

**PROMETHEUS UNBOUND,  
A LYRICAL  
DRAMA IN FOUR  
ACTS WITH OTHER POEMS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649109791

Prometheus unbound, a lyrical drama in four acts with other poems by Percy Bysshe Shelley

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY**

**PROMETHEUS UNBOUND,  
A LYRICAL  
DRAMA IN FOUR  
ACTS WITH OTHER POEMS**



PROMETHEUS UNBOUND

A LYRICAL DRAMA

IN FOUR ACTS

WITH OTHER POEMS

BY

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

AUDISSE HÆC, AMPHITARAI, SUB TERRAM ADDITE?

LONDON

C AND J OLLIER VERE STREET BOND STREET

1820



## CONTENTS.

|                         | Page |
|-------------------------|------|
| Preface .....           | vii  |
| PROMETHEUS UNBOUND..... | 1    |

### MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| The Sensitive Plant .....  | 157 |
| A Vision of the Sea.....   | 174 |
| Ode to Heaven .....  | 182 |
| An Exhortation .....   | 186 |
| Ode to the West Wind .....   | 188 |
| An Ode, written October, 1819, before the Spaniards had<br>recovered their Liberty ..... | 193 |
| The Cloud.....   | 196 |
| To a Skylark .....   | 201 |
| Ode to Liberty .....   | 207 |





## PREFACE.

THE Greek tragic writers, in selecting as their subject any portion of their national history or mythology, employed in their treatment of it a certain arbitrary discretion. They by no means conceived themselves bound to adhere to the common interpretation or to imitate in story as in title their rivals and predecessors. Such a system would have amounted to a resignation of those claims to preference over their competitors which incited the composition. The Agamemnonian story was exhibited on the Athenian theatre with as many variations as dramas.

I have presumed to employ a similar licence. The "Prometheus Unbound" of Æschylus supposed the reconciliation of Jupiter with his victim as the price of

the disclosure of the danger threatened to his empire by the consummation of his marriage with **Thetis**. **Thetis**, according to this view of the subject, was given in marriage to **Peleus**; and **Prometheus**, by the permission of **Jupiter**, delivered from his captivity by **Hercules**. Had I framed my story on this model, I should have done no more than have attempted to restore the lost drama of *Æschylus*; an ambition, which, if my preference to this mode of treating the subject had incited me to cherish, the recollection of the high comparison such an attempt would challenge might well abate. But, in truth, I was averse from a catastrophe so feeble as that of reconciling the Champion with the Oppressor of mankind. The moral interest of the fable, which is so powerfully sustained by the sufferings and endurance of **Prometheus**, would be annihilated if we could conceive of him as unsaying his high language and quailing before his successful and perfidious adversary. The only imaginary being resembling in any degree **Prometheus**, is **Satan**; and **Prometheus** is, in my judgement, a more poetical character than **Satan**, because, in addition to courage, and majesty, and firm and patient opposition to omnipotent force, he is susceptible of being described as

exempt from the taints of ambition, envy, revenge, and a desire for personal aggrandisement, which, in the Hero of *Paradise Lost*, interfere with the interest. The character of Satan engenders in the mind a pernicious casuistry which leads us to weigh his faults with his wrongs, and to excuse the former because the latter exceed all measure. In the minds of those who consider that magnificent fiction with a religious feeling it engenders something worse. But Prometheus is, as it were, the type of the highest perfection of moral and intellectual nature, impelled by the purest and the truest motives to the best and noblest ends.

This Poem was chiefly written upon the mountainous ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, among the flowery glades, and thickets of odoriferous blossoming trees, which are extended in ever winding labyrinths upon its immense platforms and dizzy arches suspended in the air. The bright blue sky of Rome, and the effect of the vigorous awakening spring in that divinest climate, and the new life with which it drenches the spirits even to intoxication, were the inspiration of this drama.

The imagery which I have employed will be found, in many instances, to have been drawn from the opera-