

Rebirth of the Mind

Transformation and renewal lie at the heart of every aspect of life. As humans, we do not have the absolute answers to explain how the world works, but we are born into a world of distinct ideologies and habits that we unconsciously learn along the way of our upbringing. To some extent, our outlook on the world is shaped before we even have our own experiences and our own chance to form judgments. Thus, one unknowingly becomes held captive by certain limitations that veil his/her eyes from seeing the world from a different lens. This is why change and rebirth are crucial for all great things to begin. As we allow room for reform in our minds and, more importantly, souls, we allow change, growth, and alignment with the right values. Shelley stresses the significance of such a rebirth in two ways. First, he reveals the wind's profound ability to render a change in nature and expresses his desperate need for the rejuvenating power of the wind's fierce spirit in order for him to gain the strength and peace once present in his childhood. Second, one could say that the ballad achieved its performative role successfully as Shelley clearly declares his message in the last three stanzas with the hope for a rebirth as he wishes the wind to "drive [his] dead thoughts over the universe... to quicken a new birth" (3). His thoughts are dead because they form an endless cycle of misery that does not renew itself. Rejuvenation, in "Ode to the West Wind", proves to be essential to **free** the narrator from his agony and to **free** the reader from his own sufferings or limitations. The narrator then says, "Scatter, as from an unextinguish'd hearth/ Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!" (3). I profoundly admire these two lines, for through this ballad, the narrator aims to cause a revolutionary change ignited by his cyclical death thoughts and agony that would be transformed into hope in another being. Although his thoughts and words are merely flares that could ignite a fire, viz., inspire a revolutionary change and reform in all his readers and in a society with decaying perspectives and ideologies about the world. Thus, even his thoughts as flares undergo transformation to

Gisele Zoghbi

become a great fire that burns the reader's past ideologies and outlooks rendering them to change.