing it. His speeches in this act are a virtual litany of what Shelley perceives to be the most unforgivable aspects of a despot. He refers to himself as omnipotent and speaks with glee of the subjugation of the world, and his description of the means by which his human worshippers praise him is almost exactly identical to Mab's assertion that murderers on earth praise their likeness in heaven to condone their acts. He is anticipating the hour when his child will be born, an event that he sees as likely to consolidate his hold on power forevermore, and his reminiscence of how he fathered that child is rife with language of sexual violence and conquest typical of an oppressor. Barbara Judson, arguing for a different but by no means contradictory view of the poem, notes that "Jupiter reveals his ignorance of the sexual terrorism he practices, mistaking Thetis' anguish for pleasure. In this representation of phallic despotism, agency is defined in absolutist and masculine terms" (Judson, 140). It has already been seen that Shelley is reacting against absolutism when Prometheus withdraws his curse, and in this light is no coincidence that Asia is female and Demogorgon formless.\footnote{In fact, Judson argues in her essay that by virtue of topical and contemporary associations Shelley makes in the poem, Demogorgon is undeniably female; while critical for her case, it is enough for me that the reader not definitively identify Demogorgon as male.} Whereas Jupiter reveals his refusal to assimilate any aspect of femininity into his masculine absolutism through his language of sexual conquest, Prometheus both requires and desires Asia to release him from his bondage; she is equally the benefactor of humanity. Through these kinds of associations and oppositions in language, Shelley is again demonstrating the need to transcend the mindset and language of the oppressor in order for non-violent resistance to work.
Of course, Jupiter's conjecture about his child is ultimately (and for him, tragically) incorrect. Bloom is interesting on this point, claiming that "Jupiter mistakes his efficacy; the grim secret that Prometheus knows and will not reveal is that Jupiter has engendered no child at all. The dialectic has gone into reverse; the unbodied fatal child is 'unbeheld' for a sound reason: he does not and will not exist. Not a menacing child but the infants of apocalypse have been born in this turn of the dialectic" (Shelley's Mythmaking, 132). Apocalypse is precisely what occurs for Jupiter upon the arrival of Demogorgon; the entire mindset that gave him power is revealed as transitory and dependent upon as aspect of the psyche. Demogorgon tells him of this, saying, "The tyranny of Heaven none may retain./ Or reassume, or hold succeeding thee" (III.i.57-8). As if this were not enough, Jupiter realizes he is to be subjected to Shelley's typical punishment of those who adhere to a tyrannical mindset: perpetual falling or downward motion. Jupiter laments this, moaning, "I sink.../ Dizzily down--ever, forever down" (III.i.80-1) as the scene comes to a close. Although formal considerations have been for the most part overlooked in this exploration, Reiter makes a point about this line that is much in keeping with the idea of perpetual motion when he notes, "The rapid initial dactyl, the especial force on down because of the alliteration and the slide over the z sounds and the assonance...all go into wonderfully creating the vortex of Jupiter's fall" (Reiter, 142).

At this point in the poem the oppositions that have been forged are meaningless; with the elements of tyranny and oppression removed and freedom, love, and liberation being celebrated, motion and immobility are no longer necessarily bound up with good
and evil and are thus released from the dialectic. The remainder of the poem is essential a celebration of the new world order, and in terms of this exploration it is not necessary to examine it as thoroughly as the poem up to this point.

In Act III, scene ii, Ocean has a remark that is much to the effect that motion is no longer tied to tyranny, claiming mortals will mark the passage of ships over seas,

    Tracking their path no more by blood and groans;
    And desolation, and the mingled voice
    Of slavery and command--but by the light
    Of wave-reflected flowers, and floating odours,
    And music soft, and mild, free, gentle voices,
    That sweetest music, such as spirits love. (III.ii.29-34)

In addition to further divorcing motion from its place in the dialectic, the words of Ocean set the utopian tone that dominates the remainder of the poem.

Act III, scene iii involves the freeing of Prometheus from his bonds by Hercules and his reunion with Asia. In this scene Prometheus evokes another image of non-violence and idealism, that of a retreat from the world into a realm of conversation and art. To bridge this kind of worldly retreat with Bloom's theory of internalization and other theories of withdrawal and immobilization is not overly difficult, and Shelley frequently uses the idea of a retreat in much the same way that he has used immobility in the poem explored here. "Lines Written Among the Euganean Hills," "Epipsychidion," and, on a very small and practical scale, "Letter to Maria Gisborne," are works in which Shelley makes explicit reference to the desirability of establishing a commune, as it were, of like-minded individuals to escape from the crush of the external world and pass the time in inward contemplation. Prometheus suggests this kind of retreat when he desires
to relocate to a cave where, among other ethereal enchantments, "we will sit and talk of time and change/ As the world ebbs and flows, ourselves unchanged--" (III.iii.23-4).

Reiter divides the time they will spend in the cave in the following way: "affectionate, idle moods intermingled with loveliness; playful, simple creativeness, like a reflection of moral innocence; spiritual questing and the making of poetry, that is, whatever is true beautiful, and good; and communion with man" (Reiter, 146). The last idea, that of the communion with man, can be set in contrast with humanity's communion with Jupiter; rather than a system of worship, humanity will communicate directly with love, peace, and justice that Prometheus and Asia now represent as the order of the world. Perhaps this is Shelley's vision of how religion would play a meaningful role for humanity once the tyrannical aspects of it had been purged from humanity's mind. This withdrawal seems to be an invitation, as well; as individuals come around to the non-violent way of life, they are welcomed into communion with their fellow humanity.

The remainder of the scene consists in the spirit of the hour blowing a conch shell to alert the world of the glorious coming age; the parallel between the conch shell and Gabriel's trumpet in announcing apocalypse is probably not coincidental, considering the underlying religious implications of the entire scene. To conclude the scene, the Earth returns, thanks Prometheus and Asia, and reveals to them the perfect cave for their retirement from earthly concerns.

The rest of the poem continues very much in the same vein, so an exploration will only be made of Demogorgon's last speech in the poem. Act III, scene iv, is a description of how the world has changed since the fall of Jupiter; it is in direct contrast to the picture
of humanity displayed by the Furies to tempt Prometheus to despair in Act I. Act IV consists mainly of songs of praises sung between the earth and moon, with Panthea and Ione offering brief commentary, but with the re-appearance of Demogorgon the poem directly addresses the problem of tyranny a final time.

Demogorgon begins by calling forth a number of entities, but it is when it addresses humanity that its words take on special meaning in the context of this exploration. It calls out to humanity, speaking of, "Man, who wert once a despot and a slave,-/ A dupe and a deceiver,- a Decay,/ A Traveler from the cradle to the grave" (IV, 549-51). The significance of the word choice in this context is obvious. Demogorgon first identifies humanity as its own oppressor, showing it to be both the slave and master of itself when civilization is driven forward by a tyrannical mindset. It then explicitly makes reference to the mental aspect of tyranny, referring to humanity as both having the mental capacity to deceive itself into allowing tyranny to flourish and also being able at any time to eradicate that element from its mindset as Prometheus and Asia have done. Finally, the identification of humanity as having once been a traveler in constant motion aligns, for the final time in this paper, motion and tyranny. Demogorgon goes on to warn all of the possible re-appearance of tyranny; Wasserman points out that a possible interpretation of Demogorgon as "the ultimate authority on the relation of the possible to the actual...like the final moral commentator in the traditional masque, to summon his audience and offer his lecture on the relation of potentiality to time" (Wasserman, 373).
Although the poem has already specifically been set free of the constraints of time\textsuperscript{6} earlier in the fourth act, existence will continue and the potential for evil is not discarded with the end of time. As the mediator between what is and what may be, Demogorgon is in a unique position to offer advice for the future. It extols "Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and Endurance" (IV.562) as the qualities which will keep tyranny out of the world, as well as being the qualities to destroy it should it return at a future point. More specifically, it speaks to qualities of interiority, non-violence, and immobility in its final stanza, telling all assembled that

> To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
> To forgive wrongs darker than Death or Night;
> To defy power which seems Omnipotent;
> To love and bear; to hope, till Hope creates
> From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
> Neither to change nor falter nor repent;
> This, like thy glory, Titan! is to be
> Good, great, and joyous, beautiful and free;
> This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory. (IV.570-8)

Reiter is rather close to echoing exactly the reading of the poem this context would provide when he says of these lines, "if such capacity for suffering, for forgiveness, for resistance, for love, for endurance, has belonged to one greater man, it can belong to us all; if saints of any time or place have shown such capacity, they are our measure" (Reiter, 189). By holding Prometheus forth as the example of how humanity can dispel tyranny and truly be free, Demogorgon is pointing to the necessity of a Prometheus-like internal revolution to occur among a vast majority of earth's inhabitants for such an overthrow to

\textsuperscript{6}Again, Shelley wrests control of the passage of time/existence from the grasp of institutional time, and
occur in reality. *Prometheus Unbound* is the final blueprint for Shelley's vision of revolution and the destruction of tyranny in all its forms.

**Section III: Conclusion: Ideas in Context**

There are certainly problems that arise in any attempt to reduce a poet's entire body of work to conformity with a single idea, and Shelley is no exception. It certainly is not my intention to claim that every word Shelley ever wrote dealt with ideas of tyranny and non-violence, but rather that it is a theme he explores several times in some of his best work. Beyond this very obvious statement, however, there remain problems even within the given realm of non-violence and immobility. As previously noted in the introduction, immobility is a tool that Shelley chooses several times to illustrate as a means of non-violence; while I make no claims to speak for any of the non-violent movements throughout history, I think I can safely say that immobility has passed away as a necessary condition for non-violence with the advent of the peace march, if not before. Indeed, mobility is a necessary component of the global justice movement operating today, as summits now take place worldwide and the movement maintains a presence in these diverse locales. However, it does seem that immobility is the primary choice of Shelley in his non-violent works and its inclusion and centrality in this paper is justified.

I quote liberally from Barbara Judson and Thomas Frosch in this paper, and in many ways the debt owed to them is as great as the debt to Harold Bloom in developing again time is inseperable from the moment of apocalypse.

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my conceptual framework. However, both Judson and Frosch delve very deeply into the role Shelley's use of the female in his non-violent poetry in ways that did not seem of utmost importance in my contribution to the issue, and they do not valorize Shelley to the same extent as an avatar of non-violence on the basis of these issues. The concerns they raise range from the encouragement of harmful female stereotypes to castration anxiety in Shelley's characterization of avenging female shapes donning the implements of patriarchal aggression. It is not my intent in this paper to refute or even necessarily engage these issues, as I have maintained immobility as the central focus of Shelley's non-violence, and both of the articles quoted in this paper should be read in full by any reader intrigued by Shelley's non-violence as they offer insight into aspects of it beyond the scope of this paper. Indeed, much of contemporary Shelley criticism takes his treatment of femininity as central to his body of work, and it certainly provides a useful and interesting point of departure for discussion of his work.

British Romanticism in general has come under fire for its very emphasis on inwardness as of late, in ways that tend to view a turning inward as a form of self-absorption that negates the possibility of social change. Jerome McGann cynically notes in his book, The Romantic Ideology, that this is a trend throughout a good deal of Romantic poetry, claiming, "the militancy of overt political action has been transformed into the paradox of spiritual quietism: under such militant banners is no march, but a wise passiveness" (McGann, 25). It seems that this charge leveled against Romanticism is not necessarily applicable to Shelley; as I noted in my discussion of Bloom, the inward

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7"Quietism" in this sense seems to indicate a preoccupation with selfhood as opposed to a desire for.
tendency in Shelley functions not as an abandonment of humanitarian issues but rather as a means of propagating a peaceful revolution. A poem such as "The Mask of Anarchy" seems to me the absolute antithesis of self-absorption and unconcern for the well-being of one's fellow man. Furthermore, it seems that Mark Edmundson effectively refutes this charge as somewhat irrelevant to Romanticism in general in his book Literature Against Philosophy. He takes up the cause of Wordsworth's "Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey" (which, to my thinking, is much more introspective than any of the poems I focused on in this paper), defending it against a similar charge. He notes,

Wordworth believed, as many people in the west have for some time, that severe introspection is the chief means by which the self can be transformed. Such introspection, therapeutic in its intent, may well be a prerequisite for effective action, action which can, but need not, be of a public nature. To be effective in the public world, one needs to know the difference between anger at political injustice and resentment against one's neglectful father, between the present and the past. This is perhaps something only introspection can achieve. (Emundson, 131)

Edmundson seems very close to echoing Shelley's views on introspection as I have presented them in this paper, and by now it should be apparent that Shelley certainly meant for inward reflection to be a catalyst for social change.

In this exploration of a few of Shelley's major works, I intended to illustrate some concepts that illuminate a corner of his genius. While certainly not the only window into this great poet, it seems that some of what is most vital and timeless about Shelley can be viewed through the vantage point of immobility, non-violent resistance, and a peaceful internal revolution that he fervently believed to be humanity's path to its idyllic destiny.
Even if this was all that was to be gained from reading Shelley, it would be enough to merit attention and reflection for years to come.
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