The Discourse of Radicalism
in Wordsworth’s “Tintern Abbey” and
Shelley’s “Mont Blanc”

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William Wordsworth is said to have forsaken his republicanism and political radicalism before he and Coleridge projected *Lyrical Ballads*. (1) The published volumes, however, still contained considerable democratic implications, which Francis Jeffrey readily recognized so that he conducted sustained attacks on Wordsworth as the most conspicuous member of the Lake School, vilifying him with all the terms associated with Jacobinism. The “theory” expounded in the Preface was the special target of attack, since it maintained that the language and feelings of the common people were the standard for all human experiences, directly contradicting Jeffrey who was against dissolving the British class structure for a stronger British state. (2) Jeffrey insisted that “The love, or grief, or indignation of an enlightened and refined character, is not only expressed in a different language, but is in itself a different emotion from the love, or grief, or anger, of a clown, a tradesman, or a market-wench.” (3) Jeffrey goes even so far as comparing Wordsworth to Thomas Paine: while Paine brought “disaffection and infidelity within the comprehension of the common people,” Wordsworth endeavored “to accommodate them with an appropriate vein of poetry.” (4) Shelley, meanwhile, was busy excavating all the “forbidden mines of lore,”
Paine, Godwin, and philosophes like Holbach, La Mettri, and Helvetius, studying the radical implications of those authors during the repressive years of the Napoleonic wars. The Wordsworth of the *Lyrical Ballads*, lauded by Shelley “as a lone star, whose light did shine/ On some frail bark in winter's midnight roar,” whose voice wove “Songs consecrate to truth and liberty” (“To Wordsworth”), qualified as a revolutionary hero for the young Shelley.\(^5\) He was regarded as a “lone star” that shined amid the darkness in the milieu of the Repression. Whether Wordsworth at the time of *Lyrical Ballads* embraced revolutionary ideas or not, he was recognized by Shelley as a vital poet to disseminate important principles of revolution, namely, the assertion of human joy that resists corrupt “customs” of society, the observation of nature and society by one's own eyes, and the acceptance of changes as necessary for man and nature.\(^6\) “Tintern Abbey,” among the poems of *Lyrical Ballads*, was the one least censured and most lauded by contemporaries, but the reasons why Shelley held it important radically differed from those of other contemporaries. In this essay, I would like to discuss Shelley's reading of “Tintern Abbey” in “Mont Blanc” as a representative case of his reception of Wordsworth's poetry under the contemporary cultural environment in which the discourse on nature was highly charged with political implications. Under the historical circumstances where censorship and persecutions were prevalent, perceptive readers like Shelley naturally developed a habit of gleaning radical political messages out of texts that came out with varying degrees of make-ups to escape censor. Past studies that attended to the relation of the two poems emphasizing Shelley's divergence from Wordsworth didn't consider the problems involved in radical discourse during the times of repression.\(^7\) Although Shelley denies the innate benevolence of nature, he has nothing against Wordsworth's celebration of nature, since the
observation of nature, which Wordsworth poeticizes as the guidance of nature, is the only means by which one can resist “Large codes of fraud and woe.” A discussion of the poem from the perspective of Shelley's affinity with the earlier radical Wordsworth, whose *Lyrical Ballads* he consistently respected, as opposed to the later conservative poet, whom he despised as “a slave,” will bring out Shelley's political and philosophical views in sharper focus.\(^{(8)}\)

### 1. The Attachment to Things

As many critics have noted, the key lines of “Tintern Abbey” that were essential in inspiring “Mont Blanc” were:

> And I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of the setting suns,
> And the round ocean, and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man,
> A motion and a spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things. (94-103)\(^{(9)}\)

Although there is a clear difference in mood between the two poems—one is impassioned, joyous, emotional, nostalgic, and the other is calm and meditative—Shelley's theme of a supreme Power controlling both nature and mind is unmistakably in Wordsworth. Shelley is concerned with Wordsworth's “motion” or the “spirit” that “impels/ All thinking
things, all objects of all thought,” which are equivalent to the “secret strength of things” in “Mont Blanc” that “governs thought, and to the infinite dome/ Of heaven is as a law” in absolute control of man and nature. Comparable to the Wye of Wordsworth, the vale of Chamonix provided Shelley with an ideal location, with Mont Blanc and the ravine of the Arve to meditate on that Power. Shelley in a calm, reflective mood conducts a sustained meditation on that theme.

A sign that indicates Shelley's indebtedness to “Tintern Abbey” in “Mont Blanc” is his prominent use of “things,” as in “The everlasting universe of things” (1), “the clear universe of things” (40), “all the living things” (85), “All things that move and breathe” (94), and finally, “The secret strength of things” (139). It signifies that Shelley correctly understood Wordsworth's attachment to “things” in “Tintern Abbey,” as manifested in the phrases: “We see into the life of things,” “All thinking things,” and “A motion and a spirit, that . . . rolls through all things.” That this attachment to “things” or to objects of nature was an important part of Wordsworth in the Lyrical Ballads is indicated in his letter to John Wilson. To Wilson who wrote to express his admiration for Lyrical Ballads, Wordsworth answers that the poet should not only represent faithfully the feelings of human nature but also try “to rectify men's feelings” so that their feelings should be more “consonant to nature” and to “the great moving spirit of things.” Wordsworth goes on:

He [i.e. a great Poet] ought to travel before men occasionally as well as at their sides. I may illustrate this by a reference to natural objects. What false notions have prevailed from generation to generation as to the true character of the nightingale. As far as my Friend's Poem in the Lyrical Ballads, is read it will contribute greatly to rectify these.(10)
Wordsworth scholars who represent Wordsworth as traditionalist tend to overlook the aspect of the poet who “travel[s] before men,” going ahead of people to herald changes. His Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, in fact, intimates his project of changing the “state of the public taste”; no wonder even Jeffrey, although a moderate liberal, was compelled to attack his theory. In the letter to Wilson, Wordsworth refers to “The Nightingale” in which Coleridge repudiates the notion of the “melancholy bird” traditionally attached to the nightingale as an “idle thought,” correcting it that “In Nature there is nothing melancholy.” Wordsworth, approving of this effort, emphasizes the importance of observing nature by one’s own eyes free from traditionally fixed notions, and he also takes it a duty of a poet to be ahead of other people to “rectify” “false notions” by accurate observation. Standing against “false notions” that “have prevailed from generation to generation,” Wordsworth is directly opposed to the Burkean reverence for traditional ideas that James Chandler attributes to Wordsworth even at the early period of *Lyrical Ballads*. Wordsworth's position here is closer to Godwin's to hold that an intellectual's contribution to the correct understanding of things will add to people's enlightenment and to the amelioration of society, which is Shelley's position as well. This untraditional attitude of Wordsworth's is not limited to natural objects. He criticizes Cowper for describing the beautiful plant, the gorse, as “unsightly and unsmooth”:

There are many aversions of this kind, which, though they have some foundation in nature, have yet so slight a one, that though they may have prevailed hundreds of years, a philosopher will look upon them as accidents. So with respect to many moral feelings, either of [lo]ve or dislike what excessive admiration was payed in
former times to personal prowess and military success it is so with
[the] latter even at the present day but surely not nearly so much as
hereto[fore]. So with regard to birth, and innumerable other modes
of sentiment, civil and religious. (356)

Wordsworth’s view of traditional distorted notions that “a philosopher
will look upon them as accidents” is in complete agreement with
Shelley’s. Wordsworth even reveals his anti-war sentiment in criticizing
people’s admiration for “military success” with a progressive liberalist
hope that such an unenlightened sentiment is now being corrected.
His subjects are extended from natural objects to “moral feelings,”
and “civil and religious” sentiments. Wordsworth’s reference to a
“philosopher” clearly reminds the contemporary readers of philosophes
who in the Encycédie and elsewhere undertook to enlighten people to
shake off superstitions. Wordsworth adopts the same standard with the
philosophes in revising existing notions on the basis of whether they
have “foundation in nature.”

The letter shows Wordsworth's vital concern at the time of the
Lyrical Ballads to see “things” free from encumbrances imposed by
tradition. It is for this “spirit of things” that Shelley prefers “Tintern
Abbey” to the later works of Wordsworth. Critics have noted on
Wordsworth's transition in poetic subjects from the observation of
people and nature to the internalized meditation, increasingly leaning
towards the acceptance of religious orthodoxy. E. P. Thompson
analyzed it in terms of Wordsworth's disillusionment with the French
Revolution, and Marilyn Butler sees it equally as “a response to the
deep new current of conservatism in English thinking.” (11) In “Mont
Blanc,” Shelley faithfully follows the materialist “spirit of things” that
Wordsworth in his earlier, radical poetics recommends. It is through
the observation of “things” that the poet of “Mont Blanc” learns that the great mountain has “a voice . . . to repeal/ Large codes of fraud and woe.”

It has been suggested that “Mont Blanc,” with its interaction between the mind and nature, is more nearly akin to Wordsworth's lines from “Prospectus” than “Tintern Abbey”. (12)

\[\ldots\] while my voice proclaims
How exquisitely the individual Mind
(And the progressive powers perhaps no less
Of the whole species) to the external World
Is fitted:—and how exquisitely, too—
Theme this but little heard of among men—
The external World is fitted to the Mind;
And the creation (by no lower name
Can it be called) which they with blended might
Accomplish:—this is our high argument. (62-71)

These lines published in the Preface to The Excursion were obviously known to Shelley, who, however, flatly rejects such a view of independent existences of the external world and the mind in “Mont Blanc” as well as the dialectic of the world and the mind. In the opening section, where the figure of “a feeble brook” is symbolical of the individual mind to which large waterfalls around it are contrasted, the sound of the brook is “half its own” since it is indistinguishable from the sound of the waterfalls. This analogy shows that the individual mind is virtually indistinguishable from the larger environment that conditions it. From this point of view, neither the fixed identity of the individual mind nor its dualistic interaction with the world cannot be
maintained. This determinist premise persists through the end of the poem where it is made clear that “thought” is governed by the “secret strength of things.” The individual mind is considered to be dependent on the world of things and on the Power that determines it. In contrast to Wordsworth in the “Prospectus,” Shelley in “Mont Blanc” even questions the identity of the individual mind, which is, as in Hume, conceived of as a collection of fragmented images (“the human mind's imaginings”), and his own individual identity is called “my own separate phantasy” (36).

Bloom in *Poetry and Repression* compared the two poems favoring “Prospectus” over “Tintern Abbey” for the strong self assurance and the faith in the power of the mind in the former. He saw in the sublime passage of “Tintern Abbey” Wordsworth's deep repression of his own power of the mind. Although Bloom is discussing the poem from another perspective, his reading of the passage contains remarkable perceptiveness:

Despite the hyperbolic language, Wordsworth makes only a measured assertion of the power of his mind over the universe of sense, and also over language. The hyperboles make it difficult for us to realize, at first, how guarded the passage is. The poet's thoughts are touched to sublimity by a presence that *dwell* in nature and in the mind, but is identified with neither. The monistic presence is clearly more allied to Hebrew than to Greek thought, but this pervasive motion and spirit is not identified with the Hebrew-Christian *ruach*, or breath-of-Jehovah. And though this presence/motion/spirit appears to be monistic in its aims, the poet stops well short of asserting that it reconciles subject and object. It impels both, it rolls both through things and through the poet's
mind, but it does not abolish the differences between them. Nor is the poet's reaction to the spirit what we might expect, for instead of declaring his love for or worship of the spirit, he proclaims instead the continuity of his love for natural sights and sounds. Having invoked directly his eye and his ear, he makes, even more surprisingly, a deep reservation about his own perpetual powers, or rather an almost hyperbolical admission of limitation.\(^{(13)}\)

It might well be argued that Shelley valued “Tintern Abbey” precisely for the objections that Bloom raises against it here. The first is that Wordsworth in “Tintern Abbey” makes “only a measured assertion of the power of his mind over the universe of sense.” “Tintern Abbey” has affinity with “Mont Blanc” in presenting “the mind of man” as not existent in itself but somehow dependent on other “things.” Wordsworth seems to agree with Shelley in not attributing the source of the “sense sublime” and a “motion and a spirit” wholly to the mind of man: the mind is rather like a passive agent to receive such influences. The second is that Wordsworth's “presence” is said to “dwell” in nature and in the mind, but is identified with neither. Again it corresponds with “Mont Blanc” which holds a view that the “Power” controls both nature and the mind and also that there is no definite demarcation between the outer and the inner. The third is that Wordsworth, while glorifying that pervasive spirit, refuses to assert that it reconciles subject and object, or the mind and things, and then persists in the enjoyment of natural sights and sounds. The lines Bloom refers to are:

\[
\text{Therefore am I still} \\
\text{A lover of the meadows and the woods,} \\
\text{And mountains; and of all that we behold}
\]
Paul de Man in “The Rhetoric of Temporality” has argued that the identity of subject and object as implied by the assertion of the superiority of symbol over allegory was a romantic fiction. According to de Man, the preoccupation of the Romantics was to hide from the “negative self-knowledge” of the self in its “authentically temporal predicament,” whence the poet’s need to conduct allegorical retreat into unreachable anteriority.(14) Unlike the “Ode,” however, which nostalgically looks backward, “Tintern Abbey,” with a full admission of the “temporal predicament,” ever looks forward to the future in spite of its reminiscence of the past. If we should accept an allegorical mode in “Tintern Abbey,” its temporal direction is not to the past but to the future; the poet even imagines the time when he is no longer in this world: “If I should be where I no more can hear/ Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams/ Of past existence” (147-149).(15) “Mont Blanc” follows the lead of “Tintern Abbey” in its expectation of a future that may be achieved by people who can see nature as it is with unbiased eyes. Since neither “Tintern Abbey” nor “Mont Blanc” presupposes a dichotomic opposition between subject and object, a reconcilement between subject and object does not matter unlike the German Idealist vein of epistemology in “Prospectus.” (16)
2. Nature and Mind as Screens

There is another important passage from “Tintern Abbey” that provides a central motif for “Mont Blanc”:

. . . and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a sweet inland murmur. Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
Which on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.        (2-8)

It is not only the similarity between this scene of the Wye and the Ravine of Arve, with the sound of the waters, the mountain spring rolling, and the steep and lofty cliffs, but more significantly, the way the “lofty cliffs” become “Thoughts” that Shelley extensively develops in his poem adopting it as a characteristic mode. It is not metaphor, not that one thing is analogous to something in the mind, but one thing becomes simultaneously something of the mind. It is not an identity of subject and object in a reconciling of their dialectic opposition, but a rejection of the dialectic view that distinguishes the external and the internal. It is characteristic of Wordsworth at his exalted mood in “Tintern Abbey” to juxtapose nature and mind as equals: “. . . And a blue sky, and in the mind of man,” or “In nature and the language of the sense.” Shelley develops this superposition of natural and mental entities as central in the structure of “Mont Blanc.” It is established in the opening section and persists through the end.

The opening section of “Mont Blanc” thus describes both the
Ravine of Arve and the workings of the mind at the same time. The opening lines explicitly echo Wordsworth's “motion and a spirit” that “rolls through all things”:

The everlasting universe of things
Flows through the mind, and rolls its rapid waves,
Now dark—now glittering—now reflecting gloom—
Now lending splendour, where from secret springs
The source of human thought its tribute brings
Of waters,—with a sound but half its own.
Such as a feeble brook will oft assume
In the wild woods, among the mountains lone,
Where waterfalls around it leap for ever,
Where woods and winds contend, and a vast river
Over its rocks ceaselessly bursts and raves. (1-11)

The description of the Ravine through which the Arve flows is simultaneously the description of the mind in operation. Shelley's explains his cognitive psychology basically in terms of the empiricist tradition of Lock and Hume. The river is the flow of all the sensory signals—some pleasing, some obscure, some stimulating—which continually pass through the senses. This is the mind in its passive function of receiving sensory impressions. To this flow of external impressions is blended a “tribute” from the “source of human thought.” The “source of human thought” may sound mysterious, hinting at some ultimate source of the mind. The succeeding simile, however, dissolves that mysteriousness, because just as the sound of the brook is indistinguishable from those of the waterfalls and the vast river, what seems to spring from the source of human thought is actually
indistinguishable from the flood of all the other sensory data, to the result that the source of human thought cannot be identified.

The simile suggests many things. One is that fancies of an individual are indistinguishable from other sense impressions. Another is that one's ideas are determined by the circumstances of the world that one lives in. There is also an implication that the identity of an individual mind that we believe in is, in fact, made out of images from the larger world. Further, it is suggested that even a feeble individual voice can be made significant by synchronizing it with a larger historical movement of the world. The first section about the workings of the mind and about its relation to the world is thus a general introduction to the poem.

A contemplation on the Ravine of Arve in section II leads the speaker to an understanding of the mind in its process of creative perception. With this knowledge, the speaker proceeds with the more difficult task of identifying the Power, supposed to be the source of the mind. Shelley, three years after “Mont Blanc,” writes in “On Life” that “It is infinitely improbable that the cause of mind, that is, of existence, is similar to mind” (PP 478). Then what would it be like? Faced with this difficult task, Shelley resorts to a mythological speculation, just as in the manner of Wordsworth in the Ode, where the poet, faced with the question, “Whither is fled the visionary gleam?” resorts to the mythology: “Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting. . . .” Shelley's “gleams of a remoter world” echoes Wordsworth's “visionary gleam”: (18)

Some say that gleams of a remoter world
Visit the soul in sleep,—that death is slumber,
And that its shapes the busy thoughts outnumber
Of those who wake and live.—I look on high;
Has some unknown omnipotence unfurled
The veil of life and death? or do I lie
In dream, and does the mightier world of sleep
Spread far around and inaccessibly
Its circles? For the very spirit fails,
Driven like a homeless cloud from steep to steep
That vanishes among the viewless gales!
Far, far above, piercing the infinite sky,
Mont Blanc appears . . . (49-57)

Instead of Wordsworth's Platonic myth of a prenatal world in the Ode, Shelley's "remoter world" is Zoroastrian—the mythology of Zoroaster's encounter with his double and the symmetrical worlds of death and life, he presents more fully in Prometheus Unbound: (19)

For know, there are two worlds of life and death:
One that which thou beholdest, but the other
Is underneath the grave, where do inhabit
The shadows of all forms that think and live
Till death unite them, and they part no more;
And all that faith creates, or love desires,
Terrible, strange, sublime and beauteous shapes. (I. 195-202)

Shelley's source of this Zoroastrian myth is not known, but that Shelley was already acquainted with Zoroastrian ideas through Peacock at the time of "Mont Blanc" is evident from his letter to Peacock, where reporting of the Alpine glaciers he mentions the reign of Ahriman.

With Shelley's Zoroastrian symmetrical worlds of life and death in mind, the lines in question may be paraphrased as follows. There are
numerous shapes in the world of death that outnumber even the thoughts of people occupied in their everyday concerns. Part of the shapes of the death world may be intimated in dreams since “gleams of a remoter world/ Visits the soul in sleep.” Therefore the speaker wonders, as he looks up at Mont Blanc, whether he is encountering the world of death seen through the half-transparent “veil of life and death” which has suddenly been drawn before his eyes, or is he only dreaming. The speaker's encounter with Mont Blanc is certainly not a moment of an ecstatic revelation but more of a bafflement at suddenly encountering a huge blankness. Mont Blanc that appears as a “veil” seems to intimate the world of death seen transparent through the whiteness, and on another look, the white mountain as a “veil” appears like a screen. The gleaming white presence of the mountain that suddenly occupies the sky would create in the mind of a beholder a blankness that baffles him so that he turns to inner thoughts to the realization that it is a screen that reflects the two worlds of life and death with symmetrical shapes that simultaneously appear projected on either side.

The power that resides in Mont Blanc is introduced as “The still and solemn power of many sights,/ And many sounds, and much of life and death” (128-29). This power that wields all the workings of nature with which “many sounds” are accompanied, presides equally over the worlds of life and death: it can both be deadly and life-giving at the same time. But the presence of this power over the peak of Mont Blanc can only be imagined since “none beholds” the snows that descend on it. The dwelling of the Power is described only in terms of silence: the word “silently” is repeated as “Winds contend” and heap up snow over the mountain (134-36). The lightning over the snow covered peak is “voiceless” with the flashing going on one after another continually so that the lightning is “like vapour” (136-39). Jonathan Wordsworth
argues that this “voiceless lightening” serves as a “symbol of power tamed to a purpose” (107). Even if, as he suggests, it is a version of the lion eating straw like the bullock, it does not follow that Shelley's adoption of the Biblical vision leads to an alignment with Coleridge's worship of “the Invisible” in his “Hymn before Sunrise.” On the contrary, what Shelley is doing here is to tame the fearful Jehovah instead of the lion. The lightning as an attribute of the divine authority inspires fear in people, but in Shelley's idea of the amoral power which “innocently” keeps its home at the mountain peak, it has no will to exert its power to punish certain kind of people while exalting others according to a system of value judgment, as the Fairy asserts in her apostrophe to Necessity in Queen Mab:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\ldots \text{ all that the wide world contains} \\
&\text{Are but thy passive instruments, and thou} \\
&\text{Regardst them all with an impartial eye,} \\
&\text{Whose joy or pain thy nature cannot feel,} \\
&\quad \text{Because thou hast not human sense,} \\
&\quad \text{Because thou art not human mind.} \quad (\text{VI. 214-219})
\end{align*}
\]

So Shelley simply imagines the mountain peak where snow accumulates silently, which works destructively to threaten life as it causes avalanches and glaciers, but at the same time, it also nourishes the life of the plains down along the River Rhone. Since fear comes out of ignorance and invisibility, by correctly imagining the nature of the force and the way it works, one can tame its fear.

In fact, the thunder is not itself the power but it only attends on the power. It is the snow that more directly becomes the means of power by feeding the glaciers. But then there is something else that makes the
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snow fall. So in the famous concluding lines, the Power, or the “secret strength of things” is just said to inhabit the mountain:

\[\ldots\] The secret strength of things
Which governs thought, and to the infinite dome
Of heaven is as a law, inhabits thee!
And what were thou, and earth, and stars, and sea,
If to the human mind's imaginings
Silence and solitude were vacancy? \(139-44\)

The first three lines state that the Power governs both the mind (“thought”) and nature (“the infinite dome/ Of heaven”). How would nature in the forms of “thou” (Mont Blanc), “earth,” “stars,” and “sea” then become if silence and solitude of the mountain should appear to the human mind as “vacancy”? The vacancy suggests Coleridge's experience in his “Hymn before Sunrise,” that the mountain which is “still present to the bodily sense . . . vanish[es] from [his] thought.” \(^{(21)}\)

Shelley's rhetorical question supposes an answer that it does not matter at all to nature itself whether man sees in it a vacancy or not. To the human mind, however, the “vacancy” would then become a screen on which “the Invisible” as a deity is projected to the result of making nature something intentionally created either to the benefit of man or to inflict pain on man. The secrecy of the mystery would then be exploited by religious authority for the purpose of retaining hegemony over people.

The Shelleyan speaker, who does not see the silence of Mont Blanc as “vacancy,” imagines, though he cannot see, that snow continually descends on the mountain in “the moonless nights,” in “the lone glare of day,” in “the sinking sun,” and under “the star-beams.” This is a poetic
vision based on an accurate understanding of the law of nature, with a realization that the snow on the mountain can both be life and death to creatures. In this vision of the poet we realize that the mountain's function as screen that reflects human visions matches the mind's function as screen that reflects natural objects. The speaker has now advanced a step beyond the impression of Mont Blanc as the “veil of life and death” to come up with a vision that reflects the integrity of nature. In this vision, man realizes that he is conditioned by the massive forces of nature but knows that they have no will of their own and consequently that he can live better if he can more correctly understand the law that governs them. That means to understand the “voice” of the silent Mountain that repeals “Large codes of fraud and woe.”

3. Joy and Pleasure

Another reason why Shelley had a much higher esteem for “Tintern Abbey” than “Prospectus” would have been that the former was pervaded in the spirit of joy and pleasure:

While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years.                                      (63-66)

When Wordsworth at the most heightened moment feels a “presence” equivalent to Shelley's “Power,” it moves him “with the joy/ Of elevated thoughts” (94-96). At another mysterious moment, we are said to “see into the life of things” with “the deep power of joy” (49-50). At less exalted moments, feelings of “unremembered pleasure” influence
the “best portion of a good man's life” (31-34). In the final verse paragraph, Wordsworth reads his “former pleasure” in his sister's eyes. There is a Nature that leads “From joy to joy” (125). And finally the Wordsworthian speaker wishes that his sister will remember him with “healing thoughts/ Of tender joy” (145-46).

Unlike “Tintern Abbey,” “Mont Blanc” is narrated in a calm meditative mood to be deliberately free from any strong emotions for the purpose of assessing the key agents of perception accurately. There is, however, one mention of “joy” in “Mont Blanc.” It is in section IV in the passage that describes the deadly force of the glacier that crushes all forms of life as it descends from the mountain:

The dwelling-place
Of insects, beasts, and birds, becomes its spoil;
Their food and their retreat for ever gone,
So much of life and joy is lost. The race
Of man, flies far in dread; his work and dwelling
Vanish, like smoke before the tempest's stream,
And their place is not known. (114-120)

Before the deadly power of the glacier that deprives of “life and joy,” man's existence appears so diminished and insignificant. Shelley reports to Peacock about the dire effects of the harsh nature of the upper mountain over the local inhabitants:

I will not pursue Buffon's sublime but gloomy theory, that this earth which we inhabit will at some future period be changed into a mass of frost. Do you who assert the supremacy of Ahriman imagine him throned among these desolating snows, among these palaces
of death and frost, sculptured in this their terrible magnificence by
the unsparing hand of necessity, and that he casts around him as the
first essays of his final usurpation avalanches, torrents, rocks and
thunders—and above all, these deadly glaciers at once the proofs
and symbols of his reign.—Add to this the degradation of the
human species, who in these regions are half deformed or idiotic
and all of whom are deprived of anything that can excite interest
or admiration. This is a part of the subject more mournful and less
sublime;—but such as neither the poet nor the philosopher should
disdain.\(^{(22)}\)

Attributing it to the harsh environment, Shelley speaks of “the
degradation of the human species,” with the local inhabitants deprived of
any character that “can excite interest or admiration.” The deprivation
of joy as the result of the harsh environment leads to the deprivation of
all admirable character in man, hence his “degradation.” He employs
this black joke about Ahriman's usurpation of power and his reign in the
description of the wilderness of the mountainside in section III of “Mont
Blanc”:

—Is this the scene

Where the old Earthquake-daemon taught her young
Ruin? Were these their toys? or did a sea
Of fire, envelope once this silent snow?
None can reply—all seems eternal now. \(^{(71-75)}\)

Shelley converts Ahriman into a more absurd “Earthquake-daemon,”
emphasizing the superstitious aspect. The harsh environment deprives
man of his joys, which makes him “idiotic” and therefore prone to
superstitious beliefs. The superstitions are eventually established as “Large codes of fraud and woe.” The “sea of fire” alludes to “Buffon's sublime theory” about the formation of the earth, which separated from the sun by the collision of a comet long time ago, blazing hot at first, a “sea of fire,” has since been in a continual process of cooling down. So the earth is expected in the future to be completely frozen up as a dead planet. Thus Shelley calls it a “gloomy theory” as “this earth that we inhabit will at some future period be changed into a mass of frost.” Either the superstitious “Earthquake-daemon” or more scientific theory of Buffon's, which by contradicting the Biblical account of creation infuriated contemporary theologians, equally mocks at Coleridge's belief in the creation by God held in “Hymn before Sun-rise, in the Vale of Chamouni.”

Shelley also challenges Coleridge's idea of beneficent God in “Hymn Before Sunrise.” Against the sublime picture of Coleridge's Mont Blanc, Shelley presents a “desert” of craggy mountain, which is inhabited only by the wolf and the eagle that brings some hunter's bone. The hunter that chased the chamois up is supposed to have met his death in the mountain, which clearly repudiates Coleridge's idea that Mont Blanc was created for man by the beneficent God. The barren scene that contrasts with Coleridge's magnificent picture makes the speaker exclaim: “how hideously/ Its shapes are heaped around!”

Above all, Shelley's questions about the Earthquake-daemon and the sea of fire with his answer, “None can reply,” mock at Coleridge's questions and his answer:

Who made you glorious as the Gates of Heaven
Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the sun
Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers
Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet?—
God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God! (54-59)

To Coleridge's question “Who made?” Shelley answers that “None can reply” and that everything seems to have existed eternally, rejecting the creation by God. It has been suggested that Shelley is even responding to Coleridge's note to the poem in the Morning Post: “Who would be, who could be an Atheist in this valley of wonders!” (23) “Mont Blanc” is Shelley's answer in the affirmative that one can indeed and ought to be an atheist there. (24)

The speaker asserts that the “wilderness has a mysterious tongue” (76) and that the mountain has “a voice” (80); yet that the mountain has “a voice” contradicts the following sections of the poem in which the primary attribute of Mont Blanc is its silence. Thus it is almost admitted by the speaker himself that the voice “to repeal/ Large codes of fraud and woe” is not the mountain's own but the speaker's. It is what “the wise, and great, and good,” as well as the speaker himself, “Interpret, or make felt, or deeply feel” (82-83), not by listening to a voice but by the observation of nature.

Then who are “the wise, and great, and good” that taught Shelley the “mysterious tongue” of the mountain? They are no other than Wordsworth and Coleridge of the *Lyrical Ballads*. The teaching of the mountain's “mysterious tongue,” that of “awful doubt, or faith so mild,” is what Wordsworth learned from nature in “Tintern Abbey”: “I have learned to look on nature” (89-90); “If I were not thus taught” (113). More interestingly, the doctrine with which Shelley attacks Coleridge's “Hymn before Sun-rise” is nothing but the one preached by Coleridge's “The Nightingale,” where he proudly declares with Wordsworth and
Dorothy:

My Friend, and thou, our Sister! we have learnt
A different lore: we may not thus profane
Nature's sweet voices, always full of love
And joyance! 'Tis the merry Nightingale
That crowds, and hurries, and precipitates
With fast thick warble his delicious notes . . . (40-45)

It was one of the *Lyrical Ballads'* revolutionary doctrines to encourage people to see and feel for themselves and to believe only what they see and feel. Wordsworth gave a strong approval of Coleridge's attempt in this regard in his letter to John Wilson as discussed earlier. Shelley is turning this “lore” of Coleridge's against the Coleridge of “Hymn before Sun-rise” where a notion of reverence is conventionally and uncritically attached to the great mountain to the effect of contributing to the “Large codes of fraud and woe.”

The power that counters the “fraud and woe” is joy. Joy or pleasure was an important indicator for Shelley to show that one is in touch with a poetic inspiration. Joy is a state when one is free from repressions and constraints, and therefore one is most fully oneself, most capable of receiving all good influences. Wordsworth had sung of such a moment:

'The eye--it cannot choose but see;
We cannot bid the ear be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against or with our will.  ("Expostulation and Reply" 17-20)

Shelley's assertion of pleasure has behind it the theories of philosophes
like La Mettrie and Cabanis. According to Seamus Deane, La Mettrie, was one of the first theorists in psychological history who regarded our normal ethical behavior as prescribed by the social norms to be inherently a diseased condition of nervous disorder created by the society’s moral repression. On the other hand, a form of rational behavior would entail one's joyful commitment to the demands of our animal nature. Sexual liberty, therefore, is “a source of legitimate joy and pleasure, and a natural consequence of a reason that looks benevolently to the general and 'natural' needs of man for its guidelines.” This affirmation of joy is combined in Shelley with Pierre Cabanis's theory that posits “a primary energy in the universe of which sympathy and order are emanations,” to which those endowed with higher nervous sensibility have better access. To Shelley, those who are sensitive to the senses of sympathy and order are poets. “Hymn to Intellectual Beauty” is his manifesto as poet to dedicate his life so as to constantly receive the influences of that “primary energy,” or “Power” or “Intellectual Beauty,” as he variously calls it. Wordsworth in the “Ode” regrets to have to relinquish a “delight” of living under “more habitual sway” of nature. But Shelley in the “Hymn” contends that one can try to live under the constant influences of that Power if he renounces his selfish concerns. Wordsworth’s ode ends with a twilight scene:

The Clouds that gather round the setting sun  
Do take a sober colouring from an eye  
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality . . .

Shelley, on the other hand, argues that “The day becomes more solemn and serene/ When noon is past”: there is more of steadiness and strength
in the sunlight in the afternoon. So he implores the Intellectual Beauty: “let thy power . . . to my onward life supply/ Its calm.” “Its calm” means the constant influences of that power, not the peace of mind that comes with a relinquishment of desire.

In Shelley's analysis, the key factor involved in Wordsworth's poetic decline was his renouncement of joy and pleasure, and such was the case of Peter in Peter Bell the Third:

One single point in his belief
From his organization sprung,
The heart enrooted faith, the chief
Ear in his doctrine's blighted sheaf,
That “happiness is wrong” . . . (569-73)

This poem, along with “The Mask of Anarchy,” was one of Shelley's immediate responses to the Peterloo Massacre. The shift of Wordsworth who once spoke on behalf of common people and now taking the side of the oppressors that trampled upon the helpless people was posing nagging questions to Shelley, and he should certainly want to ask Wordsworth how he could answer for the blood of people shed by the government that now he supports. More specifically, though, Peter Bell the Third satirizes Wordsworth's Peter Bell which seemed to acquiesce to the doctrines of methodism, especially in its denial of joy. Shelley calls Methodists “fierce successors” of Calvin and Dominic, presumably because of their ascetic discipline, intolerance, and their highly organized system of church. What is emphasized in Peter Bell the Third is their dehumanizing practices of self-mortification for the purpose of inculcating total submission.
Even now would neither stint nor stick
Our flesh from off our bones to pick,
If they might “do their do.” (576-78)

Peter's heart was hardened and his “morals thus were undermined” (579). To Shelley the basis of moral integrity is sensibility to pleasure. Therefore in *A Defence* he strongly defends all kinds of pleasure in protest against those who censure erotic poetry of the Hellenistic period:

Had that corruption availed so as to extinguish in them the sensibility to pleasure, passion and natural scenery, which is imputed to them as an imperfection, the last triumph of evil would have been achieved. For the end of social corruption is to destroy all sensibility to pleasure; and therefore it is corruption. It begins at the imagination and the intellect as at the core, and distributes itself thence as a paralyzing venom, through the affections into the very appetites, until all become a torpid mass in which sense hardly survives. (*PP* 493)

Jerome McGann suggests that this passage is more relevant to Shelley's own time than to the second century B.C. Certainly what Shelley calls a “paralyzing venom” appears to be more relevant in the context of the rising tide of ascetic prohibition in the evangelical movements.

Shelley acutely realizes that the transition in the guiding principle from pleasure, joy, and happiness in the early years to “Duty” is symptomatic of Wordsworth's transitional period around 1804-6, the period in which he deplores to “have submitted to a new controul” in “Elegiac Stanzas.” Forsaking pleasure, now he dedicates an ode to Duty:
Resolved that nothing e'er should press
Upon my present happiness,
I shoved unwelcome tasks away;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

(“Ode to Duty,” 29-32)

F. M. Todd has discussed Wordsworth's abandonment of pleasure in his poetry as symptomatic of his leaning toward conservative politics. That analysis agrees with Shelley's. To Shelley, the blindness to joy and pleasure means a blindness to the higher poetic senses that are derived from the Power in which order and justice originate; the blindness to justice, then, leads to political conservatism that would tolerate injustice because of its blindness to higher order.

4. Embracing Changes

“The Retrospect” is one of Shelley's earliest poems that retain sustained echoes of Wordsworth's poetry. In the poem, Shelley takes change as a main theme of “Tintern Abbey” and accepts it positively:

How changed since nature's summer form
Had last the power my grief to charm
Since last ye soothed my spirit's sadness—
Strange chaos of a mingled madness!
Changed!—not the loathsome worm that fed
In the dark mansions of the dead,
Now soaring through the fields of air
And gathering purest nectar there,
A butterfly whose million hues
The dazzled eye of wonder views,
Long lingering on a work so strange,
Has undergone so bright a change! (132-143)

Shelley's “change” is, roughly speaking, from the sadness and loneliness of a year ago to the happiness at the present moment. Multiple echoes of “Tintern Abbey” suggest that Shelley reads Wordsworth's poem also in terms of the past anguish and present happiness. In both poems, nature remains constant soothing the poets through the times of trouble but they appreciate her even deeper in the present happiness. Both poems share a trust in nature with a hope that one can live with changes that are inevitably brought on.

In spite of the anxiety of death that critics attribute to the poem, “Tintern Abbey” as a whole embraces change. The speaker does not deplore the loss of “aching joys” and “dizzy raptures.” If he regretted the loss of his past state, he could not feel happy watching his sister in whom he can still see his former self. Unlike in the “Ode,” the speaker is not anxious about “The Years to bring the inevitable yoke” to her. He asserts that Nature never betrayed the heart that loved her and trusts that she will bring joy “Through all the years of this our life.” Surely natural changes may bring hardships as “the misty mountainwinds” will “blow against thee,” and there will be times of “solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,” but then, the speaker assures his sister that the memory of their sharing moments with nature will later bring her a “tender joy.” Finally the speaker mentions the time when he shall no longer be able to see her nor hear her voice, but he leaves her an instruction to remember the fact that he worshipped Nature, to suggest that she will then be able to accept his death even by that fact. In short, the speaker is willing to accept all the changes including his own death that the natural cycles
Wordsworth's acceptance of natural changes sees a great development in section IV of “Mont Blanc” which is Shelley's assertion of the cyclical changes of revolving natural phenomena. At the beginning of section IV Shelley juxtaposes the joyfulness in the great variety of the natural world (“the daedal earth”) with the violent forces of meteorological phenomena that bring about changes in nature: “lightening,” “Earthquake,” “hurricane,” and “fiery flood” (volcanic eruption). The colorful “future leaf and flower” are ensured by the principle of change which breaks the “detested trance.” This link between the nature of life and the nature of deadly force is also established in the following observation of “the naked countenance of earth,” from which “the adverting mind” can learn a lesson.

What is emphasized in the progress of the glaciers is their deadly force that threatens life. As they perpetually roll down from peak to bottom, precipices and spectacular objects of ice are formed by “Frost and the Sun,” to stand as a “city of death” or a “flood of ruin.” Rocks are carried down with the ice making the mountainside uninhabitable for insects, beasts, and birds, overthrowing the “limits of the dead and living world” which is “Never to be reclaimed.” The high mountain is hostile to life, as “So much of life and joy is lost.” Man is powerless as a “smoke before the tempest's stream.” But then the most remarkable of this section is the last seven lines that reintroduce the ravine that connects the hostile nature with the world of the living so as to make a full circle:

Below, vast caves
Shine in the rushing torrents' restless gleam,
Which from those secret chasms in tumult welling
Meet in the vale, and one majestic River,
The breath and blood of distant lands, for ever
Rolls its loud waters to the ocean waves,
Breathes its swift vapours to the circling air.  (120-26)

The ravine that appeared as an image of human mind in section II appears again with its rushing torrents, but now the ravine is recognized as the source of a “River,” the Rhone, that supports the life of the distant plains finally to flow into the sea which is a great cradle of life. Then the water of the sea evaporates to “the circling air” to become clouds which will eventually fall on Mont Blanc in snow, again to be part of the glaciers. The ravine in this cycle occupies the middle position in the mountain between the life-forbidding high-altitude sphere and the life-nourishing river. The connection is thus made between the deadly force of glaciers and the life of the distant lands that cannot exist without the cyclical changes of nature. The great forces of nature that bring about changes are embraced in “Mont Blanc” just as the violent West Wind is embraced as a symbol of the great force that brings about revolutionary changes.

Through the discussions above we have examined how Shelley sympathized with Wordsworth's celebration of nature in “Tintern Abbey,” recognizing in it a progressive view to embrace changes, so as to present in “Mont Blanc” his own materialist theory in his view of man and nature. Reading the two poems from this materialist line of perspective, it appears likely that Shelley had understood Wordsworth's celebration of nature as congenial to the later eighteenth century vitalist phase of materialism in La Mettrie, Diderot, Holbach, and Erasmus Darwin. As Peter Thorslev points out, Wordsworth's idea of nature
easily lends itself to La Mettrie's concept of the entire universe as one organism in which “all of us from the crawling worm to the eagle lost in the clouds” are linked together. (35) Wordsworth's phrases, “the life of things,” “the great moving spirit of things,” and “A motion and a spirit, that impels/ All thinking things” reflect a particular eighteenth-century notion of vital nature. Both Wordsworth and Shelley were familiar with the idea commonly held by those materialists that the elementary particles that compose the organic universe were “not passive or inert, but were endowed with energy, life, and purpose.” (36) With each particle thus animated, the universe evolves with an immanent destiny, and it follows that what is then required of man is to understand nature correctly to make reasonable judgments for himself, which is to realize the course of the universal destiny. Although in “Mont Blanc” Shelley does not see the universe as animated by itself but he projects the moving principle outside over the mountain, the consequence is the same: man is inseparably linked with nature just as vitalists had maintained, which also accords with Wordsworth's view of nature in “Tintern Abbey.”

It is, after all, not surprising that, in spite of Wordsworth's boast in “Prospectus” that “The external world is fitted to the Mind” was a theme “little heard of among men,” Shelley was least impressed by it, dismissing it altogether with the whole volume of The Excursion, with the remark: “He is a slave.” (37) Obviously Shelley sensed a conservative shift in the dualistic view of the world and the mind in “Prospectus.” Such a view would distance one from the world, since it supposes an independent mind that can gratuitously make a “fitting” between the world and itself. It would distance one from the environment to be free to aestheticize others' suffering. So Shelley describes Peter after his moral degeneration:
So in his Country's dying face
    He looked--and, lovely as she lay,
Seeking in vain his last embrace,
Wailing her own abandoned case,
    With hardened sneer he turned away:

And coolly to his own soul said;—
    “Do you not think that we might make
A poem on her when she's dead?—    (Peter Bell the Third 589-96)

Shelley is alluding not only to the unhappy wives that Wordsworth's Peter Bell had wronged, and the grievous condition of English populace at the time of Peterloo, but also to Wordsworth's practice of making a poem of people's suffering with a morally uneasy detachment, most notably represented by the story of Margaret in Book I of The Excursion. The moral problem in the Wanderer who recounts the story without having done anything to save the unhappy woman from neglecting her baby to death was evident even to Wordsworth's friend De Quincey. (38) In Shelley's note to Peter Bell the Third, he criticizes Wordsworth of The Excursion by reminding him of the lesson of Nature in “Hart-Leap Well”: “Never to blend our pleasure or our pride/ With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels” (PP 342n.). In this poem of Lyrical Ballads that Shelley praises as “sweet and sublime,” man is linked together with “the meanest thing that feels,” therefore the natural law forbids man to make his happiness over its suffering. The dualistic view, on the other hand, would make one blind to the fact that one is inexorably conditioned by the world which is in continual changes. By supposing the independent existences of the world and the mind, it poses difficulty to see either one's link to the world or the changes through which the
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world evolves.

Shelley probably understood that Wordsworth's dualistic view in “Prospectus” emerged just when he could no longer respond to his natural poetic impulses and to “the language of the sense,” which had ensured his connection to nature and the world. There existed for Shelley a clear divide between the early radical Wordsworth and the later conservative one whom he called “a slave.”

NOTES

(1) Many of the arguments of this paper initially appeared in my unpublished doctoral dissertation, “Shelley's Poetic Response to William Wordsworth” (International Christian University, Tokyo, 1997), mainly in Chapter 4, which was reorganized and extensively rewritten to appear in this form.

(2) For the conflicts that Wordsworth's Enlightenment values in the Lyrical Ballads had caused in the conservative current of the war years, see Marilyn Butler, Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries: English Literature and its Background 1760-1830 (Oxford: OUP, 1981), 58-68.


(5) All references to the poetry and prose of Shelley are, unless otherwise indicated, to Shelley's Poetry and Prose, ed. Donald H. Reiman and Sharon B. Powers (New York: Norton, 1977). This edition is abbreviated as PP in subsequent references.

(6) James K. Chandler in Wordsworth's Second Nature (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1984) argues that Wordsworth's poetry from the Lyrical Ballads on is firmly founded on a Burkean traditionalism as opposed to Rousseauist ideas of nature. His supporting evidences from the Lyrical Ballads, however, are not as comprehensive as they should be, to leave room enough for making an equally strong case in support of Wordsworth's affinity with Rousseau.

(8) It also assumes the background of the ideological confrontation between the first generation Romantics and the second generation which was especially intense during the late 1810s, as discussed in Peter L. Thorslev, Jr., “Post-Waterloo Liberalism: The Second Generation,” *SiR* 28 (1989): 437-461.


(15) De Man suggests the possibility of an allegory that exists in the ideal time of endless future instead of an unreachable past, in de Man, 226.

(16) The composition of the main part of “Prospectus” is dated to be sometime between the spring of 1800 and early spring of 1802, but the particular passage about the fitting of the external world to the mind is considered to be an addition of 1806 (or 1805). See Beth Darlington, ed., *“Home*
at Grasmere”: Part First, Book First, of “The Recluse” by William Wordsworth (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1977) 19-22. French materialist vein of thought in “Tintern Abbey” may have coexisted with German idealist dualism for a while but seems to have gradually yielded to it, especially with the influence of Coleridge, around the period between 1802 and 1806. For the affinity with Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel in Wordsworth, see M. H. Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism (New York: Norton, 1971) 201-237 and 325-372. Peter Thorslev discusses the organicist theory originating in German idealism that was adopted by the first generation but rejected by Shelley and other second generation Romantics as “profoundly conservative” in “German Romantic Idealism,” The Cambridge Companion to British Romanticism, ed. Stuart Curran (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993), 74-94.


(20) The interpretation of “unfurled” in line 53 is a point of great critical controversy. William Rossetti, in his edition of Shelley's poems, approved of James Thomson's suggestion that the word should be emended “upfurled” in the sense of “uplift.” C. D. Locock and Harold Bloom are of the same opinion that the word should be understood to mean “drawn aside.” See Locock, ed., The Poems of Percy Bysshe Shelley, 2 vols. (London: Methuen, 1911) 2: 491, and Bloom, Shelley's Mythmaking (New Haven: Yale UP, 1959), 31. Their understanding is that the poet who is on the side of life encounters the world of death when the veil that separates the two worlds is uplifted. E. B. Murray, however, argues that there is little ground to doubt the validity of Shelley's word “unfurled,”
to propose another interpretation that Shelley meant the passage to be an “anti-climactic moment” after the vision of the cave of Poesy in the preceding section, so as to be paraphrased: “Has some unknown omnipotence just now shut me off from a prolonged participation with the world of sleep, death, and poetry?” (Murray, “Mont Blanc's Unfurled Veil,” Keats-Shelley Journal 18 [1969]: 46). Although this reading has gained some acceptance, for example, by Jonathan Wordsworth 104, and John B. Pierce, “Mont Blanc' and Prometheus Unbound: Shelley's Use of the Rhetoric of Silence,” Keats-Shelley Journal 38 (1989): 111, a disappointment at the interruption of poetical musing is not quite the mood and direction of the passage. The reading closest to my interpretation is Herman Rapaport's who in his Freudian reading suggests the veil as a screen: “The 'veil of life and death' is not unlike a screen upon which the pleasure and death drives represent themselves.” See “Staging: Mont Blanc,” Displacement: Derrida and Aftier, ed. Mark Krupnick (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1983), 70.


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(28) It is evident from Mичing Mallecho's Dedication that the feud between the Tory Quarterly and Hunt's liberal Examiner to which Shelley was allied was the main backdrop for Peter Bell the Third. And as Richard Cronin points out, Methodists were also regarded as enemies by reformists like Hunt, since liberals regarded Methodism as a prop for reactionary policy. For the implication of Methodism in Peter Bell the Third, see Cronin, “The Politics of Cockney Poetry,” 73-77. See also Steven E. Jones, *Shelley's Satire* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois UP, 1994), 52-58.

(29) For the ascetic discipline of Methodism and its role to provide an effective ideology to make the often unruly pre-industrial laborers into submissive industrial workers, see E. P. Thompsom, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963), 350-400.


(31) Todd notes that “He had not abandoned the cult of joy, the conviction of pleasure, and in 1804 he could still re-dedicate himself completely to the joyful spirit of nature,” citing lines from the manuscript of “The Kitten and the Falling Leaves”: “[I] to pleasure will be true:/ Spite of melancholy reason, / I will have my careless season.” See F. M. Todd, *Politics and the Poet: A Study of Wordsworth* (London: Methuen, 1957), 126-27.

(32) Kim Blank discusses this poem of Shelley’s as an early example Wordsworth's influence on his poetry. See Blank, 36-39.


(34) Jean Hall mentions this natural cycle in Hall 51.
(35) La Mettrie's words are quoted by Peter L. Thorslev, Jr., *Romantic Contraries: Freedom versus Destiny* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1984) 58. For vitalism as part of the later phase of the eighteenth-century materialism, see 56-61 of this study.

