



# Review Of Research



## REFELCTIONS OF THE POWER OF NATURE IN SELECT POEMS OF P. B. SHELLEY

**Prof. Dr. B. A. Kamble**

Associate Professor, Uma Mahavidyalaya, Pandharpur.

### ABSTRACT:

*The present paper examines the theme of power of nature in P. B. Shelley's romantic lyrics 'When The Lamp Is Shattered' and 'Ode To The West Wind.' Though the poems are about the human feelings and activities of the west wind on the surface level, the poems reflect the highest power of human emotion and power of nature which have been ascribed to the human beings and the west wind. The wind has power to change which destroys the individual life. The storm created by west wind has the volcanic power which can bring the social revolution and individual revolution also. So the present research paper aims to explore the theme of power in Shelleys above lyrics. The interpretative analytical and evaluative methods have been used to study this ode of P. B. Shelley.*

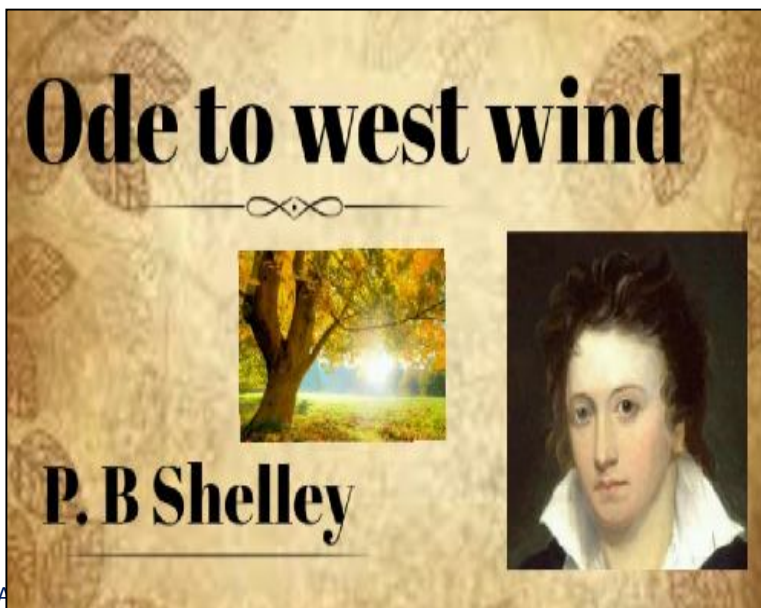
**KEYWORDS :-** Power, ode, west wind, volcanic power, revolution.

### INTRODUCTION:

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822), one of the greatest Romantic poets, was born in Sussex in a very rich family. He was educated at Eton and University College, Oxford. While at Eton, he was a lover of classics, science and skepticism. In 1811, he was expelled from Oxford for writing a pamphlet on The Necessity of Atheism. The next year he married Harriet Westbrook in London but about four years later he left her. He became a pupil of Godwin, a great philosopher, whose

teaching "created in him the hatred of tyranny and the passion for freedom 'and upity. In 1814, Shelley eloped with Mary Godwin to Italy, later married her and made Italy his permanent home. He visited Venice, Naples, Rome and finally settled at Pisa. On July 8, 1822, Shelley left Leghorn for Spezzia on a boating trip during which a storm set in and he was drowned on the same day.

Shelley's most important poetical works are : *lastor* (1815), *Revolt of Islam* (1818), *Masque of Anarchy* (1819), *Prometheus Unbound* (1820), *Adonais* (1821) and *Hellas* (1822). However, he is mostly known for his fine short lyrics and odes. There is a music in his verse and a sweetness and inevitableness in his lyrics which, lift him, in the judgment of some, above all other English poets. In his poems Shelley treats the themes of freedom, love, nature and society as they directly made an impression upon his intellect and emotion. His revolutionary ideas were born of reason as well as of emotion. He was a believer in pantheism, a view that there is a Spirit of God everywhere. His poetry is highly lyrical and full of aspirations, philosophical ideas, fiery imagination, intense passion, intellectual sadness and sweet music.



### WHEN THE LAMP IS SHATTERED

The theme of the poem is the sad one, that, as a French writer has said, we have no more control over the oration of our passions than we have over the duration of our lives. Here we get Shelley's philosophy of love. It is 'a little while a little love' and 'Never happy any more'. Shelley says that love is short lived. The light of the lamp is gone when the lamp is broken to pieces. The music comes to an end when the lute is broken. As soon as the clouds are scattered, the beauty of the rainbow is no more. In the same way, when sweet words of love are spoken, love is gone from the human heart. After love, there remains nothing but sorrow, pain and frustration. Two hearts come together but love leaves the stronger one and the weak one is left alone. It is sad that love selects the weak human heart as its home. Such a heart is afterwards mocked at Ana ridiculed by the world: Thus after the flight of love, the lover is sorrowful and frustrated.

Shelley expresses his idea of love through a series of lovely images. The images of the lamp, the cloud and the lute are beautiful and suggestive. The last two stanzas are a bit obscure to Understand and the idea they convey shows Shelley's fiery imagination and intensity of passion. The absence of perfection and continuity of love expressed in this poem illustrate important aspects of his; poetry.

### ODE TO THE WEST WIND

Shelley tells us in a note that this poem was written in a wood that skirts the Arno near Florence, 'and on a day when that tempestuous wind, whose temperature is at once mild and animating, was collecting the vapours which pour down the autumnal rains.' The poem was written in October, 1819 at Florence. Neville Rogers gives an interesting account of how this poem was written. The first stage was the jotting down in a notebook of some fragments of verse describing tiling's Shelley saw during a walk in the Cascine woods by the Agno. Next Shelley began a poem in terza rima which has a theme but no compelling image to give it life. He felt depressed at this, but at this time he got art idea, of how - spark - extinguished - is to be kindled to flame by a wind. Then thought, feeling and sensuous experience ran together in his mind. On October, 25th he wrote a draft of the first three stanzas nearly in their final form. He invented a sonnet-like stanza ending in a couplet. He recast the poem in the form of a prayer to the wind, making it more concrete and less merely personal. These sections deal with the operation of the wind on the surface of the earth, in the sky, and on the sea, the symbolical application "being left implicit. Then in another notebook he worked out the last two sections, making the symbolism more explicit and ending with the extinguished hearth, the focal point round which the different elements which went to form the poem had come together.

To Shelley, the wind is not wind only, but the 'breath of Autumn's being.' It is the essence of seasonal change, symbolizing Change itself, including social change. But the wind, in destroying the outworn, provides for the birth of the new. It drives before it leaves of various colours due to various stages of decay and dryness. The west wind scatters seeds which are to germinate in spring after remaining inactive in winter. The poet invokes this mighty spirit of the wind which at once destroys (the leaves fall) and preserves (seeds are scattered). The wind has its effect on the sky also. It drives the clouds like dead leaves, through the atmosphere. It brings rain, lightning and storm. The whistling sound of the wind appears to be the sad song of the dying year. The wind influences the interior and exterior of the sea. The wind arouses the Mediterranean from its peaceful sleep. The wind also disturbs the Atlantic in which the vegetation changes colour from the fear of the wild. Thus stanzas 1 - 3 show this activity (the West Wind) 'moving everywhere' — (1) on the earth: expelling the dead leaves and scattering the seeds of new life. (2) in the air : assembling the cloud-cover, the 'dome' both of a sepulcher and of an energizing volcano-like storm. (3) on and under the sea : rousing it from its over-idealised dreams of the past; subjecting underwater vegetation to the Universal law. The wind of change acts both horizontally and vertically within each element : stream / steep ; flocks / feed' in air; level / chasms. In stanza 4, the poet longs for the simple passivity of leaf, cloud, and wave; or the irresponsibility of childhood. In stanza 5, he triumphantly accepts his adult humanity, demanding total possession, by the wind, to be made prophet of the very movement of change that must ultimately destroy his individual life. The storm links volcanic imagery of social revolution with Biblical image of resurrection. The seeds will rise from their graves when the spring wind blows its trumpet, just as, after 'black rain, and fire, and hail', mankind will be reborn at the trumpet call of poetry.

If impressiveness is the final test of art, this is the greatest of Shelley's lyrics. A great force sweeps through it from first line to the last, felt in the movement of the verse, heard in its sound and seen in its images of things driven, and shaken, and torn. In most of the stanzas there is not a single fullstop to check the onrush of the verse until the end is reached. In its living energy the poem is characteristic of Shelley's poetry. It is characteristic too in its revelation of Shelley's attitude towards nature. He was attracted by the forces of Nature; for him the wind is alive, the woods are but the instrument on which it plays. Shelley hopes that his thought might help to quicken a new birth, that his words might be a true prophecy of the spring which would surely come, in society and in men's personal lives as well as in nature.

**CONCLUSION:**

The poem reflects the highest power of nature which has been ascribed to the west wind. The wind has power to change which destroys the individual life. The storm created by west wind has the volcanic power which can bring the social revolution and individual revolution also. So the present research paper aims to explore the theme of power in Shelley's 'Ode to the west wind.'

**WORK CITED**

1. Abrams, M. H. ed., *English Romantic Poets*, (O.U.P.)
2. Barber, Charles *Poetry in English: An Introduction*.