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## Shelley's Impression of This Real World in His Last Phase

### —A Study of 'The Triumph of Life'—

Yoshinori Banba

Shelley began to compose 'The Triumph of Life'<sup>1</sup> in 1822, but his death in the same year prevented him from completing it. It is, as Ivan Roe points out,<sup>2</sup> Shelley's wife, Mary who arranged the lines and stanzas left in his notebook and made, however imperfectly, what 'The Triumph of Life' is at present. It is questionable whether or not the poem is as Shelley intended. Yet, the poem has some clue to understand Shelley's ideas in his last phase.

It is possible to divide 'The Triumph of Life' into several parts. This study splits it into four sections, though other scholars have divided it into three,<sup>3</sup> four,<sup>4</sup> five,<sup>5</sup> or six<sup>6</sup> sections. The first section, from the first line to the 40th, is the hymn to the sun through the depiction of nature in a splendid dawn. The second, from the 41st line to the 175th, is the narrator's or Shelley's description of the chariot and the crowd around it in his vision. The third, from the 176th line to the 295th, is Rousseau's explanation of the captives of the chariot. The fourth, from the 196th line to the last, deals with his personal history and his vision.

Each section has its own importance in understanding 'The Triumph of Life' but this study concentrates on the second section, for it expresses Shelley's own impression of this real world in which he lived, and makes clear how he regarded it by defining the figures which appear in it.

The outline of the second part is as follows. A crowd of men and women, both young and old, are hurrying forward on a public way, when a chariot appears in a cold light. They gather around the chariot as if it were a triumphal procession. The famous persons of yore are fettered to the chariot like the captives. The youths in the crowd outspeed the chariot, dance in front of it and, being tired, fall onto the ground only to be run over by it. On the other hand, the old persons run after it but spin without reaching it and die.

The analysis must begin with "a public way"(l.43) because it is the main place where peo-

ple meet the chariot, the young people die under its wheels and the aged die after they “fulfil / Their work” (l.172-73). Alan K. Weinberg says that this way “translates Petrarch’s ‘publico viaggio’, a phrase used in the ‘Trionfo della Mort’ (II, 14) to indicate the common road which leads man to the grave.”<sup>7</sup> Although no one could get out of it if it were only a common way to the grave, “the sacred few” (l.128) are not seen there. Nevertheless, of the crowd on it, “yet none seemed to know / Whither he went, or whence he came, or why / He made one of the multitude” (l.47-49). This coincides with Shelley’s statement in ‘On Life,’ “What is life? ... For what are we? Whence do we come? and whither do we go?”<sup>8</sup> It can be a way to the grave but with a special meaning. The people’s behaviour, “Some flying from the thing they feared, and some / Seeking the object of another’s fear” (l.54-55) is, in other words, that described in Beatrice Cenci’s lines, “what a world we make, / The oppressor and the oppressed” (‘The Cenci,’ V, iii, l.74-75). Therefore, “a public way” is the secular world which Shelley detests.

The people on the way move forward hurriedly in “one mighty torrent” (l.53). This should attract our attention because it is extremely strange that people should walk forward on a road all in the same direction as Shelley delineates here, for normally people do not all walk in the same direction. This strangeness of the “public way” suggests another meaning, namely, time. People are born and die at various times, so “Old age and youth, manhood and infancy” (l.52) can be seen simultaneously, as Shelley portrays in the poem, at one point of the way. It is only when the “public way” is seen as a temporal axis that the depiction becomes natural of the people all moving in the same direction, because no one can go backwards in the flow of time. It deserves special mention that Shelley expresses time as a fixed thing, not as a flow. In the poem, time is a firmly fixed and unmoving substance called “a public way” and people voluntarily walk along it, getting old. Shelley distinctly puts the will in the foreground and hints that it depends on a man’s will whether he spends his life doing folly or behaving like “the sacred few.”

The “public way” is “Thick strewn with summer dust” (l.44), where “flowers never grew” (l.65). People walk fast on it, about which Shelley says that “they / Pursued their serious folly as of old” (l.172-173) and ignore nature, absorbed in doing so. Here, the way differs remarkably from nature around it. The way is hot, dry and barren like a desert, as the words “summer,” “dust” and “flowers never grew” allude to. There is no repose but fear on it. On the contrary, nature has “the fountains, whose melodious dew / Out of their mossy cells for ever burst” (l.67-68),

the breeze which from the forest told  
Of grassy path and wood-lawn interspersed,  
  
With over-arching elms and caverns cold,  
And violet banks where sweet dreams brood (1.69-72)

in its depiction. The coolness of nature is expressed by the words "mossy," "over-arching" and "cold," its moisture by "fountains," "dew" and "banks," and its fertility by "forest," "grassy," "woodlawn," "elms" and "violet." There is a respite suggested by "sweet dreams brood." As the features of the way makes sharp contrast to those of nature, it is a place antipodal to nature. Nature, as Irvin B. Kroese<sup>9</sup> and Adel Salama<sup>10</sup> say, represents for Shelley a world filled with order and harmony and embodying fully the power of love. In contrast, the way is defined as disturbed, disordered and loveless. Therefore, Shelley regards the secular world as a place of folly without love.

Here appears "a chariot" (1.86) which has profound importance to the whole poem. As for references from the book of Ezekiel, the Apocalypse, Dante, Petrarch, Milton and Spencer,<sup>11</sup> critics agree to its being evil<sup>12</sup>. Judging from "a Shape / ... as one whom years deform" (1.87-88), "that fierce Spirit whose unholy leisure / Was soothed by mischief since the world begun [sic]" (1.145-146) on it, the chariot certainly seems evil.

The delineation of the chariot begins with "a cold glare intenser than the noon, / But icy cold, [which] obscured with blinding light / The sun, as he the stars." (1.77-79). The chariot appears "on the silent storm / Of its own rushing splendor" (1.86-67). The features of this "glare" are "cold" and "icy," like the moon. Moonlight is referred to as "the moonlight's ineffectual glow" ('Queen Mab,' VIII, 1.148), which does not have the power to nourish plants. The light of the chariot, thus, lacks the power to raise life and has a different character from that of the sun. Moreover, it is possible to say that the light of the chariot hinders the function of the sun, for it obscures the sunshine. The sun being the symbol of love as the entity to propel the activity aspiring after the ideal, which another paper of the present author<sup>13</sup> makes certain, the light of the chariot is that which makes people do loveless deeds.

To speak particularly, the light of the chariot can be said to be 'the cold light of reason or materialism'<sup>14</sup> as Patricia Hodgart stated. Materialism is concerned with tangible objects in this world and the reason mentioned above is also concerned solely with them. We may regard materialism and the reason as almost the same thing. Materialism is the way of thinking that

Shelley espoused in his early life, but it is materialism in its strict sense that he approved as he wrote to Godwin in 1812 that "I can by no means conceive how the loftiest disinterestedness is incompatible with the strict materialism."<sup>16</sup> Later in his life, as late as 1815, he denounced it as "a seducing system to young and superficial minds"<sup>16</sup> in 'On Life.' As for materialism in its lower level which means such causes as mammonism and authoritarianism, Shelley denied it from his early days onward. One of the earliest examples of his denial is 'Queen Mab' where he blamed "The King" ('Queen Mab,' III, l.30) for his materialistic deeds. "The King" is depicted as a person doing loveless deeds ('Queen Mab,' III, l.23-57). The glare of the chariot is materialism as a source of human misdeeds.

The "captive multitude"(l.119) of the chariot consists of its adorers, as in 'Trionfi' by Petrarch which Shelley had read before the composition of 'The Triumph of Life' and used as its model. The reference to them, whose "hour / Was drained to its last sand in weal or woe"(l. 122-123) is reminiscent of the quotation in the latter half of the preface to 'Alastor.'<sup>17</sup> This shows that they are wretched persons and, what is more, the destroyers of this world. Since Shelley condemns power, domination and wealth in both prose and verse, we can infer that they are people who used such things. Therefore, the light of the chariot symbolises the influence or charm of power, domination and wealth. Shelley felt they were very strong as the light of the chariot obscures the sun.

There is "a Shape"(l.87) on the chariot, besides the charioteer called "A Janus-visaged shadow"(l.94). She, who Rousseau later said was "Life!"(l.180), is portrayed with words relating to death. She wears the shadow of death, as some scholars have pointed out.<sup>18</sup> She is not an actual person, while the captives being real persons from the past who are already dead. Yet she is assumed, in a sense, to live eternally in the shadow of death even though the poem does not contain one word on whether she is alive or not. In short, she can be said to be in the condition of living death. Then, on what occasion does a man fall into living death? He wears the shadow of death or is in the condition of living death when he loses love as Shelley states "So soon as this want or power [love] is dead, man becomes the living sepulchre of himself, and what yet survives is the mere husk of what once he was" in 'On Love.'<sup>19</sup> Even though she is certainly different from man in her entity, the similarity in wearing the shadow of death is so conspicuous that her character seems to be the same as man's. She has then no love in herself and is a symbol of loveless existence.

At the same time, she is shrouded in darkness and incomprehensibility, suggested by "a dusky hood and double cape"(l.89) and "a dun and aethereal gloom / Tempering the light"(l.

92-93). These are not thoroughly penetrated by the glare of the chariot. Hence, the glare cannot make her shape appear clearly. This means that the practical reason, which, as is said above, is the cold glare of the chariot, cannot perfectly discern what she is. What is that which the human reason can hardly apprehend? Shelley says in 'Speculations on Metaphysics' that though "thought can with difficulty visit the intricate and winding chambers which it inhabits," "The caverns of the mind are obscure, and shadowy; or pervaded with a lustre, beautifully bright indeed, but shining not beyond their portals."<sup>20</sup> He thinks that the human thought or reason cannot easily make apparent the human mind. Now, we may regard the "Shape" as the human mind, but if we listen to Shelley a little more, we can obtain the more precise definition of her. Shelley describes in the preface to 'The Cenci' that "The highest moral purpose aimed at in the highest species of the drama, is the teaching the human heart through its sympathies and antipathies, the knowledge of itself,"<sup>21</sup> namely "some of the most dark and secret caverns of the human mind."<sup>22</sup> Conversely speaking, he means that man or man's reason does not easily recognise the dark part of the human mind. Here, it is possible to define the "Shape" as the dark part of the human mind. According to Shelley's statements in 'Speculations on Morals,' "He [man] is revengeful, proud and selfish" at the same time as "The benevolent propensities are thus inherent in the human mind."<sup>23</sup> The "Shape" cannot be of the benevolent propensities because her "unholy leisure / Was soothed by mischief since the world begun [sic]" (l.145-146). Therefore, she is a symbol of the negative part of the human mind like selfishness.

What does "A Janus-visaged shadow" (l.94) on the beam of the chariot symbolise? Scholars say that it symbolises necessity,<sup>24</sup> destiny,<sup>25</sup> poets unable to lead the secular life correctly<sup>26</sup> or such persons,<sup>27</sup> steadfast intelligence<sup>28</sup> or time.<sup>29</sup> Certainly, necessity and destiny move in a direction transcending human intellect as if these were a blindfolded person who would move without any sensible judgement. But Shelley, regarding necessity as the same as "Spirit of Nature," composed the following lines in 'Queen Mab.'

all that the wide world contains  
 Are but thy [Spirit of Nature] passive instruments, and thou  
 Regardst them all with an impartial eye  
 Whose joy or pain thy nature cannot feel,  
 Because thou hast not human sense,  
 Because thou art not human mind.

('Queen Mab,' VI, l.214-219)

The "Spirit of Nature" indeed looks at everything "with an impartial eye" and so if the charioteer is the "Spirit of Nature," there is no necessity of daring to attach a blindfold to the charioteer in order to render it unable to choose its objects or to be partial. Whatever progress the "shadow" takes, it is necessity and destiny and it is impossible to say "So ill was the car guided" (l.105) as is depicted in the poem. Also the poet says "Nor then avail the beams that quench the sun / Or that with banded eyes could pierce the sphere / Of all that is, has been, or will be done" (l. 102-104). Therefore it is strange to presume that necessity and destiny should get the help of human's mundane reason or power to bring their effect into full play. In this light, it seems that the identification of the charioteer with necessity or destiny must be denied.

Also, the "shadow" cannot be identified with the poets and persons who cannot lead a correct life, because they are portrayed in other parts of the poem. Degraded poets appear in the third section as fettered captives, and persons unable to lead a right way of life make up the crowd in the second part in the case of their being anonymous or they become the captives in the third section if they are famous. The poem, thus, need not treat them symbolically as the charioteer.

As for the idea that the charioteer stands for time, "that wonder-winged team" (l.95) is to be taken in consideration because it is the team which draws the chariot. The narrator only hears the sound of wing beats of the "shapes" (l.96) which are invisible in lightning. Unlike the darkness in which the female "Shape" hides herself, lightning covers the "shapes." The lightning in which the "shapes" flap their wings compels us to feel some unfathomable but strong power. On the other hand, the chariot which "past / With solemn speed majestically on" (l.105-106) intimates that it moves ahead at an unvaried and regular speed without getting faster or slower. It is the "team" that draws the chariot at such a pace. The "ever" in the line, "The music of their ever-moving wings" (l.98) hints that it always rolls forward without any stop. The "public way" on which it proceeds is, as defined above, the settled temporal axis, and the "team" symbolises the power which makes the chariot go ahead, namely the power of life. The movement of the chariot caused by the "shapes" represents the passing of time. In this poem, time both fixed and flowing is fully expressed as the public way and the movement of the chariot pulled by the team. Therefore we reject the suggestion that "A Janus-visaged shadow" is the symbol of time.

The features of "A Janus-visaged shadow" are as follows: it has blindfolded eyes in its four faces; it holds the reins of "that wonder-winged team." Its eyes are not touched by "the beams that quenched the sun" (l.102) because they are banded, and "So ill was the car guided" (l.105).

But the line, "that with banded eyes could pierce the sphere"(l.103) alludes to the fact that it originally can see the whole of the past, present and future because the "public way" is the temporal axis. The front eyes see the future, the side ones the present and the rear ones the past. Shelley, saying in 'Queen Mab' that "to me [Spirit of Nature] 'tis given / The wonders of the human world to keep / The secrets of the immeasurable past, / ..., / I find: / The future, ... / ..., I gather" ('Queen Mab,' I, l. 167-173), means that the "Spirit of Nature" has such optical power. However, it cannot be identified with the charioteer, as mentioned above. It is not only the "Spirit of Nature" which can have such sight, because it reveals the secrets to Ianthe, though not her as a physical substance. When it takes her to its palace on its chariot, she is spiritual existence, leaving her body lying "amid ruin" ('Queen Mab,' I, l.138). It gives its boon to the spirit or "Soul of Ianthe" ('Queen Mab,' I, l.122). Now it is possible that the human soul or spirit can also have the sight.

In considering the other feature, it is significant to distinguish the charioteer from the power pulling the chariot, namely "the wonder-winged team." It must be pointed out that the charioteer only holds the reins, and does not pull the chariot. In other words, it means that the charioteer is the reiner of the "team" which is identified with time in the preceding paragraph, the last but one. Shelley states in the notes on 'Queen Mab' that "Time is our consciousness of the succession of ideas in our mind. ... If, therefore, the human mind, by any future improvement of its sensibility, should become conscious of an infinite number of ideas in a minute, that minute would be eternity."<sup>30</sup> This statement can be comprehended as meaning that thought is in a sense able to control time. It goes without saying that thought is spiritual activity. He assumes in 'On Life' that soul and spiritual activity are inseparable by describing that "man ..., whose 'thoughts wander through eternity,' disclaiming alliance with transience and decay; ... Whatever may be his true and final destination, there is a spirit within him at enmity with nothingness and dissolution."<sup>31</sup> Therefore, judging from what is said in this paragraph and the last, it is quite natural to take the charioteer as a symbol of the human soul or spirit.

It is because of the blindfold that the charioteer, who represents the human soul or spirit, guides the chariot badly. If he were not blindfolded, he could pierce the past, present and future, and guide the chariot well. It is this blindfold that ruins life. What then do the eyes mean, which are covered with the blindfold and are indispensable for leading a correct life? The clue to this is in the line, "Nor then avail the beams that quench the sun"(l.102). The beams, as made clear above, are the influence of materialism and worldly powers. Even materialism and worldly powers are said not to have any influence. Materialism is a form of philosophy, and what makes



philosophy possible is human intelligence. Secular powers are abstract things and they also affect man through his intelligence. Hence the eyes in the four faces of the charioteer symbolise human intelligence. We can also attribute intelligence to “A Janus-visaged shadow,” but it would be premature to say that intelligence is all that is needed to live in a right way. Shelley says in ‘Speculations on Morals’ that “In this sense, wisdom and virtue may be said to be inseparable, and criteria of each other.”<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, he states, “The great secret of morals is love”<sup>33</sup> in ‘A Defence of Poetry.’ Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the eyes of “A Janus-visaged shadow” symbolise intelligence and love.

The above consideration clarifies that the human soul or spirit has intelligence and love which is suggested by the fact that the charioteer has eyes, though they are blindfolded. This is supported by the utterance quoted above, “The benevolent propensities are thus inherent in the human mind” in ‘Speculations on Morals.’ Since the charioteer’s eyes are blindfolded, not removed or blind, Shelley seems to express his optimistic view that the human soul or spirit never lacks intelligence and love even if their function is impeded.

To conclude the analysis of the chariot, it is a symbol of the causes of loveless life because it is surrounded with the charm and influence of worldly things such as power, domination, wealth, materialism and secular reason; because on it there is “a Shape” which is the dark side of human nature, namely selfishness which opposes love; and because it is guided by a blindfolded “Janus-visaged shadow” which represents the human soul or spirit whose intelligence and love are hindered. It has no hope, no creativity, no sublimity and no beauty. For Shelley, lack of love creates the condition of the world which is expressed in the dedication to Leigh Hunt of ‘The Cenci’ as “sad reality,”<sup>34</sup> and is overcome by Prometheus who decides to “pity thee [Jupiter]” (‘Prometheus Unbound,’ 1.53) and “hate no more, / As then ere misery made me wise” (‘Prometheus unbound,’ I, 1.57-58).

The great men of the past are fettered to the chariot. They gained secular powers and died in those powers. As intimated in “So that the trunk survived both fruit and flower” (1.124), they concentrated on making comfortable the material life symbolised by “trunk,” ignoring spirituality metaphorically expressed as “flower,” and thus they became captives. Opposing them, those who escaped the fetters maintained their spirits in their natural condition as expressed in “The sacred few who could not tame / Their spirits to the conquerors” (1.128-129). From these points, it becomes clear that Shelley attaches great importance to human spirituality. Indeed, he does so in as early a work as ‘Queen Mab,’ in which he says “Vain man! that palace is the virtuous heart, / And peace defileth not her snowy robes / In such a shed as thine [the king’s]”

(‘Queen Mab,’ III, 1.74-76), “The virtuous man / Who, great in his humility, as kings / Are little in their grandeur” (‘Queen Mab,’ III, 1.150-152). He insists on the superiority of spirituality represented as “virtue,” and the spiritual man to the “king,” who represents worldly, material powers. As Shelley says in the already quoted line of ‘A Defence of Poetry,’ the centre of spirituality is love. He regards spirituality as eternal, saying “How all things are transfigured except Love” (1.476) in the later section of the poem.

The description of the captives presents another noteworthy point, namely the treatment of death. Formerly, Shelley took death only as a release from the pain and agony of this world, as the following lines show: “That all the cares subside, / Which lurk beneath the tide / Of life’s unquiet stream” (‘To Death,’ 1.25-27). “ ‘She hungers, slave! / Stab her, or give her bread!’ ” (‘Laon and Cythna,’ canto V, 1.235-236) which the tyrant says to Laon when he sees the little girl is weakened who stays beside him till the last. Also in his real life, he asks in a letter dated the 18th of June, 1822 to one of his friends, Edward John Trelawny to send “Prussic Acid, or essential oil of bitter almonds”<sup>86</sup> to him as a kind of tranquilliser while he is in distress. Although it is mainly the virtuous who, he says, find peace in death, it seems natural that the king is also released from worldly pains as Shelley says, regarding him as a sort of sufferer, in ‘Queen Mab’ that

He [king], like the vulgar, thinks, feels, acts and lives  
Just as his father did; the unconquered powers  
Of precedent and custom interpose  
Between a king and virtue.” (‘Queen Mab,’ III, 1.96-99)

In ‘The Triumph of Life’ however, those who adhered to secular powers in their life are fettered to the chariot and walk on the “public way” without experiencing peace after death. Shelley no longer believes that peace comes after death to those loveless people who clung to worldly things in their life. In other words, only those who have loved experience peace in death. In 1810 Shelley composed ‘To Death’ which contains the lines, “That every sense, but Love, destroyed / Must perish with its kindred clay” (‘To Death,’ 1.18-19).

After the captives, there appears a crowd of people dancing madly around the chariot. As many critics point out,<sup>86</sup> these people represent sexual intercourse. The critics mainly emphasise the grossness of sensuality and one of them even says that “Shelley depicts the degrading influence of loveless sensuality.”<sup>87</sup> Young people’s sexual desire is certainly intense but it is

not always true that they have sexual intercourse without feeling love. Sexual intercourse is usually preceded by attraction or love. Because of their love, which is often different from the love which Shelley approves of, and because of their intense physical desire, they often rush into sex. But in the poem they "Oft to their bright destruction come and go" (l.154), "the fiery band which held / Their natures, snaps" (l. 157-158) inside them, "One falls and then another in the path / Senseless" (l.159-160) and at last "nor is the desolation single, / Yet ere I can say 'Ware, - the chariot hath / Past over them" (l.160-162), which means that because of their love, they fall into a worse condition, instead of rising into a better one. This means that there is a difference between the love which Shelley recommends and that which young people experience.

The nature of love which Shelley approves of is shown in a letter to Thomas Jefferson Hogg dated the 23rd of December, 1810. It is "to seek the happiness of the object of attachment."<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, he clearly states in 'On Love' that "this [love] is the bond and the sanction which connects not only man with man, but with every thing which exists [sic]"<sup>39</sup> and that love between men is a tendency to find the antitype of "the ideal prototype of every thing excellent or lovely that we are capable of conceiving as belonging to the nature of man."<sup>40</sup> In a word, Shelley's love is the connection through the ideal self with everything in this world.

Now the type of love which Shelley disapproves of must be discussed. A line in 'Speculations on Morals' throws light on it: "Let it not be objected that patriotism, and chivalry, and sentimental love, have been the fountains of enormous mischief."<sup>41</sup> He denies the value of sentimental or romantic love. With regard to sentimental or romantic love, he wrote the following lines in a letter to Hogg, after ending his relationship with Harriet Grove, the first woman he loved. The letter is dated the 28th of December, 1810.

indecision and a fear of injuring another, by complying with what perhaps were the real wishes of my bosom, distracted me. I do not tell you this by way of confession of my own state, for I believe that I may not be sufficiently aware of what I feel myself, even to own it to myself.<sup>42</sup>

In the statement above, he recognizes that his love for her might injure her, and was self-centred. Later, in a letter to Hogg dated the second of January, 1811, he identifies such love with egotism, saying "Why do you, my happy friend, tell me of perfection in love? Is she not gone? And yet I breathe, I live! But adieu to egotism; I am sick to death at the name of self."<sup>43</sup> He continues by saying that "I am afraid there is selfishness in the passion of love, for I cannot avoid

feeling every instant as if my soul was bursting; but I will feel no more! It is selfish.”<sup>44</sup>

Such love is merely a desire to satisfy one's own wishes without regarding for the person he loves. The one who feels such love pay no attention to the other's circumstances, uses every available means in order to fulfil his or her own desire and aims primarily to gratify himself or herself, not the other. There are many instances when the loved one is unhappy, or when both are unhappy. A good example of the latter case is 'Zastrozzi: A Romance' which Shelley wrote in 1810. Entangled in Zastrozzi's plot of vengeance, the heroine, Matilda La Contessa di Laurentini wins the heart of Verezzi who loves Julia La Marchesa di Strobazzo. The result is Verezzi's suicide and her own trial, in which her guilt is obvious. As this romance shows, sentimental or romantic love is gratification of one's own desires and wishes, and is purely selfish. As his letters show, Shelley detests selfishness as the source of vice. Therefore, it is inevitable that the young people who are swept away by sentimental or romantic love fall with a crash.

Behind the chariot, there are the old people running after it, who are fascinated by the light of the chariot which symbolises worldly powers. They try to reach it in vain. Harold Bloom says that “the old sink to corruption with impotence of will”<sup>45</sup> but they are not degraded because of their “impotence of will” (l.170). Judging from their effort to “reach the light” (l.168), they have enough will. “They [only] wheel” (l.171) because of it. The lines, “But not the less with impotence of will / They wheel” (l. 170-171) mean that their will is decrepit because of old age. These old men still want to obtain worldly powers, and it is hard for them to be detached. They are like those whom Shelley deals with in the preface to 'Alastor,' as follows;

All else, selfish, blind, and torpid, are those unforeseeing multitudes who constitute, together with their own, the lasting misery and loneliness of the world. Those who love riot their fellow-beings, live unfruitful lives, and prepare for their old age a miserable grave.<sup>46</sup>

The second part of 'The Triumph of Life' shows that people who disregard nature, the symbol of love and order, and continue living a life of folly, welcome the chariot on the futile and loveless “public way.” The chariot gives off a bright light, symbolising the charm or influence of secular reason, materialism, worldly powers, and things incapable of or lacking love. It carries on it “a Shape” who is the dark side of human nature, selfishness opposed to love, and it is guided by “A Janus-visaged shadow” which is the human soul or spirit possessing intelligence and love but deprived of their sound functions. Fettered to the chariot is “a captive multitude” who do not experience peace after death as a result of spending their life in this world pursuing

worldly powers and not paying any attention to love. These people have forgotten love, devote themselves to the pursuit of secular powers and live vainly. In short, they are loveless persons doing loveless deeds in a loveless world. Shelley feels real life is such a thing. He regards a loveless world as detestable and evil, and despises it.

[NOTES]

1. The quotations of Shelley's works are from *The Complete Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley* (New York: Gordian Press, 1965) ed. by Roger Ingpen and Walter E. Peck, Newly. Roman numbers in the notes to Shelley's prose works indicate the volume numbers of the complete works.
2. Ivan Roe, *Shelley: The Last Phase* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1973), p.196.
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