

Romanticism – an era of rebellion, of overreachers revolting against previous generations' conventions of taste, style and morals. Romantics made transgression their badge of honour and prided themselves on the desecration of formerly canonised laws. The repercussions of these meaningful and consequential trespasses are explored in unique ways in their texts.

Having gathered thirteen papers given at the 2019 joint conference of the German Society for English Romanticism (GER) and the International Association of Byron Societies (IABS) at the University of Vechta, this essay collection examines the extent to which boundaries were crossed, permeated and violated. The boundaries between Orient and Occident, humanity and the animal world, subject and object, fictional and factual and even life and death, all of which were contemplated by selected authors of English and German Romanticism, are of particular interest.

Swantje van Mark,
Leonore Sell, Norbert Lennartz (Eds.)



23 STUDIEN ZUR ENGLISCHEN ROMANTIK

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Boundaries, Limits, Taboos: Transgression in Romanticism

Selected Papers from the Vechta Conference of
the German Society for English Romanticism and
the International Association of Byron Societies

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Acknowledgements

Tourneys, masques, theatres, better become
Our halcyon days
Thomas Carew, 'In Answer of an Elegiacal Letter,
upon the Death of the King of Sweden ...' ll. 96-97.

This collection of essays stems from the joint conference of the International Association of Byron Societies (IABS) and the German Society for English Romanticism (GER) held at the University of Vechta in September 2019. When scholars from the US, Canada, Britain, France, Italy, Sweden, Lebanon, Japan, South Korea and Germany convened on the campus of our small university in Lower Saxony, nobody could have known that this meeting was to be the last gathering for many of us and that fewer than six months later the academic world came to a standstill due to Covid-19.

In seventeenth-century literature, the Cavaliers used the term 'halcyon days' to describe the few convivial days that Royalists enjoyed before the onset of the rigorous Puritan Interregnum. Unwittingly, we were also enjoying halcyon days in September 2019, partaking of the pleasures of academic life, sitting closely together at conference dinners in Bremen and Vechta and listening (with a few glasses of wine) to Robert Schumann's fabulous *Kreislarian* played by the pianist, colleague and our dear friend Wolfgang Mechsner. Today, after more than a year of intermittent lockdowns, it seems almost inconceivable that people from all over the world were able to come to Vechta, to sit together in rooms without restrictions, to talk to each other without wearing face masks and to spend a wonderful time without being constantly alerted to pandemic spikes, R-numbers and rates of infection. The fond memories that we have of the conference have helped us to deal with the hard and often challenging periods of isolation (for quite a long time Vechta was one of the hotspots of the pandemic in Germany) and to look forward to new post-covid conferences where Romanticists meet in person (and not via Zoom), engage in lively conversations and recollect in tranquillity the time when a little, but pernicious virus became the transgressor of boundaries, limits, taboos and bodies.

Our heartfelt thanks go to the German Research Foundation (DFG) that supported the conference and the project of transgression in Romanticism as generously as the University of Vechta. We are very grateful for the wonderful selection of essays that renowned scholars in the field of Romanticism submitted to us and to these authors who responded to all our nit-picking queries with patience and benevolence in spite of current circumstances. We are very happy and grateful that in these times of pandemic restrictions and ever-recurring lockdowns we were able to rely on flexible and cooperative contributors who eventually made this collection possible as a lasting tribute to those halcyon days in Vechta in 2019.

Vechta, in April 2021

Swantje van Mark

Leonore Sell

Norbert Lennartz

Transgression in Romanticism: Some Introductory Remarks

The arts have always attracted and even invited transgressions, and at least since Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* readers of all generations have known that neat compliance with norms, rules and regulations is liable to create fatal boredom and leave the avid scholar "glutted with conceit of this" (*Doctor Faustus* 1.1.77). When Alexander Pope considers it advisable to remind his contemporaries of the fact that to probe into God's plans is presumption and that the "proper study of mankind is Man" (a maxim still duly repeated by the law-abiding and tragic protagonist of Goethe's *Elective Affinities*, Otilie) ("Essay on Man" 2:2, *Major Works* 281; *Wahlverwandtschaften* 417) he seems to be responding to man's ongoing unruliness in allegedly serene Classicism in the same way as John Donne did more than a century before when he lamented that seventeenth-century Faustian man wanted to be as unique as a phoenix ("The First Anniversary" l. 217).

While in early modern times overreachers rebelled against limitations imposed on them by religion and convention and in their outrageous complaints focused on the Chain of Being as a God-given instrument of clipping the wings of their Icarian aspirations, Romantics saw themselves thrust into a world in which the opprobrium attached to transgression changed into fascination, awe-inspired admiration and an unprecedented celebrity cult. Reverting to Milton's singular idea of restoring Lucifer to his pristine angelic splendour in *Paradise Lost*, Romantics such as Percy Bysshe Shelley not only courted the idea of being blasphemers or followers of the Satanic school of poetry, but also sought scandal when they turned the foremost Luciferic sin of pride into a new transgressive virtue. Although burdened by a "heavy weight of hours" and suffering from the dreariness of the human condition, the speaker in "Ode to the West Wind" (1819) feels himself akin to the destructive sublimity of the wind and characterizes himself as "tameless, and swift, and proud" ("Ode to the West Wind" ll. 55-56), giving the last word full stress and turning it into a byword for positive transgression.

The fact that Shelley was a political radical who was actuated by transgressive pride against the *ancien régime*, in particular at the time of the traumatic Peterloo massacre in 1819, is not new; neither is the fact that in just one line – "I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!" ("Ode to the West Wind" l. 54) – he conflates bleeding Christ with Icarus and thus creates a new syncretistic type of (thwarted) transgressor. What is, however, intriguing and underlines the Romantics' tendency to contradiction and paradox is that this eulogy of transgressive power is subjected to the rigorous demands of an intricate form that coerces the wind into the double grid of the Dantean *terza rima* and the fourteen-line sonnet. While even Shakespeare tends to give his overreachers the partial freedom of showing their high-flown rhetorics in rhymeless blank verse, Romantics seem to

negate their transgression when they prefer to confine their manifestations of unbounded strength to the conservatism of traditional forms.

This contradiction permeates most of the Romantics' works and, to a certain extent, tempers the transgressiveness of their overriding subjects. Read from this perspective, even Byron, after his Faustian spell in *Manfred* (where he, however, refrains from giving his ranting hero a flamboyant Wertherian death), reverts to the discipline of the comic epic in *ottava rima*, a stanzaic form which is instrumental in belittling the former metaphysical rebel Don Juan and transforms him into a *picaro* buffeted around by his mother, harassed by voracious women and even laughed at as a drag queen *avant la lettre* in an Oriental seraglio. While, in Byron's poem, the world is transgressively turned upside down, making the boyish Don Juan bear the brunt of an unleashed Hobbesian wolfishness, Juan's rebellion and transgression are made alarmingly redundant in the absence of a punitive God. In this context, it is interesting to see that, in the scandalous Canto 2 of *Don Juan* (*DJ*), Byron shows his (anti-)hero's disconcerting shift from Prometheus, the relentless and vindictive rebel against Jupiter's tyranny, to the carnivorous vulture that daily devoured the Titan's liver and now stands for man's bestialization and reduction to an instinct-driven nonentity. When the "savage hunger" demands, "[I]like the Promethean vulture, this pollution" (*DJ* 2.595-96) man's identification with the predatory bird is almost complete. With the ship of the holy trinity (*Trinidad*) turned into a small boat of cannibalistic fools, Byron seems to insinuate that transgression has lost its way and that even the breach of the last taboo, cannibalism, has been deprived of its momentum when all myths of order have come to be replaced by chaotic arbitrariness. The fact that Juan refrains from partaking of this cannibalistic excess – "Twas not to be expected that he should, / Even in extremity of their disaster, / Dine with them on his pastor and his master" (*DJ* 2.622-24) – and that he is consequently spared the horrid convulsions with which the devourers of Pedrillo are afflicted is certainly not due to an act of metaphysical justice, but rather the result of both a desultory stroke of luck and a lingering feeling of humanity in a post-human world.

Despite the fact that Goethe was like Byron a "bad metaphysician" (*Byron's Letters and Journals* 3:135; cf. Conrady 2:487), he seems to have checked his overreacher's designs by embedding the tragedy of the disgruntled Faust into the framework of a wager between God and Mephisto. And when Mephisto even defines his role as being part of a power that by wreaking havoc intends to effect good things ("Teil von jener Kraft, / Die stets das Böse will und stets das Gute schafft"; *Faust* II. 1335-36),¹ Goethe leaves his readers in no doubt that Faust's transgression follows the pattern of a dialectic gravitating towards a meaningful end (eventually discernible in the *deus ex machina* interference in Gretchen's dungeon). The Faust syndrome (see Lansdown) is thus doubtlessly inscribed into many Romantic works, but while Goethe's play seems to imply that transgression is an integral part of a Calderonian *theatrum mundi*, British Romantics insinu-

1 See also Coleridge's rather wooden translation: "a portion of that power / Whose wills are evil, but whose actions good" (Burwick and McKusick 21).

ate that all Faustian transgression is on the point of becoming absurd when the transgressor's antagonist (Jupiter, Jehovah) is either an inveterate *deus absconditus* or even fading away into non-existence. It is this sudden meaninglessness that Frankenstein's monster is ultimately faced with when its dilettantish creator dies and provocative confrontations between creature and creator (modelled on disputes between God and Satan in *Paradise Lost*) have irretrievably come to an end.

In the first generation of Romanticism, for Wordsworth and Coleridge, even small-scale transgression immediately triggered self-censorship and corrective intervention. For generations, critics have been trying to lift the mysterious veil of the (genderless) person from Porlock and inadvertently contributing to its myth rather than explaining its untimely arrival to truncate the surreal poem "Kubla Khan" (see also Wu 108-14). That "Kubla Khan" is a poem about transgression is evident and that the eruption of the mighty fountain is suggestive of an orgasmic ejaculation and predictably the result of suppressed auto-erotic fantasies can also be proved by textual evidence. The more the poem seemed to be getting out of control and the sexual subtext was on the point of surfacing, the more urgently Coleridge seems to have felt the need to apply what Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, in a related context, was to call the "sphincter of the will" (Sedgwick 818-37), the proto-Victorian application to an instance of self-censorship later personified by an invisible character from a Romantic play, Mrs Grundy in Thomas Morton's forgotten melodrama *Speed the Plough* (1798). In "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner", the transgression is arguably less sexual than a good example of the "motiveless malignity" that Coleridge associated with Shakespeare's Iago. As soon as the Mariner shoots the albatross and thus arbitrarily interferes with the sentimental ring of sympathy between man and animals, there is, however, an immediate reaction from an ontological Mrs Grundy, repaying the Mariner's purposeless transgression with the death of the ship's crew, with the curse of the Mariner's Ahasverian existence and forcing him to overcome his aversion to the thousands of "slimy things" ("Rime" l. 238) and to extend his love even to the ambiguous ugly water-snakes (see Böhm). To what extent this transgression loses its impact and turns into a banality in the pre-Darwinian struggle for survival is shown in Byron's *Don Juan* when the beautiful webfooted "bird of promise" (*DJ* 2.754) only whets the cannibals' appetite, and eventually it is by chance that the bird escapes and leaves the few survivors of the *Trinidad* still famished and longing for their elusive food: "They would have eat her, olive branch and all" (*DJ* 2.760). Considering the fact that man is, according to Byron's sardonic narrator, "a carnivorous production" (*DJ* 2.529), only crude necessity is paramount, but Coleridge's divine and punishing antagonist, so indispensable for the concept of transgression, has fallen out of Byron's poem.

Even Wordsworth is unable to escape the emergent Mrs Grundy whose correction he seems to solicit even for minor transgressions in his youth and for his Icarian flight into the Alps. Before the speaker of *The Prelude* yields to the temptation of the soul-liberating feeling of the sublime, he introduces a peasant, who, like an ontological signpost, exhorts the mountaineers to descend and to be aware that "our future course ... / Was

downwards" (*Prelude* 6:581; 6:584-85). When they still entertain hopes that "pointed to the clouds" (*Prelude* 6:587) and are loath to believe that their aspirations are futile, Wordsworth and his crew are compelled to come to terms with the sobering and castigating truth the peasant so insistently reiterates: "*that we had crossed the Alps*" (*Prelude* 6:591; italics in the original).

With transgression eliciting responses that range from the censorious application of the volitional sphincter to the conviction that man is fatalistically thrust into an absurd universe in which transgressions have ceased to be transgressive, some of the Romantics, more often than not those writing off the beaten track of the canonical 'big six', tried to tackle the boundaries, limits and taboos that persistently keep the individual locked in "mind-forg'd manacles" (*Blake Songs of Experience* 8:8). As if to escape the ever-tightening grip of an imaginary Urizen, Godwin is in line with his son-in-law Shelley when he predates *The Cenci* by a few years with an action-packed novel about incest (a work that might not have passed muster with Wordsworth who, on the one hand, was exposed to allegations of incestuous love for his sister, and, on the other, saw British culture flooded by a deluge of trashy and immoral novels) (see Möllers). Others follow Byron's cue, pop star, *enfant terrible* and alleged practitioner of incest, who not only transgressed boundaries of taste and decorum in his anarchic *Don Juan*, but also transgressed real geographical boundaries and introduces his bewildered British audience into the exotic and passionate realm of the Orient. *The Giaour*, *The Corsair* and various other Oriental tales suck their readers into the vortex of passion, jealousy and death (see also Reimann), but they also give them insight into forms of otherness which Regency society – despite its ubiquitous display of flippancy – recoiled from. The anonymous epistolary novel *The Lustful Turk*, fuelled by the transgressive potential of preceding works of clichéd Orientalism such as Beckford's *Vathek* and Byron's seraglio episode in *Don Juan*, makes use of the transgressive power of pornography which, present in Romantic literature at least since Matthew G. Lewis's *The Monk* (1796), channels sentimental feeling, introspective narration and the generic freedom of the novel into a liminal area where lustful Oriental man coalesces with machines, displaying ever-erect genitals as instruments, engines and weapons (see Saglia). The anonymous writer of this titillating story ostensibly goes beyond the boundaries imposed by Romantic Platonism and counteracts the disembodied growth of poets' minds with the daunting heritage of the eighteenth-century *homme machine* and its genital sublime as paraded in John Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (Blackwell 39-63). Yet, it was to take another century before D. H. Lawrence was able and audacious enough to transgress the linguistic boundaries which hedged in nineteenth-century pornographic forays (from *The Lustful Turk* to Bram Stoker's *Dracula*) and to free literature from the clutter of metonymies and metaphors (see also Domsch). Although "transgressing logocentric perspectives that dominated Western culture from the first", as Larry H. Peer maintains (Peer 5), even the transgressive genre such as burgeoning pornography seems to be peculiarly hampered by a linguistic codification that can pass muster in the face of a stern and ever-vigilant Mrs Grundy.

While the spirit of the perverse propels many Romantic works, from Beethoven's late piano sonatas to ramified novels of the Gothic tradition, it never reigns supreme, but rather proves to be perpetually locked in an antinomian or pseudo-dialectical dichotomy (Kershaw 92-114) between the perverse transgressor and a demonic nemesis (see Duncan). In Edgar Allan Poe's unsettling story "The Black Cat", the murderer is eventually tracked down by the ruses of his feline antagonist, the eerie epitome of fate's vindictiveness. Lewis's Ambrosio is lured into perdition by the erotic traps that the devil puts in his way in the shape of seductive Matilda, and E. T. A. Hoffmann's universe, in which Gothic implausibilities from Horace Walpole's and Lewis's stories converge, is ultimately swayed by the ruthless influence that the ominous dead wield over the living (see Schlutz). It is this dualism that keeps Romantic transgressors in check and shows them nullified by an indefinable antagonistic power which defies expression in the same way as the unleashed erotic force that writers preferred to demonize or to domesticate in a language of vexing ambiguity.

Considering the fact that Regency society vociferously called for a counterpoise of smug domesticity where Thomas Bowdler hoped to familiarize his audience with an adulterated Shakespeare that could freely be read aloud in family circles, readers are scarcely surprised to find Romantic transgressions repeatedly mitigated by stunning depictions of the petty bourgeois world. It is in this context that Byron's *Don Juan* has to be read as a story that reduces Mozart's metaphysical rebel to a boy whose books are mercilessly bowdlerized and who, instead of flamboyantly descending into hell, grows up in the trite matrimonial hell of his parents. This atmosphere of inane domesticity, which to a certain degree is bolstered by the gossipy style of the prevalent gazettes, not only clashes with the *ottava rima* of the Italian epic tradition, it is also held together by what Gottfried Benn calls the "form-demanding power of nothingness" (Benn 8:1913) without which the whole poem would fall apart or dissolve into utter contingency (see Sha). Reverting to a style of meandering loquacity (so much at odds with the elegiac *ubi sunt* tone about dying cultures in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*) (see also Kasahara) and inducing his readers to transgress the boundaries of decorum by filling the gaps created by the odd, allegedly shamefaced hyphen, Byron adroitly shifts the transgression from poet to reader, who from behind the façade of sentimental priggishness hoped to peep through the various keyholes of Juan's life.

In particular, in these private spaces newly created as buttresses against the public mode of eighteenth-century culture, in libraries, boudoirs and salons, readers were quietly introduced to the new transgressive art of taste-making (see Gigante). Books, formerly the pillars of masculine culture in monastic-looking rooms of authoritative knowledge, now turn into objects in which women such as Byron's hectoring Donna Inez not only censor juicy passages but which have also become decorative things standing next to tea dishes, vases and other ornaments. Books themselves (some of them exploring new provinces such as gastronomy) are no longer containers of sacrosanct and hermetic knowledge, they turn into objects that, in their sheer materiality, are violated, commodified, rough-handled and used as sites of intellectual conversation, Swiftian battles or even fierce and

sardonic games of 'crambo' (see Gross). Not only does Charles Lamb's bibliomaniacal library seem to be one of the prime examples of the way books, in the private sphere of domesticity, turn into tools, instruments and receptacles whose aesthetic boundaries are disregarded and whose contents are treated as intellectual food, but more often than not as baits that tend to make the taker mad. In this respect, Byron not only weaponizes books to engage in fierce conversations with the Lake Poets, allied with Beckford, he also seems to pounce on Southey's unctuous *Vision of Judgement* and to hold the Poet Laureate, the "dry Bob" (*DJ* "Dedication" l. 24) and slavish imitator of Kotzebue, accountable for his pompous acquittal of sinners, traitors and decadent regents.

Southey, nowadays seen as a minor poet, but in the early nineteenth century the butt of hatred for the younger generation, is part of the Lake triumvirate that, for Byron and his ilk, epitomizes stagnation, turn-coat conservatism and collusion with the corrupt Establishment. While Byron paraded the "pageant of his bleeding heart" through post-Napoleonic Europe, the Lake Poets were accused of withdrawing into the remote nooks of their native villages, there to start a long process of self-observation, to vent ever-increasing opinionated views and to become as "dispensable" as the late Wordsworth is for Jonathan Bate (Bate 427). Despite the fact that Wordsworth increasingly became monumentalized and as the "sage of Rydal" savagely lambasted works of ostensible loose and transgressive morals such as Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* (translated by Carlyle in 1824-27), Wordsworth preceded Goethe in writing his autobiography and thus in transgressively placing his ego at the centre of a "secular theodicy" (Abrams 95). Although Wordsworth was pre-Victorian enough to keep the objectionable facts of his French liaison with Annette Vallon out of the *Prelude* and like Goethe in *Truth and Fiction* (*Dichtung und Wahrheit*, 1811-31) liberally mixed truth and fabrication, he touched upon an area that was suspected of being a kind of anatomy, of laying bare the innermost recesses of the poet's mind. While Romantic poets thus readily gave insight into their private lives and willingly contributed to the commodification of their vulnerable personalities, they took advantage of a transgressive longing for biographical information and savoury voyeuristic details that had first gathered its momentum in the eighteenth century and flourished with James Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson* (1791). What in the Romantic autobiographies came to be seen as an unhampered form of exhibitionism, in post-Boswellian biographies, became synonymous with body-snatching, with the obscene rummaging in the entrails of a dead body, clandestinely done in the Frankensteinian "workshop of filthy creation" (*Frankenstein* 55) (see Roe).

Seen in this context, the transgression of boundaries, limits and taboos is something which is deeply woven into all areas of Romantic literature, even though the life span of arch transgressors such as Prometheus, Faust, Icarus or Don Juan was relatively short, consumed like a spark – "Der lohe Lichtfunke Prometheus ist ausgebrannt" (*The Robbers / Die Räuber* 1781, 1.2.3) – and more often than not nullified by the worm-like representatives of what Friedrich Schiller indignantly dismissed as the "century of limp eunuchs" ("das schlappe Kastraten-Jahrhundert"; *The Robbers / Die Räuber* 1.2.27). While too much attention has been devoted to aspects of Promethean rebellion over the past de-

cedes, critics have tended to overlook the fact that transgression in the Romantic age is more variegated, covers all manner of things such as Orientalism, pornography, gastronomy, bibliomania and (auto)biography and that it also tentatively affects a language that is for a long time fuelled by the Miltonic sublime, but so glaringly fails to shake off its inhibitions in the realm of backward *homme-machine* pornography.

It might be a coincidence, but also provoke further research that in this study of Romantic transgressions women are conspicuously underrepresented. Although Byron seems to hint that a weak and malleable Don Juan is on the point of being replaced by transgressive women such as Gulbayez or the larger-than-life Empress Catherine of Russia, the countless women in the position of meek Gretchens are still shepherded into the roles of the transgressors' victims and eventually pave the way for the nondescript Sibyl Vane, a specimen of the "decorative sex" in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (38) – a late nineteenth-century novel still propelled by the Faust theme. Women are either immured by psychopaths, used as gender-bending tools of Satan (as Matilda in *The Monk*) or turned into the ravaged bodies battered by the Lustful Turks' genital machines. Even Lucy Westenra in *Dracula*, who as a vampire temporarily dares to defy the regime of Victorian Grundyism, is later ruthlessly subjected to patriarchal order by her fiancé Arthur when he, like the Germanic god Thor, drives "the mercy-bearing" stake through her riotous body (*Dracula* 201). It is to the merit of Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, albeit amply vilified by feminists, that women are increasingly shown in the role of Romantic transgressors, disregarding the time-honoured boundaries between culture and nature and slackening the volitional sphincter by enjoying eurhythmic dances naked in the pouring rain. The fact that Lady Chatterley dislikes men in the role of raffish Don Juans not only makes the history of transgression featuring prominently Byron's *Don Juan* come full circle, it also proves that since the twentieth century Byron's deplored lack of heroes has been compensated for by new and transgressive heroes of all genders.

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Richard Lansdown

Appetite and Deeds, War and the Will: Faustian Transgression in Byron's *The Deformed Transformed*

"En tirant sur la grappe, on fait tomber les grains à terre."
Simone Weil, *La Pesanteur et la grâce*

This chapter inserts Lord Byron into the history of Anglo-Germanic Faustianism, from the English *Faust Book* published in 1592, via Marlowe and Goethe to Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus*, published 360 years after the originary *Historia von Johann Fausten* (based on the life of a historical charlatan dead some fifty years before) was printed in Frankfurt in 1587. In doing so it takes account of matters historical (the Sack of Rome of 1527, where and when *The Deformed Transformed* is set) and philosophical (the will, the hypertrophied exercise of which has often been seen as central to the Faustian legend).

Byron wrote three Faustian poems: *Manfred*, started in the *Frankenstein* summer of 1816 but completed in Rome in May 1818; *Cain* of 1821, where he interpreted events from the fourth chapter of Genesis in terms of a Mephistophelean temptation; and *The Deformed Transformed*, started in January 1822 and abandoned around a year later. *Cain* is a special case, couched as it is in Miltonic terms, and complicated as it is by the preceding incident of the temptation of Eve. But the first and the third poems are clearly influenced by Goethe. The seed of *Manfred* was planted by the Gothic novelist Matthew Lewis, who had translated passages from *Faust* to the poet "by word of mouth" (*Byron's Letters and Journals* [BLJ] 5:26) at Diodati in August 1816 – though the hero of that poem is "his own dupe and destroyer", as Anne Barton suggests (Barton 204), without a Mephistopheles to bring him to perdition. The Faustian atmosphere amidst the Shelley circle at Pisa in 1822 was even thicker. By then Byron's publisher had sent him the anonymous *Analysis of Goethe's Tragedy of Faust*, published in 1820, which involved a brief introduction, sixty pages of translations from the drama, and twenty-six engravings of Friedrich Retzsch's illustrations for it, originally issued in Germany in 1818.¹ Shelley had also been impressed by these engravings, and by April 1822 had translated the Prologue in Heaven and the *Walpurgisnacht* scene from Goethe. We can be fairly

¹ Text and plates are reprinted in Burwick and McCusick. A month after his arrival at Pisa, on 4 December 1821, Byron asked John Murray: "Are there not designs from *Faust*? send me some – and a translation of it – if such there is" (BLJ 9:75). On 22 May 1822 we have record of him giving the book to the wife of a visiting American naval officer, Mrs Catherine Potter Stith (BLJ 9:161-62). Shelley had his copy by 12 January 1822 (Jones 2:376 and 406-07).

Kasahara Yorimichi

Croly's Dying Warrior: The Roman Gladiator That Crossed the Boundary and Turned into Arminius

Byron's Dying Gladiator in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto 4 (hereafter *CHP 4*) is undoubtedly one of the highlights of the entire poem. Yet it should not blind us to the fact that there are other Dying Gladiator poems produced in the English Romantic period. William Hayley, George Robert Chinnery, Felicia Hemans, and William Sotheby, for example, all made poems or lines based on the statue of *Dying Gaul* or *Gladiator*, now housed in the Capitoline Museums in Rome (Kasahara 44-48). Seen in this context, Byron's Dying Gladiator may be just one of them. George Croly's Dying Warrior, too, is yet another. But it is unique in several points. First, his Dying Warrior in *Paris in 1815*, as its title suggests, captures the statue when it was on display in the Louvre as one of the trophies of Napoleon's conquest of Continental Europe. What makes Croly's descriptions further unique is its model. The man who is now about to die is not a gladiator fighting in the Roman coliseum. It is Arminius or, as some Germans later came to call him, Hermann,¹ who, at the head of the anti-Roman alliance, fought fierce battles against Roman legions led by Varus in the Teutoburg Forest in the year AD 9. What I aim to do in this article is first to give a brief biographical sketch of the poet Croly, along with an overview of the poem. I will then, in the next section, devote a few paragraphs to the close reading of the earlier version of Croly's stanzas on this Germanic hero, and compare it with the later version. These two versions happen to cross the chronological border of 1818, the year when *CHP 4* was published: the earlier version written before 1818, and the other after. By so doing, I hope to see the significance of Croly's transgression of the 1818 borderline on his revision of his picture of this ancient Germanic hero who crossed the boundary geographically, chronologically and thematically.

Croly's Life and an Overview of *Paris in 1815* (1817)

For George Croly, who was born in Dublin in 1780, educated at Harrow, then at Trinity College, Dublin, the crossing of boundaries seemed nothing out of the ordinary. In 1804 he was ordained in the Church of Ireland, but soon abandoning the clerical profession, crossed the Irish Sea once again, this time with his two unmarried sisters and his mother – now a widow – and settled in London. By 1813, says David Hanson in the *Oxford*

¹ Since Croly uses no particular name in the poem, nor in the endnote, I will, throughout the present article, use the name "Arminius" which the Kalkriese Museum adopts to refer to this hero. One of the originators of "Hermann" is Martin Luther. See footnote 4 below.

Dictionary of National Biography, the only reliable source available today, Croly had emerged as a theatre critic for *The Times* (Hanson).

In April 1813 *The Times* assigned him as a foreign correspondent to Hamburg and Paris. The crossing of the English Channel and the French-German boundaries seems to have served as a basic formative experience to the composition of *Paris in 1815*. It gave him chances to see and feel what was actually happening on the Continent just when the Congress danced, or the Vienna System was being contemplated for the post-Napoleonic balance of power in Europe. Croly was fortunate enough to be a living witness to all that took place in the French capital from the time when the French army lost the Battle of Waterloo in June 1815, all through the time when the Louvre was being cleared of Napoleon's trophies once looted from all over Europe. He wrote the First Part of *Paris in 1815* and had it published anonymously by John Murray's in 1817 (hereafter abbreviated as *P 1815* (1817) 1).

This is a poem in which the poet narrator pays visits to various places in the city and makes outspoken Byronic comments here and there, just like those in *CHP*. The poem begins as the poet places himself upon a vantage ground, like the narrating poets of eighteenth-century prospect poems. The narrator first goes up Montmartre, overlooks St Cloud, Sèvres, Meudon, and other villages, and goes on to describe what he sees with meditative comments. Here is one of these views:

The gale has come, at once the fleecy haze
Floats up, – then stands a purple canopy,
Shading th' imperial city from the blaze.
Glorious the vision! tower and temple lie
Beneath the morn, like waves of ivory,
With many an azure streak and gush of green,
As grove and garden on the dazzled eye
Rise in successive beauty, and between
Flows into sudden light the long, slow, serpent Seine. (*P 1815* (1817) 1:14.1-9)

For Paris now. – Now farewell hill and vale,
And silence sweet, fresh blooms, and dewy sky!
Farewell the gentle moral of the gale,
The wisdom written in the rose's dye!
I go to meet the wizard city's eye,
That puts on splendour but to dim the soul.
A thousand years of crime beneath me lie!
One glance! – I stand as on a mighty mole,
Around whose base not waves, but evil ages roll. (*P 1815* (1817) 1:15.1-9)

Here Croly first presents the view of the "imperial city" against the backgrounds of a quick succession of changing weather, contrasting it with the unmoving "tower and temple" – reminiscent of Wordsworth's prospect of London in "Composed upon Westminster Bridge, Sept. 3, 1802" (Wordsworth 147). He then concludes Stanza 14 with the moral sinuousness of the Seine, again, contrasting it with Wordsworth's tranquillity of the Thames in the same sonnet. In Stanza 15, Croly goes on to parody Byron's medita-

tion upon the Rhine in *CHP* 3, making the waves roll against the base as "evil ages", instead of "wash[ing] down the blood of yesterday" (*CHP* 3:51.5). Very Byronic indeed. But how quick Croly is to catch the best of Byron from *CHP* 3, published in November 1816, and incorporate it into the 1817 edition of *Paris in 1815*!

What makes Croly's Byronicism different from that of *CHP*, however, is that his comments are mainly made from anti-revolutionary and pro-English viewpoints supporting Church-and-State. In other words, it is a conservative version of *CHP*. Here is another example: the poet, descending Montmartre (*P 1815* (1817) 1:22.1), takes a worm's-eye view of the city, and pays a visit to a gorgeous mass held at Notre-Dame, saying, "Low at the altar, forms in cope and hood / Superb with gold-wrought cross and diamond twine, / As in the pile – alone with life endued, / Toss their untiring censers round the shrine, / Where on her throne of clouds the Virgin sits divine" (*P 1815* (1817) 1:43.5-9), and comments later:

Gorgeous! – but love I not such pomp of prayer;
Ill bends the heart 'mid mortal luxury.
Rather let me the meek devotion share,
Where, in their silent glens and thickets high,
England, thy lone and lowly chapels lie.
The spotless table by the eastern wall,
The marble, rudely traced with names gone by,
The pale-eyed pastor's simple, fervent call;
Those deeper wake the heart, where heart is all in all. (*P 1815* (1817) 1:45.1-9)

True, it is a conservative version of *CHP*, but one does not have to be "a staunch defender of Church and King" with "the Tory viewpoint" as Reiman characterizes the poet in his "Introduction" to Garland's facsimile edition of *Paris in 1815* (Reiman v) to cherish this love of "lone and lowly chapels" of the English countryside (though Croly is of Irish origin). Those who can sympathize with Gray's "rude Forefathers of the hamlet" in his "Elegy Written in a Country Church Yard" (Gray 38) will not fail to appreciate the humble dignity of "[t]he marble, rudely traced with names gone by".

The volume of *Paris in 1815* as published in 1817 carries no mention of its being the "First Part" on the title page, but ends as "The End of the First Part". This suggests that Croly, who had started the poem with a single-volume plan, began entertaining the idea of continuing it towards the final stage of printing, and had just time enough to add a few words at the end. In fact, Croly himself states in the "Preface" to the 1821 edition (hereafter abbreviated as *P 1815* (1821) 2) that he had continued writing a "considerable number of stanzas", which were meant to be published immediately following the 1817 edition, but some causes that were "unimportant to the reader" delayed its publication (*P 1815* (1821) 2: Preface iii). He further comments that he mentions the circumstance "only to avoid the appearance of plagiarism", and continues, "[t]he lines on the Louvre Statues, and Pictures, were written before the publication of that Canto of *Childe Harold*, in which the same subjects are described" (*P 1815* (1821) 2: Preface iii). It was in

this 1821 edition that the Dying Warrior stanzas were first published as part of the Second Part of *Paris in 1815*.²

The 1821 Edition and After

In the Second Part of *Paris in 1815* published in 1821, the poet becomes more liberated from the constraints of actual time and place. He becomes ekphrastic and gives descriptions of works of art amassed in the French capital. He first speaks of *The Triumphal Quadriga*, or the Roman bronze statue of horses, then temporarily placed on the Arc Triomphe de Carrousel in Paris, now returned to St Mark's Basilica in Venice. The works of art in the Louvre he mentions are, in the order of the poem, Guido Reni's *Penitence of St Peter*, Raphael's *Transfiguration*, Titian's *Peter Martyr*, Correggio's *The Marriage of St Catherine*, and statues of *Apollo Belvedere*, the *Laocoön Group*, *Dying Gladiator*, and *Venus de Medici*. The poet then touches upon the public execution of King Louis XVI, Napoleon's Russian campaign and his retreat in the harsh winter of 1812, his exile on St Helena, his defeat at Waterloo, and the late years and funeral of King George III, etc., before he finishes the Second Part.

Croly keeps revising the poem after the publication of the Second Part in 1821. Then in 1830 *The Collected Works of Croly* comes out, in which is given the revised version of the First and Second Parts of *Paris in 1815* (hereafter abbreviated as *P 1815* (1830) 1 or 2). What I intend to examine below is the Dying Warrior stanzas of the 1821 edition claimed to have been written before the publication of *CHP 4* or the 1818 borderline, and those of the revised 1830 version.

What the Endnote Tells Us

All editions of *Paris in 1815* are appended with endnotes. The notes relating to the Dying Warrior stanzas are identical regardless of editions, and will be hereafter quoted from the 1821 version. There are three main points in the interpretation of the Dying Warrior stanzas.

Chinnery's Dying Gladiator Criticized

Croly begins the endnote with a criticism of the expression "[c]ollecting all his energies to die" in "an Oxford-prize-poem on the *Dying Gladiator*". He says "[t]he Dying Gladiator is *collecting no energies*. His strength is totally gone ..." (*P 1815* (1821) 2:80-81, Croly's italics). Croly does not mention the poet's name, but if what he means is George Robert Chinnery's "The Statue of the Dying Gladiator" that won the Newdigate Prize of

2 "The Dying Warrior" is my coinage, based upon (1) Byron's "Dying Gladiator", and (2) Croly's phrase "Beside him sinks a warrior on his shield".

the University of Oxford in 1810, the original passage runs as follows: "... rally life's whole energy – to die!" (Chinnery l. 18) and not "collecting" as Croly defiantly criticizes.³ We cannot help thinking that either Croly was too confident of his memory to take the trouble of checking the original, or simply the book was not near at hand.

Battle of the Teutoburg Forest, and the Expedition of Germanicus in AD 9

The second and third paragraphs of the endnote, compared with the first, are extremely laconic but of far greater importance. This is all that Croly says:

This statue, of the highest excellence in its style of strong expression, is generally supposed to represent, not a gladiator but a German dying on the field.

The allusions in the stanzas refer to the celebrated description of the march of the Roman army, to find the remains of Varus and his legions. "Igitur cupido Caesarem invadit solvendi suprema militibus," &c. – Tacitus, *Annal. Lib. 1* [sic]. (*P 1815* (1821) 2:80-81, Croly's italics)

The Latin quotation at the end is taken from the beginning of Section 61, Book 1 of Tacitus's *Annals*, which describes the expedition of Germanicus conducted in the year AD 15. Croly's actual source, however, is not confined to this part of *The Annals*. He also takes from other volumes and other sections as well as from other writers, notably from Velleius Paterculus, whose account of Varus's severed head carried "o'er many a hill and fen" (*P 1815* (1821) 2:56.8) proves indispensable in the interpretation of the latter part of Stanza 56. Again, Croly does not seem have paid much attention to the accuracy of citation. Or perhaps Croly, assuming that everyone was familiar with Arminius's surprise attack of AD 9, and trying to remind us that his stanzas were concerned with two separate battles, pointed out only the lesser known one in the note.

Whichever the case, here is the basic historical background reconstructed from Arminius-related narratives by various authors:⁴ the first major event to note is what is called the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest in the year AD 9. In this battle, the chieftain of the Germanic Cherusci tribe, whom Romans called Arminius, stood at the head of the anti-Roman alliance, fought fierce battles against three Roman legions led by Publius Quinctilius Varus in the Teutoburg Forest, and forced the Roman commander Varus to commit suicide. According to Velleius Paterculus, "The body of Varus, partially burned, was mangled by the enemy in their barbarity; his head was cut off and taken to Maroboduus

3 For Chinnery's complete poem, see Kasahara, pp. 44-45. It should be noted that the poem accessible on the internet, starting "Imperial Rome and trophied Greece ..." (as of 13 Jan. 2021) is a different poem.

4 Since all the ancient narratives were written by Roman historians, I have much benefitted from Harnecker's summary of the battle in *Arminius, Varus and the Battlefield at Kalkriese*, and from the following two websites: Jona Lendering, *Livius.org: Articles on Ancient History*, and *Varusschlacht*, the official museum website, all written from neutral or non-Roman viewpoints.

and was sent by him to Caesar; but in spite of the disaster, it was honoured by burial in the tomb of his family" (Paterculus 2:119). In the year 15, Germanicus, nephew and adopted son of the Roman emperor Tiberius, in one of his punitive campaigns crossing the Rhine, came near the Teutoburg Forest. And "[t]here came upon the Caesar, therefore, a passionate desire to pay the last tribute to the fallen and their leader" (Tacitus 1:61), as Tacitus says in the very passage which Croly mentions in the endnote. In this campaign Germanicus pursues Arminius with much difficulty. "It was a night of unrest", writes Tacitus, and "the barbarians, in high carousal, filled the low-lying valleys and echoing woods with chants of triumph or fierce vociferations" (Tacitus 1:65). Thus, Arminius finally succeeded in foiling the Romans. The end of Arminius does not occupy much space in Tacitus. It happened much later in the year AD 21 as a result of an inter-tribal conflict (Tacitus 2:88). Yet, this is the very moment that Croly captures at the beginning of the Dying Warrior stanzas, where the "heart" (*P 1815* (1821) 2:55.2) of the dying warrior alone tells as the remembrance of past events.

Dying Warrior Stanzas in the 1821 Version

Beside him⁵ sinks a warrior on his shield,
Whose history the heart alone must tell!
Now, dim in eve – he looks, as on the field,
Where when he fell, his country with him fell.
Death sickens all his soul, the blood-drops steal
Slow from his breast, congealing round the wound;
His strong arm shakes, his chest has lost its swell,
'Tis his last breath, – his eye-ball glares profound,
His heavy forehead glooms, bends, plunges, to the ground! (*P 1815* (1821) 2:55.1-9)

The first stanza begins with what appears to be an ekphrastic description of the statue. We need, of course, to read it on the assumption that it is not a gladiator but a German dying on the field that is depicted. The second line gives the overall framework of the following lines: what follows is the history which the warrior's heart alone tells, in other words, readers will be shown as a dying vision of a warrior what he witnessed in the past and had kept only in his heart. We are told in the poem that he is a warrior on the shield, and that he is looking onto the field "[w]here when he fell, his country with him fell" (55.4).

As we read on, the statue gets incarnated and becomes flesh with the description of a minute-by-minute movement of this dying man: "blood-drops" (2:55.5), presumably having gushed out for some time, have already begun to slow down, "congealing round the wound; / His strong arm shakes, his chest has lost its swell" (2:55.6-7). The narrating poet, hearing the dying man's breathing, thinks out loud "'[t]is his last breath" (2:55.8). There is glaring in his eye-ball, which speaks of profoundness, perhaps, in thought, feeling, and his entire existence. There is gloom across his forehead. The head gradually

5 A reference to Laocoön in the preceding stanza.

begins to bend, and suddenly no longer able to sustain itself, "plunges, to the ground" (2:55.9). This is a wonderful verbal rendition of the last moment of the dying German, with all the movements, feelings, and thoughts condensed in the static marble statue. The succession of three verbs "glooms, bends, plunges" (2:55.9) skilfully captures the very frozen moment of the dying man full of potential energy.

Yet had he high revenge, if Roman tears
For Roman slaughter could rejoice his soul.
Did he not hear the crashing of the spears?
When like a midnight tide, his warriors stole
Around the slumbering legions – till the roll
Of the wild forest-drum awoke the glen;
And all was havoc; – and the German pole
Bore Varus' head o'er many a hill and fen.
Chains and the spear are chaff, when Heaven gives hearts to men! (*P 1815* (1821) 2:56.1-9)

In this stanza, the narrator describes the battle that took place in the Teutoburg Forest in the year AD 9, within the framework of vengeance, which Arminius would have felt, if – synonymous with "since" in this context – Roman tears shed for the slaughter of Romans, could rejoice Arminius's soul. Croly next speaks of "Roman slaughter" (2:56.2) or the Romans slaughtered in a German ambush. In this attack, German warriors took advantage of the terrain, and "like a midnight tide ... stole / Around the slumbering [Roman] legions" (2:56.4-5) causing havoc all round. Soon the head of Varus was severed, borne on a "German pole" (2:56.7) and carried "o'er many a hill and fen" (2:56.8). This surprise attack, the poet comments at the beginning of the stanza, would have fulfilled Arminius' revenge – "had he high revenge" (2:56.1) – if there were Romans who shed tears for this slaughter.

Between Stanza 56 and Stanza 57, we need to assume the passage of six years.

Had not that glance the fuller, haughtier joy,
To see the Caesar stand a weeper there?
Fated Germanicus! when, years gone by,
The Legions came the funeral pile to rear;
With silent march, bare head, and trailing spear,
Piercing the forest o'er the slaughter grown;
In horror finding chief and comrade dear
In wolf-torn graves, and haggard piles of bone
Along the ramparts' ruins, and marshy trenches strown. (*P 1815* (1821) 2:57.1-9)

Still frown'd the fatal altars, now in robes
Of giant weeds that sheeted down the boughs
Of the brown pines. There had the thronging globes
Of German warriors held the night's carouse,
And groans of death, and Magic's fearful vows
Startled the moon. But now the murder'd lay,
The human hecatomb! in ghastly rows,
The leaders still unmix'd with meaner clay
Tribune and consul stretch'd in white and wild decay. (*P 1815* (1821) 2:58.1-9)

These two stanzas are based, as Croly himself mentions in his endnote, on Tacitus's account of Germanicus's expedition in the year AD 15. In fact, Croly's lines roughly correspond with the account of Tacitus: legions led by Germanicus trying to find the site of the Roman encampment, the remains of the slaughter being clearly visible even to altars and bones (*P 1815* (1821) 2:57), and those of soldiers and officers being in separate places (*P 1815* (1821) 2:58), all in Section 61 of Tacitus' *Annals*; and German warriors holding the night's carouse (*P 1815* (1821) 2:58) in Section 65.

The 1830 Version Compared with the 1821 Version

The Dying Warrior episode of the later version begins with the same ekphrastic description of the statue as that of the earlier version. In fact, Stanza 51 of 1830 is identical with Stanza 55 of 1821. The next stanza (Stanza 52) includes an expression that suggests a very important change of direction in the 1830 version:

Yet had the bold barbarian joy; if tears
For Roman slaughter could rejoice his soul.
Did he not hear the crashing of the spears?
When like a midnight tide, his warriors stole
Around the slumbering legions – till the roll
Of the wild forest-drum awoke the glen;
And every blow let loose a Roman soul.
So let them sting the lion in his den;
Chains and the spear are chaff, when Heaven gives hearts to men! (*P 1815* (1830)
2:52.1-9)

The first sentence "Yet had the bold barbarian joy" (*P 1815* (1830) 2:52.1) had originally been "Yet had he high revenge" (*P 1815* (1821) 2:56.1) in the earlier version. The substitution of "revenge" with "joy" through the process of revision is to be carried on to the next stanza, where an entirely new concept "shame" appears:

Had not that with'ring lip quaff'd long and deep,
The cup that vengeance for the patriot fills;
When swords instinctive from their scabbards leap,
When the dim forests, and the mighty hills,
And the lone gushings of the mountain rills,
All utter to the soul a cry of shame;
And shame, like drops of molten brass, distils
On the bare head and bosom of the tame,
Till the whole fetter'd man, heart, blood, and brain, is flame. (*P 1815* (1830) 2:53.
1-9)

Then there were lightnings in that clouded eye,
And sounds of triumph in that heavy ear;
Aye, and that icy limb was bounding nigh,
Tracking the Roman with the bow and spear,
As through the live-long night the death-march drear
Pierced the deep forests o'er the slaughter grown;

Seeking for ancient chief and comrade dear,
Through wolf-torn graves and haggard piles of bone,
Along the rampart ruins, and marshy trenches strown. (*P 1815* (1830) 2:54.1-9)

We need to note in the first place that Stanza 53 has no corresponding lines in the earlier version. It begins with the narrator's confirmation to the reader, in the form of a negative interrogation, that Arminius surely did drink from the cup filled by the personified vengeance for the patriot Arminius (2:53.1-2), which would certainly be the cause of the sense of shame he next feels in the latter half of this stanza. The key word here is "shame," (2:53.6, 7) a new concept in the 1830 version. Shame, the narrator tells us, distils "like drops of molten brass" (2:53.7), and works magic on the mind and heart of the tame German, and he, in turn, is set aflame (cf. 2:53.9) with this distilled sense of shame. What we are looking at here is the reversal of emotive direction. Vengeance, a negative feeling directed towards outside, is transformed into a negative feeling directed towards oneself or inward: shame.

We should also note that this change of direction is caused by Arminius's contact with nature. He hears the cry of shame in the natural environment, or to be more precise, it is "the dim forests, and the mighty hills, / And the lone gushings of the mountain rills" (2:53.4-5) that utter a cry of shame to the soul of Arminius. Here nature seems to be acting of its own will upon our Germanic hero. The 1830 addition makes vengeance capable of making the person susceptible to nature when internalized, which in turn causes the negative feeling formerly directed towards the outside to change direction and turn into shame. Vengeance is thus mitigated and transformed into shame in the 1830 version.

In the 1821 version, Arminius is referred to with no particular name. He is first mentioned as "a warrior" (2:55.1), and the following references are all made by the use of the third person pronoun. In the 1830 version, Arminius still remains unnamed, but is, instead, referred to with various rhetorical alterations such as "the bold barbarian" (2:52.1), "the patriot" (2:53.2), "the tame" (2:53.8), and "the ... fetter'd man" (2:53.9). He is furthermore given references to various parts of his body: "that with'ring lip" (2:53.1), "the bare head and bosom" (2:53.8), "that clouded eye" (2:54.1), "that heavy ear" (2:54.2) and "that icy limb" (2:54.3), none of which has any corresponding expressions in the earlier version. All in all, we are able to visualize more clearly what he would physically have been with these parts of the body mentioned, and what he would have been inside with these different designations.⁶

6 Why the hero constantly remains nameless throughout the revisions is a big question that would require a full-length thesis. The facts are that Croly does not use the Latin name "Arminius", nor does he use its German version "Hermann", which had, by Croly's time, come to be popularized, as Benario points out, by Klopstock's trilogy: *Hermanns Schlacht* (1769); *Hermann und die Fürsten* (1784); *Hermanns Tod* (1787). It may not go beyond speculation but Croly's use of the word "warrior" may have something common with what Martin Luther writes in his discussion of the Psalm 82, "Herman [sic], whom the Latins

In spite of the fact that Arminius remains nameless in both versions, his antagonists are introduced with distinctive names in the earlier version: "the German pole / Bore Varus' head o'er many a hill and fen. ... Fated Germanicus!" (2:56.7-8; 2:57.3) In the 1830 version, Varus and Germanicus are gone, and all that is left are racial appellations: German and Roman. In addition, the episode of Varus's severed head carried "o'er many a hill and fen" (2:56.8) disappears in the 1830 version along with the name Varus. Thus, in the 1830 version, while Arminius becomes more vivid physically as well as inwardly, all the personal antagonism is somehow substituted by, or sublimated into, the racial consciousness, German vs. Roman, with vengeance internalized and personal names gone.

The 1830 Version Compared with Byron

Between the 1830 version of *Paris in 1815* and the 1821 version which, Croly declares in its "Preface", was written immediately after the 1817 version, comes the publication of *CHP* 4 in 1818. One of the most characteristic features of Byron's Dying Gladiator stanzas, perhaps, would be the dying man's vision of his wife and children.

I see before me the Gladiator lie:

He leans upon his hand – his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And his drooped head sinks gradually low –
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now
The arena swims around him – he is gone,

Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch who won. (*CHP* 4:140.1-9)

He heard it, but he heeded not – his eyes
Were with his heart and that was far away;
He recked not of the life he lost nor prize,
But where his rude but by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother – he, their sire,
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday –
All this rush'd with his blood – Shall he expire

And unavenged? – Arise! ye Goths, and glut your ire! (*CHP* 4:141.1-9)

Stanza 140 begins with what first appears to be an ekphrastic description of the statue, "I see before me the Gladiator lie". This gradually turns into an imagined realistic description of the gladiator dying in the coliseum with expressions indicating clear movement: "... sinks gradually low ... the last drops, ebbing slow ... fall heavy, one by one". And with the next passage "now / The arena swims around him", the narrator's eye becomes one with that of the gladiator. The arena swims around him, as well as the narrator

treat badly and call Ariminus [sic], is actually *ein Heer man* (an army man)" (Benario 87-88).

and the reader. From this line onwards, the narrator goes inside the consciousness of the gladiator.

He "heard" the inhuman shout, in the next stanza, but he "heeded not". The roaring spectators in the coliseum are no longer capable of penetrating into the gladiator's heart. There is something more precious than his own life at the innermost core of his heart: "his rude hut ... his young barbarians ... their Dacian mother". This final dying vision of the gladiator lies at the innermost core of his consciousness. Then revives the self-consciousness: "he, their sire, / Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday". We are not exactly sure whether this is the gladiator thinking about himself, or the narrator commenting on the ancient gladiatorial show. In any case, we are no longer at the innermost core of the gladiator's consciousness, we have moved one step outward. With the next phrase "All this rush'd with his blood", the narrator further zooms out and describes the imagined death of the gladiator, as he had done in the preceding stanza. Thus, Byron in his description of the statue, moves on to the imagined gladiatorial show in the ancient Roman period, goes inside the gladiator's heart, sees what he might have seen, and then comes out of this sacred shrine of his heart.

We can see that both Byron's Gladiator lines and Croly's 1830 revised version of the Dying Warrior stanzas are characterized by the narrator intently looking inward: one describing the most intimately private moment of his domestic life with his wife and children before he was taken prisoner, the other describing the minute process of forests, hills, and mountain rills uttering a cry of shame to the soul of Arminius, and the process of shame being distilled compared to a very slow movement of molten brass dripping drop by drop on the head and bosom of the tame German warrior.

After this, the narrating poet, in strong sympathy with the gladiator, apostrophically comments, "Shall he expire / And unavenged? – Arise! ye Goths, and glut your ire!" If there is anything common in this vengeful outburst of Byron's narrator with Croly's lines, it is the racial consciousness that has come to the fore, rather than personal vengeance. Byron's narrator, in order to avenge one particular gladiator from Dacia, is calling onto the entire Goths to arise and destroy the whole Roman Empire, which indeed was the real course of history. Gladiator's personal vengeance is sublimated in Goth-Roman antagonism.

This final sublimation of vengeance at the end of the Dying Gladiator stanzas (*CHP* 4:140-41) is in fact the culmination of the entire Coliseum stanzas (*CHP* 4:128-45) as well. From the very beginning, the narrating poet, meditating in the coliseum at night, calls on to "Time, the avenger", saying "unto thee I lift / My hands, and eyes, and heart, and crave of thee a gift" (*CHP* 4:130). He then calls on to Nemesis, saying, "thou shalt take / The vengeance" (*CHP* 4:133, Byron's italics), yet when he thinks of his own future poetic composition, and how "a far hour shall wreak / The deep prophetic fulness of this verse" (*CHP* 4:134), he turns the direction of his vengeful outburst to the opposite direction, and assumes a deliberately careless attitude, saying, "That curse shall be Forgivenness" (*CHP* 4:135). The reason for this sudden affected change, says the narrator,

is that he knows how he has "suffered things to be forgiven ... had ... Life's life lied away" (CHP 4:135), and still was able to keep calm, because he knows he is "not altogether of such clay / As rots into the souls of those whom" he surveys (CHP 4:135). What we see here is a man, burning with vengeance, trying to strike a balance with the thought of his future fame and his feigned superiority over his enemies, and finally forcing out the word of "forgiveness" hardly inseparable from "curse". It is the recognition of "that within me which shall tire / Torture and Time, and breathe when I expire" (CHP 4:137), that puts an end to his vengeful outburst, enables him to "become a part of what has been, / And grow upon the spot – all-seeing but unseen" (CHP 4:138), and finally allows him to see before him "the Gladiator lie" (CHP 4:140). Introspective contemplation that is capable of overcoming vengeance is an indispensable prerequisite for Byron's Dying Gladiator stanzas.

Conclusion

Some of the characteristic features of Croly's 1830 revision of *Paris in 1815*, as far as the Dying Warrior stanzas are concerned, can thus be seen as a product of the transgression of the 1818 borderline, the year CHP 4 was published. The features I discussed are, first of all, an introspective orientation, exemplified in the Gladiator's final vision of his wife and children, preceded by the recognition of something that is within oneself in Byron (cf. "that within me" (CHP 4:137)), and the German warrior's crude sense of vengeance transformed into shame in contact with nature, and gradually distilled in his heart until it sets his heart on fire. The second feature is an emphasis on racial antagonism rather than on personal conflict, exemplified in the narrator's apostrophic call to the Goths to arise and glut their ire in Byron, and in Croly manifested in the disappearance of proper nouns, Varus and Germanicus, from the later edition. The ancient Germanic hero's transgression of the 1818 borderline has clearly brought the later version thematically closer to Byron. Croly's Dying Warrior in the 1830 version of *Paris in 1815*, Part 2 is Byron's Roman Gladiator that crossed the boundary and turned into Arminius, with vengeance distilled into shame, and with personal antagonism sublimated into racial consciousness.

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