

Creative Agony: A Critical History of P. B. Shelley's *The Triumph of Life*

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1. Introduction

This essay shows the critical history of *The Triumph of Life* (TL) from the time this poem was first published in 1824 to the present time (2012). Specifically, this article focuses on three main factors: Harold Bloom's contribution, textual studies of TL, and the influence of Paul de Man. My aim is not simply to follow the dynamical change of TL reputation—mystical, monumental, anti-monumental—but also to consider the values of TL study, which present us new views of historical persons like Rousseau or Napoleon.

Before Bloom, TL study was barren for a long time. Compared with Shelley's other major poems like *Prometheus Unbound* or shorter popular lyrics like *To a Skylark*, TL remained relatively unstudied in the years following its publication. However, before the publication of this poem, Mary Shelley, P. B. Shelley's wife and the editor of his anthology, described TL as "one of the most mystical of his poems."¹ "Mystical" was a convenient label for readers because it was sufficiently ambiguous in terms of pinpointing the poem's meaning. Therefore, TL remained conveniently "mystical" and almost totally neglected by academia for nearly a century.

After Shelley's reputation peaked at the end of the nineteenth century, thanks to praises from William Butler Yeats and George Bernard Shaw, two important studies were presented in 1914: one by A.C. Bradley and the other by F. Melian Stawell. Both investigated the influence of literature by Italian authors such as Petrarch and Dante on Shelley's TL. Soon after, New Critics also made the connection between Shelley's TL and Italian literature, with T. S. Eliot asserting that Shelley penned "some of the greatest and most Dantesque lines in Eng-

¹ From "Note on Poems of 1822, by Mrs. Shelley," *Shelley: Poetical Works*, 676.

lish" (130). In the eyes of critics at least, TL remained a mystical and Dantesque poem that was difficult to interpret. Such vague, varied critical responses toward TL indicate how difficult reading the poem is and how profound Shelley's intentions were when writing it.

Bloom broke such a critical stagnation in 1959. This paper explains his contribution first. Bloom made Shelley scholars realize that TL, after a century of critical neglect, was not just a complicated, pseudo-*Divine Comedy* but rather an important piece of art that concluded Shelley's own mythmaking. Denying interpretations of previous scholars as misreading, Bloom presented his own interpretations of images and symbols in the poem. However, such a denial of previous studies provoked refutations from other scholars like Kenneth Allott and Peter H. Butter. As a result, Bloom stirred and vitalized TL study.

This article subsequently focuses on the textual study. G. M. Matthews and Donald H. Reiman were the contributors. Before 1946 when one of Shelley's descendants presented his manuscripts to Bodleian Library, Oxford, scholars never saw the manuscript of TL. They needed to consult various unreliable printed texts that were revised by many editors. Matthews investigated the manuscript and issued "'The Triumph of Life': A New Text" in 1960. Reiman published his whole book about the poem in 1965. Thanks to their efforts, Shelley scholars were able to consult an authoritative, reliable text.

The contribution of Paul de Man is inevitable to mention in the discussion of TL history. With deconstruction theory, de Man rejected all previous readings because they disfigured the language of the poem by interpreting it through existing images. De Man did not find any story or meaning in the poem but analyzed the language and style itself. De Man's drastic proposal produced many de Manians and anti-de Manians. I will consider

his influence on later scholars by focusing on typical articles that are positive and negative to de Man.

This paper also introduces some eminent essays that were published on the subject since 1990. Many essays have employed various literary theories such as comparative literature, new historicism, and psychoanalysis. This indicates the profoundness and diversity of TL so that additional points of view must be left for investigation. I will consider such view points and values of TL study in the last part of this essay. As Shelley says in the poem, "I / Am one of those who have created, even / If it be a world of agony" (293-5).² Indeed, the dynamic changes in TL study show the creative agony of Shelley scholars. I will inspect their agonies in this article.

2. Bloom's Contribution to Academia

In 1959, Harold Bloom published his first book, entitled *Shelley's Mythmaking*. Applying Martin Buber's theory of religious existentialism symbolized by "I-Thou" and "I-It," Bloom regarded Shelley's poetic creativity as Shelley's own mythmaking, which began with his intimate relationship with nature as described in poems like "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty," and which ended up with a hopeless disconnection with nature as depicted in TL. His interpretation of the poem and its elements ("The Sun" as being evil, for example) created waves because interpretations of TL had been practically fixed until then. Not surprisingly, Bloom's reading of the poem provoked some objections from Shelley scholars, especially from Kenneth Allott and P. H. Butter. As a result of the controversy he created, Bloom opened the door to the modern study of the poem.

Before Bloom, the harvest of TL study could hardly be considered rich. It was as if critics regarded this poem as unworthy of reading, or as simply an etude by a Dantean student partly because of its fragmented state. Bloom crashed this fixed idea, and as a result led TL studies into a new phase. Indeed, in the last chapter of *Shelley's Mythmaking*, Bloom pointed out that "'TL' has been misread by the few commentators who have written on it at any length." (221) The revisionist Bloom reread the poem

² Shelley, Percy Bysshe. "The Triumph of Life." *Shelley: Poetical Works*. Ed. Thomas Hutchinson. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1905, rpt. 1990. All the quotations of *The Triumph of Life* are from this text.

line by line and made original interpretations of images, scenes, and phrases.

Bloom's main arguments were summarized in two points: (1) that a man is not a part of nature; and (2) that the chariot symbolizes Shelley's ironic view toward tradition. Bloom explained that TL shows Shelley's skepticism toward nature. For instance, in regard to the sunrise in the opening of the poem, Bloom explained that the scene describes a series of natural acts of worship of the sun by all the natural components of the earth. The sun purges Venus, the symbol of poets, and so is the source of tyranny. And as all things rise in answer to the summons of the sun, the poet does the reverse: he falls in sleep. Bloom contends that with this scene, as is evident in Rousseau's retrospect of the happy life before sleep (ll.308-39), Shelley is demonstrating the change from dependence on nature to a recognition that it is dangerous to depend on nature for too much.

Bloom compared Shelley's chariot in TL with the one in Ezekiel's vision. The chariot, which appears in the early part of TL leads the triumphant procession. The people in the procession are hurrying, but seem not to know from where they are coming or to where they are going. The chariot is described as follows:

So came a chariot on the silent storm
Of its own rushing splendor, and a Shape
So sate within, ... (ll.86-8)

... Upon the chariot-beam
A Janus-visaged Shadow did assume
The guidance of that wonder-winged team; (ll.93-5)

All the four faces of that Charioteer
Had their eyes banded; (ll.99-100)

Bloom interpreted Shelley's chariot as presenting an ironical confrontation with the Christian tradition. Dante, Milton, and Blake all described the chariot as divine transcendence-in-motion, using the traditional images of Christianity. But Shelley's chariot is different, according to Bloom. Though there are many similarities with Ezekiel's chariot (e.g., it comes in the midst of a whirlwind, the charioteer has four faces, and it is filled with light), the charioteer of TL has his eyes on all four faces covered, so that he cannot guide the procession in the right

direction. This means that the components of the chariot (the charioteer, the shape in the carriage, and consequently the procession) are not justified.

Bloom was so severe in pointing out the misreadings of the critics who preceded him (e.g., A. C. Bradley, F. Melian Stawell, and Carlos Baker) that objections arose from Shelley academia. Kenneth Allott's "Bloom on 'The Triumph of Life'" (1960) was the representation of such refutations.

In his criticism, Allott denounced Bloom, saying that he ignored the distinction between what was really settled and what was still debatable only to be different from other critics. One example of Allott's rebuttal of Bloom's interpretation revolves around the scene of Rousseau's recollections of the past. Bloom suggested that this scene represented the passageway between childhood and the beginning of manhood, whereas Allott refuted Bloom's disingenuous ambiguity and, quoting past critics like Todhunter, Locock, and Bradley, explained this scene as being symbolic Rousseau's rebirth.

Similarly, Allott also refuted Bloom's interpretation of the "Shape all light" as being deceitful and malevolent. "Shape all light", which appears in Rousseau's reminiscence wearing rainbow, was hitherto regarded as a kind of an ideal woman Shelley often described.³ Instead, Allott proposed that "Shelley is affirming that to attempt to realize the Ideal Vision in human love is to invite disappointment and find oneself involved in life's inevitable corruption" (227). In this way, Allott criticized Bloom's monotonous interpretation that all the visions that appeared in TL are evil.

P. H. Butter was another scholar who refuted Bloom. In "Sun and Shape in Shelley's *The Triumph of Life*" (1962), Butter criticized Bloom's revision of the usual reading of the above-mentioned scene of Rousseau's recollections of the past, saying, "This is too literal-minded" (44). Butter's main argument was focused on the interpretation of the "Shape." Bloom regarded the Shape as being associated with the sun, and since the sun in the poem is evil, so must be the Shape. Butter thought this interpretation was rather forced. He insisted that the effect of this poem is ambiguous and paradoxical. Quoting other poems like "The Witch of Atlas" and "Epipsychidi-

³ About the reception of "shape all light" by critics, see Linda E. Marshal "The 'Shape All Light' in Shelley's *The Triumph of Life*" (1979).

on," in which ideal visionary maidens are shown, Butter concluded that natural beauty symbolized by "Shape" seemed to be a reflection of the divine, though he conceded that vision passes and does not protect from the contagion of life.

In response to Bloom's interpretation of the sun as being evil in that it is the source of tyranny, and of "the Shape all Light" as relating to the sun, Butter opposed Bloom and, like prior critics, concluded that "the Shape" is similar to the earlier visionary maidens who represent the ideal beauty of the spirit of nature.

In the 1960s, Bloom seemed to be fighting his battle alone. However, by causing a great many counterarguments, Bloom stimulated future TL study, which has made rapid progress since then.

3. Textual Studies: Matthews' and Reiman's New Texts

The 1960s witnessed the birth of the poem's authoritative text. G. M. Matthews issued a new text of the poem in the first half of the decade, and in 1965 Donald H. Reiman presented his own new text in his book, *Shelley's 'The Triumph of Life.'* Both texts were newly edited from Shelley's holograph held in the Bodleian Library. Thanks to Matthews' and Reiman's thorough investigations, textual study of TL was greatly developed, since academia could now obtain the poem's reliable text. The two scholars did disagree on some key points, however, such as whether a jotting on one sheet of the poem can be read as "Julie" or "Jane." This led to the problem of whether Shelley did indeed have a love affair with Jane Williams in his last days.

Shelley's manuscript of TL had already had a long history before it was accessed by scholars, because his wife Mary had the intention of making Shelley a legend. After Mary published Shelley's anthology in 1824, 1839, and 1847, the manuscript was concealed. Matthews pointed out that Mary herself did not consult the manuscript after 1824, and all the editions other than Mary's are derived from her 1824 edition ("A New Text" 272). The editors who followed in Mary's footsteps amended and corrected the text according to their own policies and readings.

Mary intended for many of Shelley's manuscripts to remain concealed. Indeed, she devoted her life as a wid-

ow to protecting her only surviving son, Percy Florence Shelley. Though her husband had been disinherited and died prior to her father-in-law, Sir Timothy Shelley, she managed to arrange for Percy Florence to inherit the Shelley Baronetcy, and furthermore she bargained with Sir Timothy not to reveal her husband's unfavorable deeds.⁴ What's more, as a manuscript by nature includes more personal and private information than literary textuality, Mary disliked the idea of the manuscript being open to the public; after all, to make Shelley a legend, she had to carefully control what information about him was available. Mary's effort to make Shelley a legend was taken over by her daughter-in-law, Lady Jane Shelley, who strictly oversaw which of Shelley's letters and manuscripts could be opened and which could not.

So concealed, there came the moment for the manuscript to be revealed. One descendant, Sir John Shelley-Rolls (the son of Percy Florence's cousin), presented many of Shelley's manuscripts (including TL) to the Bodleian Library in 1946. Shelley-Rolls had inherited the Shelley Baronetcy and had become the sixth Baronet. Thanks to his presentation of the manuscripts, scholars were finally able to access Shelley's own holographs.

G. M. Matthews moved first. In his "The Triumph of Life: A New Text" (1960), he compared his new text to Mary's 1824 edition in detail. As this was the first text edited from Shelley's own copy since the publication of the 1824 edition, Matthews' text was greatly appreciated by contemporary Shelley scholars. In Matthews' "The 'Triumph of Life' Apocrypha," issued in the same year, he introduced two more cancelled openings of the poem. These alternate openings show Shelley's labor in terms of his work.

Matthews' third paper concerning TL entitled "Shelley and Jane Williams" (1961), was the most controversial. Introducing a lyric known as "Lines written in the Bay of Lerici," recovered from Shelley's manuscript, Matthews presents Shelley's love affair with Jane Williams (the wife of Edward Williams, who died with Shelley in Bay of Lerici) with some evidence. One of these pieces of evidence is a jotting which appeared on the last leaf of the TL manuscript, which read, "Alas, I kiss you Jane." Observing Mary's journal, Edward Williams' journal, and information about weather conditions at that time, Matthews concluded that "Shelley must have been a good deal in Jane's company" (45).

⁴ *The Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley*, I, 444, 478, 521.

Furthermore, in "On Shelley's 'The Triumph of Life'" (1962), Matthews laid out his own close reading of the Rousseau scene. As the interlineation "Alas I kiss you Jane" was inserted on the sheet of the scene where Rousseau speaks of having fallen by the wayside, heavy with his awareness and acceptance of defeat, Matthews concluded that, "What gives Jane Williams her overwhelming importance for Shelley and for his last poem is ... that the experience forced him to admit the collapse of his relationship with Mary" (132). Clearly, Matthews' contribution to TL study was not only that he presented the first reliable text since Mary's edition, but also that he proposed a renovated view of this poem with thorough biographical evidence.

In 1965, Donald H. Reiman published *Shelley's "The Triumph of Life": A Critical Study Based on a Text Newly Edited from the Bodleian Manuscript*. This work included not only the new text, but also its history, style, and a detailed reading. His notes on the text presented a detailed comparison with Mary's 1824 edition and Matthews' more recent textual analysis, and explained the basis of his decisions almost line by line. So strictly accounted for and so reliable was his textual analysis that Reiman's version became the authoritative edition of TL. In this way, Reiman's work greatly contributed to modern-day TL study.

Prior to his textual analysis, Reiman had issued a paper titled "Shelley's 'The Triumph of Life': The Biographical Problem" (1963). This work was Reiman's objection to Matthews' earlier "Shelley and Jane Williams." In it, Reiman refuted Matthews' arguments one by one. For example, Reiman argued that Shelley's confession to Byron about his affair with Jane was unlikely to have happened, because at that time the relationship between Byron and Shelley was not close; in fact, Shelley disliked him so much as to say, "Lord Byron is the nucleus of all that is hateful and tiresome in it" (537). And about the most fatal scribble, "Alas, I kiss you Jane," Reiman interpreted the last word not as "Jane," but as "Julie," derived from Rousseau's *Julie, ou la Nouvelle Heloise*. This reading reflected Shelley's deep inclination toward Rousseau at that time. In the last part of his argument, Reiman pointed out some previously unnoted parallels between the character of "Rousseau" in TL and the real J. J. Rousseau.

So severe and so persuasive was Reiman's refutation of

Matthews' work that Matthews did not respond to Reiman for some time, and even then only slightly. This response didn't come until 1968, when he published his paper, "Shelley's 'The Triumph of Life,'" in which Matthews supported Kenneth Allott against Bloom and only referred to Reiman as having been "influenced by Bloom's interpretation" (354).

Reiman's contribution to Shelley academia has been influential for many reasons. First among these is that he presented an accurate text, which enables us to reach Shelley more directly than previous texts. Furthermore, he also presented a comprehensive understanding of TL. That his *Shelley's 'The Triumph of Life'* continues to be repeatedly quoted indicates the greatness of his achievement.

4. De Man's Influence on TL Study

Paul de Man's deconstructive "Shelley Disfigured," published in 1979, was a shock to Shelley academia. In it de Man explained the impossibility of determining any connotative or performative meaning that the language might pose. Basically, de Man was advocating for the rejection of all the interpretations accepted up until that point because they disfigured the language of the poem by interpreting it through existing images. De man deconstructed TL to make a new phase for critics to reconstruct a new TL study.

The widespread influence of de Man's argument began to be evident in 1983, when Lisa M. Steinman analyzed Shelley's poetic concern as per de Man's reading. Since then, many authors have followed de Man's treatment, including Deborah Esch, Orrin Wang, James O'Rourke, and Ross Woodman. There have also been those scholars who have disagreed with de Man's far-fetched, language-inclined analysis. For example, Jerrold E. Hogle presented his anti-de Manian leanings sharply.

The articulation of language and the inability to satisfy a desire for self-knowledge were significant in de Man's argument. The structure of TL follows a pattern, when the character repeatedly asks the question "Why?", but the scene suddenly changes into a totally different depiction before the question is answered. De Man called these changes "the articulation of language," where connections are made that allow movement. "How can a positional act, which relates to nothing that comes before and after, become inscribed in a sequential narrative?" de

Man asks, and then answers, "...because we impose, in our turn, on the senseless power of positional language the authority of sense and of meaning" (64). To read what was imposed on the poem, de Man argued, is to find what was disfiguring Shelley. De Man concluded, "Reading as disfiguration, to the very extent that it resists historicism, turns out to be historically more reliable than the products of historical archeology" (69).

De Man also analyzed some key phrases in TL like the "Shape" and "the sun," which had already been discussed by many critics. However, for his interpretations, de Man referred only to the scene within which the phrase appears (as opposed to other scholars, who related those key phrases to other parts of the poem or to other poems by Shelley). De Man does so because he believes that "The Triumph of Life warns us that nothing ... ever happens in relation ... to anything that precedes, follows or exists elsewhere, but only as a random event whose power ... is due to the randomness of its occurrence" (69).

According to de Man, the fact that TL's repeated questioning, such as "What is this?" and "Whence camest thou?", is never addressed shows that Shelley's intention was not to provide answers, but rather to present such questions in their own right and to show the failure to satisfy the desire for self-knowledge. Before de Man's work on the subject, there was an assumption shared by academics that Romantics were attempting an "apocalyptic vision" in which the distance between the subject and the object was to be dissolved in a momentary symbolic representation. In contrast to this, de Man insisted that Romantics, in different ways, had developed allegories in which narratives of visionary experience as a momentary achievement of unity were intimated and then deferred, only to be replaced by a new trope again and again. This allegorical device is what de Man called "rhetoric of temporality." So, he argued, Shelley's questioning should not be answered inside or outside of the poem; rather, what readers should do is observe the very language of the poem.

In the end, de Man, who rejected every monumentalization of language, also rejected his own observation being fixed into a method because it "would be to regress from the rigor exhibited by Shelley" (69). Against his wish, however, de Man's argument was monumentalized by later scholars in various ways. For example, Steinman's "From 'Alastor' to 'The Triumph of Life': Shelley on the Nature and Source of Linguistic Pleasure" (1983) dis-

cussed the continuity of Shelley's poetic concerns and strategies from "Alastor" to TL in light of de Man's insights. Steinman employed the approach of comparing TL with other Shelley works—which is the very method avoided by de Man—but her arguments seemed to respond to de Man. The basis of her argument was derived from the statement that "The Triumph of Life" identifies and thematizes the impossibility of defining or abandoning the quest for a stable text," which was the idea gained from de Man (23). Steinman finally concluded that, in opposition to de Man, she thought it useful to follow the ways in which Shelley's skepticism about the relationship between the causes and effects of poetry is revealed. Thinking in this way, Steinman seemed to persuade herself to describe how "De Man's reading thus comes to seem less a threat" (34). This telling statement reveals just how great de Man's influence was on her—whether she wanted to accept it or not.

Another de Manian study was Deborah Esch's "A Defence of Rhetoric/the Triumph of Reading: De Man, Shelley and the Rhetoric of Romanticism" (1988), which presented a close examination of de Man in light of Shelley. In it, the author states that de Man's terminology and his critical procedures are, to a telling extent, prefigured in Shelley's reflections on the nature and function of poetic language. Esch concluded that de Man's essay enables us to read both the force and the failings of the de Manian corpus.

Orrin N. C. Wang's "Disfiguring Monuments: History in Paul de Man's 'Shelley Disfigured' and Percy Bysshe Shelley's 'The Triumph of Life'" (1991) claimed that de Man lifted "The Triumph of Life" to the position of a critique of history and revolutionary transformation — a critique that commented upon the uncertainty of deconstruction's present role. In another instance, James O'Rourke's "Death and Error in 'Shelley Disfigured'" (1992) detected how de Man was trapped in "Shelley Disfigured," referring to the influences of Derrida and Kant. Ross Woodman's "Figuring Disfiguration: Reading Shelley after De Man" (2001) tried to analyze Shelley's "Adonais" and "Prometheus Unbound" in a de Manian way in the first half of the paper, while in the second half the author focused on de Man's reading of the poet, comparing it with that of other critics like Earl Wasserman, Jacques Derrida, and Michel Foucault.

Jerrold E. Hogle investigated TL in the last chapter of

his *Shelley's Process* (1988), in which he argued that the logic and style in all of Shelley's works were governed by a certain movement in every thought, memory, image, or word-pattern whereby each was seen and saw itself in terms of a radically different form. Hogle revealed this revisionary procedure and demonstrated the powerful effects of "radical transference" in Shelley's visions of human possibility. Hogle later appealed his disagreement with de Man, criticizing de Man's conclusion as being focused too exclusively on the tracing-effacing movement of the "Shape all Light." Hogle insisted that he had found the pattern in the late works of Shelley, where killing the previous meanings of the signs also released the human imagination. Hogle convicted de Man as one who does "not consider enough." ("Response")

The monumental volume of criticism *Deconstruction and Criticism* (1979), in which "Shelley Disfigured" was first presented, was originally conceived as a collection of essays on TL (Arditi, 125). The very existence of this volume showed that the deconstructionists succeeded in making Shelley scholars realize that TL was worthy of additional arguments and analyses. In addition to the great significance of de Man's contribution, the fact that so many later critics have quoted or referred to him has made de Man's argument even more significant and indispensable for today's scholars of Shelley's works, particularly the poem TL.

5. 1990s to Present (2012) : Eminent Essays

After 1990, a prevailing and dominant article or literary theory cannot be found in TL studies. Instead, essays which apply various literary theories such as the new historicism, psychoanalysis, and especially comparative literature increased. Essays expressing various points of view—not bound by literary theories—has also been produced. Ronald Tetreault analyzed Shelley's poetic style, while Alan M. Weinberg applied a historical and biological view. Bernard Beatty found musical elements in the poem, and David Vallins compared "a person inside a vehicle" with Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway. John Whatley's view was gothic, and Katherine Singer focused on female roles. The two latest essays were both written by the doyen Michael O'Neill: one was about religion and the other compared with Southey. I will consider three of the above articles: Tetreault, Vallins, and Singer.

Ronald Tetreault liberated TL studies which had so far been dominated by de Man's reading. In "Shelley: Style and Substance" (1991) Tetreault argued that de Man's "structure of forgetting" —to present various allegories in order to impose the positing power of language—is too skeptical, and it leads to nihilism. He insisted, "Perhaps there are possibilities in the poem that de Man's rhetoric closes off but which Shelley's allows us to explore" (21). He regarded TL as replete with equivocal richness and the incessant successive replacement of images is not negation by erasure and forgetting, as de Man claims, because "disfiguration is succeeded by constant refiguration in the poem" (24). The play of signifiers generates a multiplicity of signified, and this is the way style modifies substance in Shelley, he concluded.

Articles using a comparative literature approach have increased in this period. Not only Shelley's contemporaries like Keats, Wordsworth, Blake, and Southey were compared, but also later authors like George Eliot and modern authors like Steven Gill. Vallins presented Shelley's influence on the later author, Virginia Woolf, in his article "'Whose Shape Is That within the Car? & Why?': *Mrs. Dalloway* and 'The Triumph of Life'" (2001). Referring to her diary which confessed that when she was twenty she read much of Shelley, he lined up several parallels between the settings and structures of *Mrs. Dalloway* and TL: The events described take place on a single day in June in a crowded city, and later described a figure of authority who is strangely bereft of his customary grandeur or impressiveness, for example. What Vallins focused on most is the obscurity of being in the car and the excited people surrounding it. Vallins explained the crowd's fascination with the car as a symbol of unthinking obedience to conventional values. And to leave the being inside the car obscure is to satirize the reverence for power and authority. Woolf's negative stance on authority and power is very similar to Shelley's, the author regards. One regrettable thing about this article is that the author should have considered more from a feminist point of view. The shadow of Mary Wollstonecraft in TL could be found in the light of Woolf.

On the other hand, Katherine Singer presented a gynocentric approach. Singer focused on the role of women who bring revolution with some kind of drugs. In "Stoned Shelley: Revolutionary Tactics and Women Under the Influence" (2009) Singer found some similarity

of the figure and the role of women between *Prometheus Unbound (PU)* and TL. Asia in *PU* inhales "oracular vapors" and is led to Demogorgon's cave where she finds the secret of gods and humans. After that, she emits liquid light that intoxicates those around her. In TL "shape all light" who came from the East offers nepenthe to Rousseau, who is seeking the secrets of his birth and life. Singer considered that in both cases an eastern woman was related to a kind of drug which brought a dramatic change, a revolution. Using biographical evidence that Shelley took laudanum sometimes when he was in severe situations and needed a refuge, Singer suggested that "Shelley's drugs may pave the way for a liberatory vacancy, the necessary silence and solitude that open up the possibility for new social structures" (698). As Singer indicated, for Shelley drugs may help usher in political and social changes, but may have the danger for users of losing their mind and being hooked on the medicine. And "the onus of eluding this danger falls on women" (707). From these two works, Singer extracted, I think, two significant roles of women Shelley thought: to bring good or bad with magical powers and to guide male protagonist to a success or a failure. Though Singer did not use or cite other feminist works or theories, this article is valuable because very few feminism studies concerning Shelley's works have been done so far. Barbara C. Gelpi's *Shelley's Goddess* was rich in suggestion from feminism point of view, but rarely referred to TL. Though in *Shelleyan Eros* William A. Ulmer investigated Shelley's theory of love in detail and analyzed TL in the last chapter, the main arguments were Shelley's tendency of self-love and the relationship of love and death. So feminism study is one of the most significant and expected viewpoint in Shelley study.

The value of TL study is admitted all the more when we can get a new and fresh perspective in historical persons. On Rousseau in TL, many scholars have studied so far⁵, but Cian Duffy presented a new figure of Napoleon

⁵ For the study of Rousseau in TL, see Hodgson, John A. "The World's Mysterious Doom: Shelley's *The Triumph of Life*." *ELH* 42.4 (1975): 595-622.; Wu, Ya-feng. "The Spectre of Rousseau in Shelley's 'The Triumph of Life.'" *Studies in Language and Literature* 8 (1998): 119-45.; Duffy, Edward. *Rousseau in England: The Context for Shelley's Critique of the Enlightenment*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1979; and also de Man.

in his "The Child of a Fierce Hour': Shelley and Napoleon Bonaparte" (2004). Duffy compared Napoleon with the protagonist-poet in *Alastor; or the Spirit of Solitude* (1815) and regard Napoleon in TL as "a failed poet" (401). Then Duffy concluded that the use of Napoleon by Shelley in his work means "an important test case for Shelley's developing understanding of 'the relationship of poetical to political power'" (416). In TL Shelley depicted many historical persons. To study those depictions and to learn how he observed and expressed each historical person or event suggest us a new and fresh figure and way of thinking about each historical time, which will be able to reflect our modern times. On this point, TL study has much significance, and it is modern scholars' duty to investigate more thoroughly and more diversely Shelley's works including TL.

6. Conclusion

As we have seen above, TL study experienced dynamic changes full of vicissitudes. For a century of critical neglect, it was regarded as difficult or worthless to research. But by Bloom's enlightenment on the value of the poem, TL study became active for the first time in 140 years after its publishing. Thanks to Matthews and Reiman, scholars were able to consult an authoritative and reliable text, and then de Man deconstructed the poem to get rid of any conventional images that disfigured the poem itself so that the value of TL as a work of art was exalted. Later critics applied many literary theories to TL, which indicated its profoundness and variety. From now on, the value not only as a literary work but also as a historical text which is profitable to reconsider the present day will be found. Recent approaches from various viewpoints like culture, health, geography, feminism, and eco-criticism will be applied to TL in the future. Shelley's product of creative agony, which was once ignored long by critics, became scholars' own creative agony, and is now inviting them to the history of interpretive pleasure. And it also leaves the door widely open to further investigations by us later critics.

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