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大阪教育図書

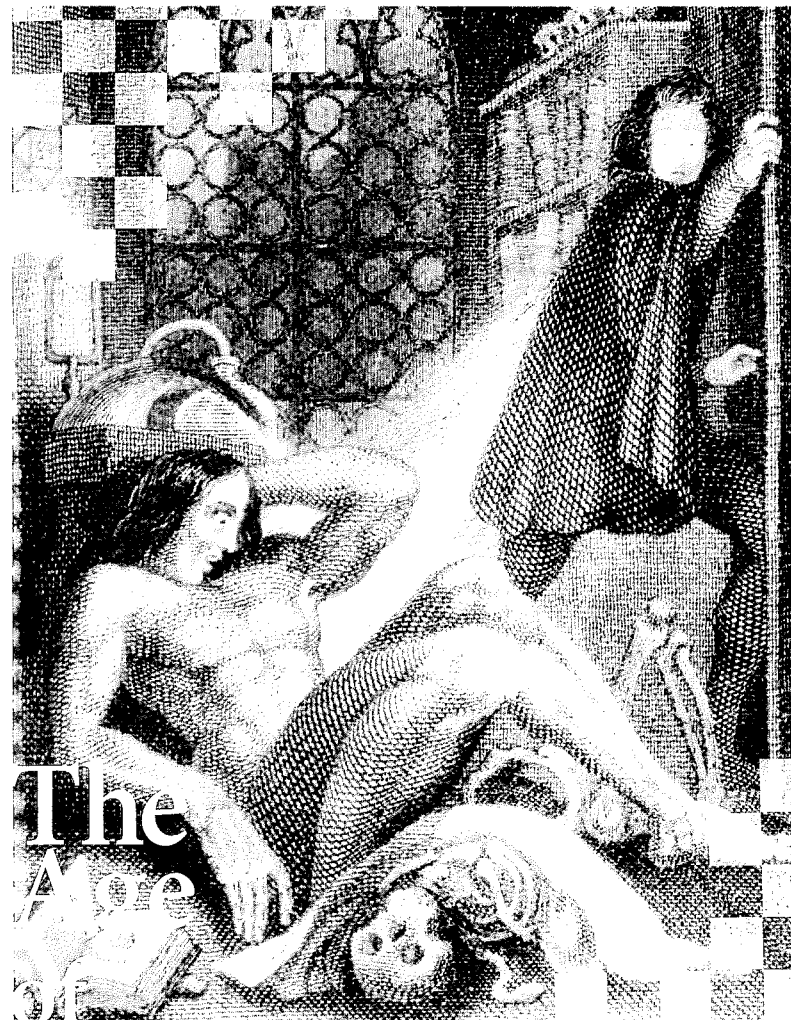
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The
Age
of

Frankenstein

Bicentenary Essays I

日本シェリー研究センター 編

大阪教育図書

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The Seventh C: A Critical Response to the Modern Prometheus

Nahoko Miyamoto Alvey

Celebrating the 200th-anniversary year of the publication of Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus*, the Japan Shelley Studies Center held a symposium "The Cult of Prometheus and *Frankenstein*" as part of its 27th annual conference held at Ritsumeikan University on December 1, 2018, with two distinguished panelists, Yumiko Hirono (professor at Kyoto University) and Miharu Abe (president of the Japan Shelley Studies Center). In "The Significance of 'The Modern Prometheus': Rereading *Frankenstein*," Hirono examined the problems of the modern Prometheus represented by Victor Frankenstein as a scientist by comparing him with Prometheus in the Greek myth. Abe, following Hirono's presentation, detailed the predicament of women poets/novelists as "female" Prometheuses in the first half of the 19th century in "Letitia Elizabeth Landon's Suffering Prometheus: Another Vein in the Cult of Prometheus."

In responding to these presentations, this paper considers how to humanize the modern Prometheus by looking into Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Percy Bysshe Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, Elizabeth Barrett Browning's translation of *Prometheus Bound* and her letters, and an essay on the importance of original research in modern science by Tasuku Honjo, an immunologist awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2018. The paper argues that the danger of the modern Prometheus lies in "unbridled curiosity," which Immanuel Kant regarded as a fatal flaw in the modern Prometheus. Taking Kant's warning, Mary Shelley depicts the failures of two male Prometheuses, Victor and Walton, but at the same time, she hints at the emergence of the female Prometheus in three "heroic and suffering" young women, Elizabeth, Justine, and Safie, who look forward to the figure of Asia in *Prometheus Unbound*. Elizabeth Barrett Browning considers Prometheus as "great ruined struggling Humanity." The quality of being human/e in the word "humanity" is what is needed to recreate the modern Prometheus. The value of "compassion" as something that can control boundless curiosity is recognized when Victor and Walton listen to and speak to the Creature "by a mixture of curiosity and compassion." By the 21st century "curiosity" has become the first of the six important characteristics that modern scientists should possess as Tasuku Honjo emphasizes in his essay "The Six Cs." If we bridle unlimited curiosity of the modern Prometheus, it is the seventh c, "compassion," that is required both in moral and life sciences in this century.

Story of a Provençal Maiden Narrated by a German Lady: A Source Hunting of an Apollophile Who Raved Herself to Death

KASAHARA Yorimichi, Sebastian BOLTE

Introductory Synopsis

The following research was originally planned as part of the proposed JSPS research: "A Transdisciplinary Study on the Literary Exchanges among Shelley-Byron Circle That Took Place in the Summer of 1816", and in fact proceeded to a certain—fairly satisfactory but not complete—stage, when KASAHARA Yorimichi, the researcher in charge, was forced to withdraw from the present JSPS research group on account of the administrative appointment he had to fulfill at his affiliated university. Given below is the research thus half or almost done, yet by any standard sufficiently worth publishing on this occasion as constituting part of the present JSPS research result.

This research originates in an annotative query in the interpretation of Byron's lines. In the description of the statue of the Belvedere Apollo in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto IV, Byron speaks of "some solitary nymph, whose breast / Long'd for a deathless lover from above, / And madden'd in that vision". Who this nymph is, is the question that has puzzled many annotators of Byron including Darmesteter (1882), Tozer (1885; 1916), Rolfe (1890), Ernest Harley Coleridge (1889-1904), Morris (1908), Thompson (1913), and Keene (1922).

Section 1 below is the research request (long quotations excepted) by KASAHARA to Christoph BODE (later to give a lecture at Ritsumeikan University in 2018 in the present JSPS research), who in turn appointed one of his graduate students Sebastian BOLTE for this research. Here, KASAHARA traces the nymph to the story of a Provençal maiden who falls in love with the statue of Apollo at the Louvre, alleged to have been narrated by "Madame de Haster, a German lady".

Section 2 is the research note done by Bolte, and sent on 21 June 2016 to KASAHARA. Here, Bolte makes further searches on this German lady and comes up

with an 1807 article in *The Lady's Magazine*, entitled "Singular Insanity". This German lady mentioned in the short foreword to the article as "Madame de Haster", Bolte claims, is in fact a misquotation of Helmina von Chézy, or, Wilhelmine (or Wilhelmina) Christiane von Klen(c)ke (1783–1856), married to the Baron Gustav von Hastfer (not *Haster*) in 1799, later divorced and later married to the Orientalist Antoine-Léonard de (Anton Leonhardt von) Chézy.

Section 3 consists of long quotations referred to in Section 1.

[I]

In connection with *Frankenstein*, the creation of a monster, or a quasi-human yet more-than-human being, can be placed in a broader context in which the interest in abnormal beings emerged in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. This emerging interest in abnormal beings, in my hypothesis, manifested itself in various aspects of the culture of the English Romantic period, most typically in the story of a girl from Provence who fell insanely in love with the statue of Apollo and died of the love she bore towards it. This story, according to various sources, is said to have been related by a German lady, Madam de Haster, whose identity, in spite of my researches, remains unknown. What has been discovered by Kasahara so far, however, is that Madam de Haster's story found its way into (1) George Dale Collinson's *A Treatise on the Law Concerning Idiots, Lunatics, and Other Persons Non Compotes Mentis* (1812)⁽¹⁾; (2) Henry Hart Milman's *The Belvidere Apollo: A Prize Poem...Oxford* (1812)⁽²⁾; (3) Byron's stanzas on the Belvedere Apollo (stanzas 161-63), in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto IV (written 1817)⁽³⁾; and finally into (4) Barry Cornwall (Bryan Waller Proctor), *The Flood of Thessaly, The Girl of Provence, and Other Poems* (1823)⁽⁴⁾. I am very much interested in the truthfulness of the story of this girl from Provence, and would like to find out who this Madam de Haster is, what other works she wrote if ever she really had existed. In fact, I am beginning to think that this Madam de Haster is a fictional character, since no mention of her so far is found as far as I searched.

What I would like you to do, is to recommend someone who is interested in this source hunting and is willing to pursue further searches in various writings of the period in German for a same or similar account of a girl whose love towards some ideal beauty consumed her to death, or anything related to this story, the girl from Provence, or Madam de Haster.

Note:

- (1) See III-1 below for the detailed account of Madam de Haster's story, taken from Collinson (1812).
- (2) See III-2 below for Milman's account. In spite of Milman's footnote that the background fact is related in the work of Mons. Pinel sur l'Insanité, Pinel, so far as I have searched, gives no account of such a girl. All of Pinel's works consulted are listed in the "Select Bibliography" below.
- (3) See III-3a below for Byron's account. Byron is extremely laconic in that he compressed the entire process of the girl's insanity into a single word "madden'd". So much compressed that you wouldn't know what this stanza is about unless you are familiar with the episode beforehand. McGann is silent on this stanza. So are past annotators on Byron: Morris (1908), Thompson (1913), and Keene (1922). Darmesteter (1882) and Rolfe (1890) erroneously suggest that Byron might have been referring to Egeria (*Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto IV, Stanza 115) when he spoke of the "nymph, whose breast / Long'd for a deathless lover from above, / And madden'd in that vision". Only Tozer (1885) touches upon "a dream of Love, / Shaped by...", and paraphrases this phrase as "which is like a dream of Love...", which, alas however, is quite wide of the mark.
- (4) See III-4 below for Barry Cornwall's account.

[II]

Madame de Haster and »The Girl from Provence«

SEBASTIAN BOLTE

LUDWIG-MAXIMILIANS-UNIVERSITÄT MÜNCHEN

Helmina von Chézy

Name variants and pen names include *Sylvandra*, *Sylvandry*, *Hermine Hastfer*, *Madame de Haster*, *Helmina*, and *Enkelin der Karschin* (»Granddaughter of Karsch«).

Wilhelmine (or Wilhelmina) Christiane von Klen(c)ke (26/01/1783–28/01/1856) was a German poet, playwright, novelist and publicist. She was born into a literary family in Berlin: Her mother Karoline von Klencke and her grandmother Anna

L(ouise) Karsch (called *Karschin*) were famous poets. She married the Baron Gustav von Hastfer (not *Haster*) in 1799 when she was only sixteen years old and divorced him two years later. For fourteen months she stayed with the Comtesse de Genlis in Paris, where she met and married the Orientalist Antoine-Léonard de (Anton Leonhardt von) Chézy. During this time she was in contact with Friedrich Schlegel, Achim von Arnim and Adelbert von Chamisso (with whom she had a short love affair). After the couple separated in 1810 she lived in Heidelberg, Frankfurt am Main, Aschaffenburg, Darmstadt, Dresden, Vienna, Munich, and, until her death, in Geneva.

Her multifaceted Œuvre ranges from simple practical texts, travel writings, journalistic essays and popular entertaining narratives to ambitious literature and autobiographies. She admired Jean Paul and stayed true to late Romantic literary ideals. Several of her poems were put to music by major composers (e.g. Franz Schubert, Charles Ives, and Carl Maria von Weber). She promoted the cultural exchange between France and Germany in the magazine *Französische Miscellen* she published with Cotta from Paris.

»The Girl from Provence«

The anecdote about a girl from Provence who falls in love with a statue of Apollo was first published with the title »Singular Insanity« in *The Lady's Magazine* in 1807. Since the short foreword to the article misquotes the author's name as »Madame De Haster« (p. 300), all further publications repeat this error.

The anecdote might have influenced Achim von Arnim's epic *Die Pöpstin Johanna*, in which the title character, a woman disguised as a man, puts a ring on the Belvedere Apollo's finger (p. 154) which later cannot be removed (p. 157)—so (s)he destroys the statue (p. 175). Even though the critical commentary in the second volume (pp. 946-9) does not mention this source, a hypertextual influence seems likely. Presumably all variations of the Venus Ring motif (cf. Frenzel) with reversed sexes (female lover and male statue) derive directly or indirectly from Helmina von Chézy's »Singular Insanity«.

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[III] QUOTATIONS

[1] *From the 'Preface' to George Dale Collinson, A Treatise on the Law Concerning Idiots, Lunatics, and Other Persons Non Compotes Mentis (1812):—*

“The enthusiasm of a Girl from Provence had lately occupied my mind. It was a singular occurrence which I shall never forget. I was present at the national Museum when this Girl entered the Salle d' Apollon: she was tall, and elegantly formed, and in all the bloom of health. I was struck with her air, and my eyes involuntarily followed her steps. I saw her start as she cast her eyes on the statue of Apollo, and she stood before it as if struck with lightning, her eyes gradually sparkling with sensibility. She had before looked calmly around the Hall; but her whole frame seemed to be then electrified as if a transformation had taken place within her; and it has since appeared, that her youthful breast had imbibed a powerful, alas! fatal passion. I remarked, that her companion (an elder sister it seems) could not force her to leave the statue, but with much entreaty, and she left the Hall with tears in her eyes, and all the expressions of tender sorrow. I set out the very same evening for Montmorency. I returned to

Paris at the end of August, and visited immediately the magnificent collection of antiques. I recollected the Girl from Provence, and thought perhaps I might meet with her again; but I never saw her afterwards, though I went frequently. At length I met with one of the attendants, who, I recollected, had observed her with the same attentive curiosity which I had felt; and I enquired after her. 'Poor Girl!' said the old man, 'that was a sad visit for her. She came afterwards every day to look at the statue, and she would sit still, with her hands folded in her lap, staring at the image, and when her friends forced her away, it was always with tears that she left the Hall. In the middle of May she brought, whenever she came, a basket of flowers and placed it on the Mosaic steps. One morning early she contrived to get into the room before the usual hour of opening it, and we found her within the grate, sitting within the steps almost fainting, exhausted with weeping. The whole Hall was scented with the perfume of flowers, and she had elegantly thrown over the statue a large veil of India muslin, with a golden fringe. We pitied the deplorable condition of the lovely girl, and let no one into the Hall until her friends came and carried her home. She struggled and resisted exceedingly when forced away; and declared in her frenzy that the god had that night chosen her to be his priestess, and that she must serve him. We have never seen her since, but have heard that an opiate was given her, and she was taken into the country!' I made further enquiries concerning her history, and learned that she died raving."— Related by Madame de Haster, a German lady.

[2] Henry Hart Milman, *The Belvidere Apollo* (1812):—

Heard ye the arrow hurtle in the sky?
 Heard ye the dragon monster's deathful cry?
 In settled majesty of fierce disdain,
 Proud of his might, yet scornful of the slain,
 The heav'nly Archer stands — no human birth, *
 No perishable denizen of earth;
 Youth blooms immortal in his beardless face,
 A God in strength, with more than godlike grace;
 All, all divine — no struggling muscle glows,
 Through heaving vein no mantling life-blood flows, 10
 But animate with deity alone,

In deathless glory lives the breathing stone.

Bright kindling with a conqueror's stern delight,
 His keen eye tracks the arrow's fateful flight;
 Burns his indignant cheek with vengeful fire, *
 And his lip quivers with insulting ire:
 Firm fix'd his tread, yet light, as when on high
 He walks th' impalpable and pathless sky:
 The rich luxuriance of his hair, confin'd
 In graceful ringlets, wantons on the wind, 20
 That lifts in sport his mantle's drooping fold,
 Proud to display that form of faultless mould.

Mighty Ephesian! with an eagle's flight
 Thy proud soul mounted through the fields of light,
 View'd the bright conclave of Heav'n's blest abode, *
 And the cold marble leapt to life a God:
 Contagious awe through breathless myriads ran,
 And nations bow'd before the work of man.
 For mild he seem'd, as in Elysian bowers,
 Wasting in careless ease the joyous hours; 30
 Haughty, as bards have sung, with princely sway
 Curbing the fierce flame-breathing steeds of day;
 Beauteous as vision seen in dreamy sleep
 By holy maid on Delphi's haunted steep,
 Mid the dim twilight of the laurel grove, *
 Too fair to worship, too divine to love.

Yet on that form in wild delirious trance
 With more than rev'rence gaz'd the Maid of France.
 Day after day the love-sick dreamer stood
 With him alone, nor thought it solitude; 40
 To cherish grief, her last, her dearest care,
 Her one fond hope — to perish of despair.
 Oft as the shifting light her sight beguil'd,
 Blushing she shrunk, and thought the marble smil'd:
 Oft breathless list'ning heard, or seem'd to hear, *
 A voice of music melt upon her ear.

Slowly she wan'd, and cold and senseless grown,
 Clos'd her dim eyes, herself benumb'd to stone.
 Yet love in death a sickly strength supplied.
 Once more she gaz'd, then feebly smil'd and died. 50

Note. The foregoing fact is related in the work of Mons. Pinel sur l'Insanité.

[3a] Lord Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, IV (1818), clxi-clxiii:—

161

Or view the Lord of the unerring bow,
 The God of life, and poesy, and light—
 The Sun in human limbs arrayed, and brow
 All radiant from his triumph in the fight;
 The shaft hath just been shot — the arrow bright
 With an immortal's vengeance; in his eye
 And nostril beautiful disdain, and might,
 And majesty, flash their full lightnings by,
 Developing in that one glance the Deity.

162

But in his delicate form — a dream of Love,
 Shaped by some solitary nymph, whose breast
 Long'd for a deathless lover from above,
 And madden'd in that vision — are express
 All that ideal beauty ever bless'd
 The mind with in its most unearthly mood,
 When each conception was a heavenly guest—
 A ray of immortality — and stood,
 Starlike, around, until they gathered to a god!

163

And if it be Prometheus stole from Heaven
 The fire which we endure, it was repaid
 By him to whom the energy was given
 Which this poetic marble hath array'd

With an eternal glory — which, if made
 By human hands, is not of human thought;
 And Time himself hath hallowed it, nor laid
 One ringlet in the dust — nor hath it caught
 A tinge of years, but breathes the flame with which 'twas wrought.

[3b] From E. H. Coleridge's Edition of Byron's Works (1899):—

It is probable that lines 1-4 of this stanza contain an allusion to a fact related by M. Pinel, in his work, *Sur l'Insanité*, which Milman turned to account in his *Belvidere Apollo*, a Newdigate Prize Poem of 1812— (II, 447)

[4] From 'The Girl of Provence' (1823):—

[4a: Preface]

The following passage (which occurs in "Collinson's Essay on Lunacy") suggested the poem of the "Girl of Provence." The reader will perceive, however, that it forms the material of only the concluding stanzas.

[4b: Epigraph]

— A dream of Love

Shaped by some solitary nymph, whose breast
 Longed for a deathless lover from above.

Lord. Byron. — Ch. Harold.

[4c: From the Poem]

LXXXIV

— There is a story: — that some lady came
 To Paris; and while she — ('tis years ago!)
 Was gazing at the marbles, and the fame
 Of colour which threw out a sunset glow,
 A tall girl entered, with staid steps and slow,
 The immortal hall where Phoebus stood arrayed
 In stone, — and started back, trembling, dismayed.

LXXXV

Yet still she looked, tho' mute, and her clear eye

Fed on the image till a rapture grew,
 Chasing the cloudy fear that hovered nigh,
 And filling with soft light her glances blue;
 And still she trembled, for a pleasure new
 Thrilled her young veins, and stammering accents ran
 Over her tongue, as thus her speech began: —

LXXXVI

“Apollo! king Apollo! — art thou here?
 Art thou indeed returned?” — and then her eyes
 Outwept her joy, and hope and passionate fear
 Seized on her heart, as tow’rds the dazzling prize
 She moved, like one who sees a shape that flies,
 And stood entranced before the marble dream,
 Which made the Greek immortal, like his theme.

LXXXVII

Life in each limb is seen, and on the brow
 Absolute God; — no stone nor mockery shape
 But the resistless Sun, — the rage and glow
 Of Phoebus as he tried in vain to rape
 Evergreen Daphne, or when his rays escape
 Scorching the Lybian desert or gaunt side
 Of Atlas, withering the great giant’s pride.

LXXXVIII

And round his head and round his limbs have clung
 Life and the flush of Heaven, and youth divine,
 And in the breathed nostril backwards flung,
 And in the terrors of his face, that shine
 Right through the marble, which will never pine
 To paleness though a thousand years have fled,
 But looks above all fate, and mocks the dead.

LXXXIX

Yet stands he not as when blithely he guides
 Tameless Eo from the golden shores
 Of morning, nor when in calm strength he rides
 Over the scorpion, while the lion foars
 Seared by his burning chariot which out-pours
 Floods of eternal light o’er hill and plain,
 But, like a triumph, o’er the Python slain:

XC

He stands with serene brow and lip upcurl’d
 By scorn, such as Gods felt, when on the head
 Of beast or monster or vain man they hurled
 Thunder, and loosed the lightning from its bed,
 Where it lies chained, by blood and torment fed;
 His fine arm is outstretched, — his arrow flown,
 And the wrath flashes from his eyes of stone,

XCI

Like Day — or liker the fierce morn, (so young) —
 Like the sea-tempest which against the wind
 Comes dumb, while all its terrible joints are strung
 To death and rapine: — Ah! if he unbind
 His marble fillet now and strike her blind —
 Away, away! — vain fear! unharmed she stands,
 With fastened eyes and white beseeching hands.

XCII

— Alas! that madness, like the worm that stings,
 Should dart its venom through the tender brain!
 Alas! that to all ills which darkness brings
 Fierce day should send abroad its phantoms plain,
 Shook from their natural hell, (a hideous train)
 To wander through the world, and vex it sore,
 Which might be happy else for ever-more.

XCIII

Lust, and the dread of death, and white Despair,
 (A wreck, from changed friends and hopes all fled),
 Ambition which is sleepless, and dull care
 Which wrinkles the young brow, and sorrows bred
 From love which strikes the heart and sears the head,
 The lightning of the passions, — in whose ray
 Eva's bright spirit wasted, day by day.

XCIV

She was Apollo's votary, (so she deemed)
 His bride, and met him in his radiant bowers,
 And sometimes, as his priestess pale beseeemed,
 She strewed before his image, like the Hours,
 Delicate blooms, spring buds and summer flowers,
 Faint violets, dainty lilies, the red rose, —
 What time his splendour in the Eastern glows.

XCV

And these she took and strewed before his feet,
 And tore the laurel (his own leaf) to pay
 Homage unto its God, and the plant sweet
 That turns its bosom to the sunny ray,
 And all which open at the break of day,
 And all which worthy are to pay him due
 Honour, — pink, saffron, crimson, pied, or blue.

XCVI

And ever, when was done her flowery toil,
 She stood (idolatress!) and languished there,
 She and the God, alone; — nor would she spoil
 The silence with her voice, but with mute care
 Over his carved limbs a garment fair
 She threw, still worshipping with amorous pain,
 Still watching ever his divine disdain.

XCVII

— Time past: — and when that German lady came
 Again to Paris, where the image stands,
 (It was in August, and the hot sun-flame
 Shot thro' the windows) — midst the gazing bands
 She sought for her whose white-beseeking hands
 Spoke so imploringly before the stone,
 (The Provence girl) — she asked; but she was gone.

XCVIII

Whither none knew; — Some said that she would come
 Always at morning with her blooming store,
 And gaze upon the marble, pale and dumb,
 But that, they thought, the tender worship wore
 The girl to death; for o'er her eyes and o'er
 Her paling cheek hues like the grave were spread:
 And one at last knew further; — She was dead.

XCIX

She died, mad as the winds, — mad as the sea
 Which rages for the beauty of the moon,
 Mad as the poet is whose fancies flee
 Up to the stars to claim some boundless boon,
 Mad as the forest when the tempests tune
 Their breath to song and shake its leafy pride,
 Yet trembling like its shadows: — So she died.

C

She died at morning when the gentle streams
 Of day came peering thro' the far east sky,
 And that same light which wrought her maddening dreams,
 Brought back her mind. She awoke with gentle cry,
 And in the light she loved she wished to die: —
 She perished, when no more she could endure,
 Hallowed before it, like a martyr pure.

Synthetic Conclusion

In his description of the Belvedere Apollo in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto IV, Byron speaks of "some solitary nymph, whose breast / Long'd for a deathless lover from above, / And madden'd in that vision". Who this nymph is, is the question that has puzzled many annotators of Byron including Darmesteter (1882), Tozer (1885; 1916), Rolfe (1890), Ernest Harley Coleridge (1889-1904), Morris (1908), Thompson (1913), and Keene (1922). In this essay, Kasahara traces the nymph to the story of a Provençal maiden who falls in love with the statue of Apollo at the Louvre, alleged to have been narrated by "Madame de Haster, a German lady". Bolte in turn makes further searches on this German lady and comes up with an 1807 article in *The Lady's Magazine*, entitled as "Singular Insanity". This German lady mentioned in the short foreword to the article as "Madame de Haster", Bolte claims, is in fact a misquotation of Helmina von Chézy, or, Wilhelmine (or Wilhelmina) Christiane von Klen(c)ke (1783-1856), married to the Baron Gustav von Hastfer (not *Haster*) in 1799, later divorced and later married to the Orientalist Antoine-Léonard de (Anton Leonhardt von) Chézy. Hence all subsequent references to this story give the German lady's name as "Madame de Haster" down to Collinson (1812), Milman (1812), and to "Barry Cornwall" (1823). Byron's extremely laconic expression "And madden'd in that vision" could not have been possible unless this anecdote had gained some sort of prevalence among the readers at the time. By the end of the century, however, it had lost its former popularity, and escaped the attention of Byron annotators, making the Apollo stanzas enigmas, all of which resulted in McGann's curious silence on this episode in his edition of Byron's works (1980-93).

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