

Following the time of political turmoil and social change sweeping through Europe (the French Revolution, the Napoleonic Wars, the Industrial Revolution), the mythological figure of Prometheus was especially popular in English Romantic literature. The Promethean symbol and values of liberty and defiance were evident inspirations of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Percy Bysshe Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* and George Gordon Byron's *Manfred*. Being generally interested in English Romantic literature, I seek to discuss in what ways and to what extent have the Romantics rewritten the themes associated with the Titan for the purposes of modernity.

Prometheus' chief characteristics are his caring and self-sacrificing, yet rebellious and cunning nature - he is in short an individual that the Romantics could relate to, also because he suffered for his beliefs and was mentally strong enough to stand up against the Olympian authorities. His name translates as 'forethought' or 'foresight' and this is without doubt connected to why the Romantics found him relevant to their time. There are a few issues that will need to be confronted. First of all, there are countless versions of the ancient myth, so instead I will direct my attention to the values and symbols associated with Prometheus. Secondly, there are also other literary works that had influenced the ones analyzed; for example, *Frankenstein* to some extent draws on Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Byron's *Manfred* refers to the German legend and Goethe's appropriation of *Faust* and P. B. Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* is a reaction to the work of the ancient Greek tragedian Aeschylus *Prometheus Bound*.

After a brief introduction on the literary and historical context, my chief aim is to find why Prometheus is so topical for the selected authors of this period. To do this, I will use the following method of research.

1. Focus on each of the chosen literary works separately and identify specific Promethean aspects discussed by the Romantic author.
2. Discuss the Promethean set of values and symbols presented in connection to or comparison to the protagonist of the chosen work (*Frankenstein*, *Manfred* and *Prometheus*).
3. Critically assess the way in which the ancient Prometheus is changed, deconstructed or newly formulated.