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SHRINES AND SACRED ARCHITECTURE

IN CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

by

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For George and Wilhelmina

Prefatory Note

Like Byron's Regency Readers I have continually stepped over the line Byron tired of drawing between himself and the Childe. W. Paul Elledge decided to use the terms "Harold," "narrator," and "speaker" interchangeably in Byron and the Dynamics of Metaphor to enable the poem "to achieve a much tighter cohesiveness and a clearly discernible structural and thematic unity" (footnote, 54). In terms of shrine meditations and visitations, although Harold often maintains a separate existence as he holds up the framework of the pilgrimage format, many of the issues explored at shrine sites pertain directly to Byron's personal politics, nationality, and sexuality.

Harold, as medieval pilgrim, departs from the baronial abbey, wears the pilgrim's sandals, and retrieves the scallop shell. Byron, however, who eventually separates from the more limited Harold, visits the world's shrines in his own right to receive heavenly and hellish visions much as Dante placed himself in heaven, hell, and purgatory. Byron's earliest readers and illustrators pictured Harold and Byron as twins. Tourists from Emerson to Florence Nightingale convey an awareness of Byron at the sites he "immortalized" in Childe Harold. Therefore, it seems expedient to conflate "the narrator," "the poet," and Byron, allowing Harold a separate existence when Byron does so.

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Introduction

In between his visions of Beatrice and the Virgin, Dante needed a parallel earthly experience to convey his wonder "to have come from the human to the godly, / to have come to the infinite from time." He thought of the Barbarians who were "left stupified by the sight of Rome / And her arduous works, when the Lateran / Rose high above all other mortal things."[1] And it is to a later Rome Byron goes for the climatic experience of his vision quest in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage[2] to find in St. Peter's an objective correlative for Byronic aspiration and competition, going dome to dome with the great cathedral somewhat as a later Byronic hero, Ahab, would go "forehead to forehead" with his whale. Like Ahab's whale, St. Peter's is a kind of pasteboard mask which may be broken through for a glimpse of the other side of eternity. Standing before the great cathedral with his spirit dizzyingly "dilating" to match its size, Byron finds a momentary solution to the fundamental Byronic frustration of being shut outside of Eden's gates for another man's sins, while perennially and painfully feeling the assertions of divine impulses trapped within claustrophobic, human clay. Remarkably enough, so much does Byron forget himself when absorbed in Rome's greatest cathedral that the usually Calvinistic Byron foresees no

punishment inherent in the experience: "See now thy God, face to face, as thou dost now/ His Holy of Holies, nor be blasted by his brow" (IV, clv). Even Ahab could not say that.

But then, St. Peter's was wrought by hands in partnership with trusted divinity. It gave the measure of God through man's eyes, and is therefore a fit edifice for Byron who wishes to exalt man, not humble him to deity. St. Peter's came to be anticipated with the greatest of expectations. This is an edifice that tourists who felt uncomfortable in kneeling to God could still conscientiously worship. Fifty years later, Mark Twain, who felt this idolatry of St. Peter's, to which Byron greatly contributed, called it "a monster church," and concluded that the worship of the dome's designer was so prodigious that one might as well say that "the Creator made Italy from designs by Michelangelo."[3] Twain is being facetious, of course, but this idea of a man telling God how to do things right is an aspect of St. Peter's most appealing to Byron. Byron's Lucifer, being less pious than his author, desired "to dare look the Omnipotent tyrant in / His everlasting face, / and tell him that all His evil is not good" (Cain, I,i, 138-40). As Harold Bloom has put it in Ruin the Sacred Truths (1989), the dilemma here is that "We are made in Yahweh's image and asked to be like him, but we are not to presume to be too much like him."[4]

Byron often felt like a godlike man. At the point

when he confronted St. Peter's, there was quite a bit of evil in his life. Shaking the dust of England out of his shoes, as in the Max Beerbohm caricature, Byron was tired of being submitted to scorn and belittlement by the hypocrites who had earlier made him an idol. He was most happy to be perceived walking in the footsteps of the Italians, Dante and Michelangelo. And if creating a demonic character, like Lucifer, who most appropriately "did not speak like the Bishop of Lincoln" but taunted God with the evidence of suffering, was taboo, that too fit quite well with Byron's literary, spiritual, emotional, and sexual needs. For Byron bore a unique combination of Calvinistic doom, a consequent attraction to the Roman Catholic doctrine of Purgatory to counter his preordained damnation, an association of the Bible with a premature arousal of sexual response by his Scottish nanny, and an unrelenting need to augment and heighten experience. He thrived on a sense of opposition, and there could be no greater sense of antithesis than the clash of the sacred and the profane. He did not, like his Lucifer, wish to denigrate his creator but preferred to partake of His glory. To place a bleeding, Byronic outlaw within the holy precincts of shrines and sacred architecture is to push parameters to their limits.

With this convergence of Godlike Michelangelo, Byronic man, and the Byronic perspective of the ultimate cathedral, Byron reaches a pinnacle in the second half of

Harold's baffling vision quest which contrives finally to raise his dust to deity. Within the confines of a Grand Tour disguised as a pilgrimage, Byron presses for an apotheosis of man as artist, as sculptor, and as author. The layered view of Byron as a man who "meditates the better to observe himself observing himself,"[5] or in this instance as a man who views himself viewing the cathedral, is so pervasive that in his own era it is difficult to find late nineteenth-century descriptions of Rome's sacred architecture which do not include Byron in the picture. Mark Twain, for all his scoffing, brought Byron in, though he congratulated himself for being "the only free, white man of mature age" who did not feel compelled to quote him (181). But in disavowing the inclination, even he quotes Byron.

St. Peter's as the shrine of shrines, and all the shrines in Harold which lead up to it, are integral to the formation of Byronic character in its completer aspects: the resolution of Harold's pilgrimage, Byron's decision to compose an epic poem, Don Juan, in keeping with the high expectations projected in the earlier poem, the formation of a comprehensive Romantic vision quest in the combination of Harold and Don Juan, his solution for obtaining eternal remembrance, and ultimately, his decision to die for Greek Independence despite all the disillusionment of life and war in the latter work. Yet the shrines of Harold are neglected in Byron studies. As Stuart Curran writes, "The

pilgrimage is a religious quest, and it visits literally dozens of shrines, a fact curiously absent from the voluminous critical literature on Childe Harold's Pilgrimage."[6] In effect, this is a neglected topic in a neglected poem by a now neglected author. Even the phenomenon of shrines, in general, is not studied very much. In Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture (1975), an anthropological approach to pilgrimage, Victor and Edith Turner point out that the attractions people find in visiting shrines "has been surprisingly neglected," sharing "in the disregard of the liminal and marginal phenomena."[7] Byron's interest in both Catholicism and Christian shrines is unusual in English Romantic poetry. Most English Romantic poets take a more Protestant and negative view of shrines, placing them, along with Byron and his Harold, a little beyond the pale. M.H. Abrams omits Byron from his study Natural Supernaturalism (1973) wherein Romanticism is interpreted as "a metaphysics of integration, the key of which is the reconciliation, or synthesis, of whatever is divided, opposed, and conflicting," citing Byron's "ironic counter voice and satiric vein."[8] Yet Byron's functional use of shrines in Harold and his sense of transition evident in his usage of shrines in the plays written in his exile in Italy correlate significantly with his personal sense of integration and satisfaction in the composition of Don Juan and his living and dying

outside of the constraints of English morality.

The appeal of shrines and sacred structures for Byron in nineteenth-century Britain is problematical and it is important to place Byron's attraction to shrines in context. To many nineteenth-century British writers, shrines resonate with irrationality, and superstition and are therefore distasteful. The other major Romantic writers view shrines as fit for nostalgic, obsolete use in medieval ballads, legends, and Gothic novels but not for intercession, healing, or enlightenment. Paradoxically, only Robert Southey, Byron's arch-enemy, has a poem about a pilgrimage to an authentic Christian shrine, the famed Compostela. This skeptical view of both the older and younger generations of British Romantic poets is in keeping with perceptions of British tourists on Grand Tours who, according to Jeremy Black in The British and the Grand Tour (1985), correlate shrines with bigotry and hesitate to enter continental cathedrals, disliking "the alien quality of their ceremonies."[9] In Keats: The Religious Sense (1976), Robert M. Ryan points out that Keats was discouraged to find uneducated Londoners collecting rain water on Holy Thursday to cure eye ailments.[10] As a medical apprentice, he was looking for more rational and efficacious remedies.

Shelley felt that shrines were created by "God's dupes." Blake and Coleridge show little interest in

shrines or sacred locations in their verse. Blake, having seen the holy host on Primrose Hill, had no need to venture out to sacred places or enter into holy structures, and Coleridge, sitting in his favored arm-chair, had access to other worlds through imagination stimulated with and without opium. Wordsworth left the supernatural in The Lyrical Ballads largely in Coleridge's hands, preferring the simplicity of unobstrusive mountain-chapel shrines which blended in with the serenity of his cherished landscapes. Bolton Abbey, beautiful in ruin, speaks to him of the passage of time; the alien, fallen abbeys he witnesses in France evoke momentary pity in their failure to have secured liberty and justice for man. In fact, most of the Romantics would like to do away with shrines and authority, and intercede directly as Keats does in "The Ode to Psyche," wherein shrines are entered into the litany of what is no longer required "to be thy priest": "no pipe, no incense sweet / from chain-swung censer teeming / no shrine, no grove, no heat of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming."[11]

These Romantic poets prefer to keep their shrines in their antiquated medieval ballads and reserve sacred architecture for metaphor. Though Wordsworth has strong patriotic feelings for St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey, his cathedrals often occupy negative space. The towering spire of Salisbury Cathedral is lost in "the blank sky" in "Salisbury Plain"; visiting Notre Dame is not

part of the bliss of his Parisian days in The Prelude; and Tintern Abbey is only a reference point in "Lines Written a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey."[12] Wordsworth's abbeys are "of the mind," unobstructed pristine spaces allowing for constructions and reconstructions of experience through memories layered over place.[13] He declares The Prelude to be "'the antechamber of the gothic church to come'" (quoted in Abrams, 20) in the poetry of his maturation, thus sanctifying his role as poet and uplifting, through cathedral metaphors, his intentionally humble places and themes.

Keats prefers the natural basaltic beauty of Fingal's Cave on the tiny Scottish island of Staffa to "what I had seen of grey cathedrals" (Fall of Hyperion, I, 66-7).[14] Keats was "amused" by Winchester Cathedral, but Fingal's Cave was "a cathedral of the sea," projected out onto the water from "the monastery" of his mind. Shelley seated an imaginary devil with the saints in St. Paul's in "The Devil's Drive" and himself in the pagan ruins of the Baths of Caracalla for inspiration for the more weighty Prometheus Unbound.[15] Blake in Milton envisioned "spires & Domes of Ivory" following the experience of "being Mortal & Vegetable in Sexuality."[16] Blake is the hardest on church architecture, declaring the chapel doors shut, the brothels to be "built with bricks of Religion," and the only radiance countering London's "blackning Church"

is "the multitudes of lambs / Thousands of little boys & girls raising their innocent hands," who flood into St. Paul's like the Thames.

Unlike Byron, these poets do not invest much of themselves in shrines or sacred architecture; they are more interested in the act of enshrining. Since this act entails the enclosure of what is most sacred to heart and mind, an examination of their enshrinements often reveals the core of their beliefs. Wordsworth in "It is a Beauteous Evening, Calm and Free" places Dorothy in "the Temple's inner shrine" for her selfless, yearlong acts of worship; Shelley enshrines Prometheus, who is as forgiving of tyrants as Christ. Blake enshrines his world restructuring architect, Urizen; Keats enshrines melancholy, suspending it in the air for wonderment and examination in his "Ode on Melancholy", and the adolescent Byron, who was more often than not in unrequited love, allotted sickly Romance "a gaudy shrine" in "To Romance." All these enshrined objects and persons are emblematic of each poet's quest for meaning - Blake creating his new mythology with Urizen, Wordsworth seeking truth in plain people's faith, Shelley striving, Prometheus-like, to reform the world, Keats working through senseless sorrow, and Byron, already at eighteen, displaying his wounded heart. But the shrines created here are overshadowed by the objects enshrined, and are therefore

not particularly memorable in their own right.

Shelley, Keats, and Coleridge effectively use shrines in the medieval folklore of their nostalgic ballads. In "St. Edmund's Eve" Shelley raises an accusing skeleton out of a shrine to accuse a guilty Canon and nun of an illicit marriage. Keats' Italianate "Isabella," "The Eve of St. Agnes," and "The Eve of St. Mark's" contain pilgrims, relics, and truth-revealing shrines, but they are firmly set in the obsolete, mystical past which will not come again except fleetingly in the enchantment of poetry. Wordsworth and Coleridge held to two cardinal points in composing the Lyrical Ballads: "the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence of truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by modifying the colours of imagination."[17] Coleridge partially fulfilled the latter precept, for "Christabel" and "The Dark Lady" have medieval, shrine-like settings. But in taking on the supernatural aspects of this collaboration Coleridge found that "Mr. Wordsworth's industry had proved so much successful, and the number of his poems so much greater, that my compositions, instead of forming a balance, appeared rather an interpolation of heterogeneous matter" (192). Readers preferred Wordsworth's giving "the charm of novelty to things of every day" to Coleridge's transferring "from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance

of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment which constitutes poetic faith" (192). Shelley and Keats also failed to find contemporary audiences for their medieval ballads.

Byron, who found an immense audience for Harold required for this work's success the present moment in time and history for the presentation of his immediate emotions, but also the quickening and augmenting effects of cathedral apparatus and the intimacy of shrines which are sympathetic to man and in league with his desire. Byron's shrines are nostalgic but not obsolete; they retain an accessible medieval and Gothic sense of organic intensity. Shrines serve as guides to Harold, who has no mentors, milestones in his journey, and as templates for character formation. Like Wordsworth, Byron is willing to share emotions and the developement of his youthful perceptions which are hardening into a world view. He too feels "singled out, as it might seem, / For holy services" (The Prelude I, 61-2), and is soon to take his seat in the formidable House of Lords. He wants his youthful speculations to have weight beyond his years and experience, and positions himself against a backdrop of the world's great temples and cathedrals to secure the amplification of cathedral tones. But Wordsworth, who has "easy likings, aims / of a low

pitch," which he correlates with "the plain Steeples of our English Church," is content with his "possible sublimity," or, as Abrams puts it, "qualified hope," and the unByronic "sufficient Paradise" (458, 447).

For Byron, of course, nothing is ever enough. Byron wants to pontificate, and elevate himself and his reader's thoughts. But then he changes key, tinging his honor with something furtive and suggestive of sin. Byron wants to confess, and for this a medieval milieu is required, where shrines and cathedrals may still be places of intimacy and revelalation. Only in this way do Byron's quirky medievalisms begin to make sense. The shrines captured by Chaucer in his middle English were such intimate places that bodily fluids, blood and tears, flowed as the affairs of the gods and men ran together. By placing at shrines a character with an antiquated title and a mysterious sin, who can fluidly move backwards and forward in time and history onto holy ground, Byron heightens the emotional aspects and the reader's expectations of the poem by returning to ecclesiastical architecture a sense of immediacy, aliveness, centrality in quest and vocation, characteristic of the Middle Ages. In this way, Byron, who had an almost constitutional readiness to return things to elements and origins, utilizes cathedral architecture much as its original designers intended. Seeing cathedrals

in this light provided Byron with solutions for his own pressing and private dilemma when he appropriated them for his public performance in Harold.

It is appropriate for Byron to feel so particularly at home within the parameters of the Gothic cathedral structure since its purpose correlates so well with Byron's strongest desire to thrust beyond the limits of humiliating clay and to gain a sense of immortality through eternal remembrance. This parallels the Abbott Suger's expectations of St. Denis, "the parent of all gothic churches."[18] Suger had huge golden letters set above the west portals petitioning: "O may it not be obscured." Suger's apprehension "of the central nave of this chevet as being 'suddenly (repente) raised aloft,'" fulfilled his desires to create a space somewhere in between "the slime of earth . . . and the purity of Heaven" (37). Byron's spirit, moving to the measure of St. Peter's upward surge, recaptures this. Byron's positioning of himself before the monuments of Rome, particularly face-to-face with the vertiginous St. Peter's, created a kind of template for the public imagination, as he imprinted the indelible image of himself, which will not soon be forgotten, standing before a grandiose structure. To stand before the Coliseum or St. Peter's after Byron entails a process wherein to think of these structures is to think of God, of monumental struggling sacrifice

and creation, and of Byron, as Twain, against his better judgment, did.

As landscapes serve Wordsworth to order and convey the remembrances of his life's events and the emergence of his thinking processes, cathedrals serve Byron. But, as Hazlitt said, Wordsworth began "de novo on a tabula rasa of poetry."[19] Byron discovered cathedral structures ready-made for Byronic architectonics, cathedrals which have been perceived, alternately, as "shadowy, overreaching, and perilous" (Henry Adams), "electrifying" (John Ruskin), "dominating and aspiring" (Prince Charles), and as "pompous workshops of Vulcan" (St. Bernard). Thus the Gothic cathedral invites a centrifugal displacement of Byron's developing persona as he pauses to structure both himself and his prototypical hero, Harold, while touring the continent.

On the negative side of the ledger, Byron and the Gothic cathedral share accusations of excessive egoism. St. Bernard, fearing that the cathedral's conveyance of self-aggrandizement would foster a pollution of God's sacred and reserved space, strikes the most ominous note in the above reactions to developing Gothic structure. Protestant writers, like Hazlitt and Wordsworth, seem to agree with St. Bernard. Hazlitt, who called Wordsworth's Muse "a levelling one," associated ecclesiastical architecture with the despotism of "The Grand Seigneur" who lived off "the

fat abbey-lands . . . and hung up in his courtyard, without judge or jury, anyone who dared to utter the slightest murmur against the most flagrant wrong."[20] In the spirit of the French Revolutionists, he urges on "the battering ram" and extolls Wordsworth, who does not require the trappings of Gothicism to produce elevating experiences.

But if this overly wrought, holier-than-thou architecture with its "black spell" (the phrase is Keats's) tied to the superstitions of "papish" ceremony, ritual, relics and priests, invites profanation, then the Gothic novelists were most ready to exploit this to the fullest. Just as Byron does in Harold, they often place young, unformed outsiders into vast, swallowing, sacred edifices. Like Harold, Mrs. Radcliffe's Emily and Matthew Lewis' "enlightened" Raymond have no patron saints or rosaries to protect them. They must find their own way out through dark Gothic corners to the light of day by their own wits and purity of heart. However, they discover that as corrupt as these structures have become, the righteous architecture itself encodes within its stones a guide for right action accessible to those who are able to correctly decode it. Like Byron's shrines, these structures plot a course for the protagonist to follow, give the measure of spiritual and emotional development as they form and reform character, and serve,

ultimately, as St. Peter's does in Harold, to culminate the journey. The French Revolution did not topple these edifices; they are still upright at the conclusion of these novels. It is right that they should be for they are required for the Catholic sacramental marriages with which these novels conclude in order to join hands and proper bloodlines to ensure progeny who will fill the restored castles and abbeys. Gothic novels, such as The Adventures of Caleb Williams[21] (1784), Frankenstein (1818),[22] and The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner[23] (1824), noticeably lack architecture; their protagonists come to a full stop at the conclusion of the novel, mentally, spiritually, physically unravelling their homes, families, and futures.

The high Gothic novels of Lewis and Radcliffe, replete with palpitations of the dilated heart and outrageous suffering inflicted by mannered torturers which perilously overwhelm once sacred architecture, are also, like Harold, fair game for the satirist. Edmund Burke, unlike Hazlitt, was on the side of the abbeys and against the revolution. He identified sublimity with terror, as did Mrs. Radcliffe, and, following her, Matthew Lewis. But the same British tourists who could thrill to both the horrors of the Gothic novel at home and "the sensual and physical appeal" of the Catholic milieu on the continent could quickly turn and scoff at "the antick postures and grimaces" of priests "mumbling" before incredible, incredulous miracle shrines

and bleeding relics which "symbolised the inversion of reason" (Black, 200). These aspects of Catholicism, which the Gothic novelists exploited to thrill such a large segment of the British public, including Byron, Shelley, and Keats, took on a different hue under the scrutinizing eye of Jane Austen in Northanger Abbey (1803).[24] In this novel, Catherine Morland is frustrated by her inability to evoke harrowing thrills within the promising environs of the great Gothic Northanger Abbey. Unlike Lewis' and Radcliffe's Gothic chambers, which creak, shudder, and shake, Northanger will not do anything but remain as static and still as a classical temple. Catherine, whose expectations of a heightening sublunary scaring resemble the exhilarations of "the flow" which Victor and Edith Turner describe as part of the shrine experience, finds only the frights of the British weather and the flattening social horrors inherent in a rigid class system. Catherine is told her disappointments are a matter of location: "Remember we are English, that we are Christians," she is admonished (163). The inquisitional scarifyings she yearns for are presumbably confined to the papish domains across the water.

Byron, however, at the fictional Catherine's age, was inhabiting an English Abbey, Newstead, which had only recently housed a murderer, his grandfather, "the Wicked Lord," William Byron, who also sometimes

resided in the Tower of London. Whereas Chaucer's pilgrims departed from the secular Tabard Tavern for Thomas Becket's holy shrine at Canterbury, Childe Harold embarks from Newstead, which was built by Henry II in expiation for Becket's murder, to begin a very unorthodox pilgrimage. Washington Irving believed that Newstead Abbey's "very dreary and dismantled state addressed itself to his poetical imagination and to the love of the melancholy and the grand which is evinced in all his writings."[25] On the continent Byron's expectations of sacred structure, like Miss Morland's in England, encountered reality and fell off. As Harold pauses at Parnassus, his author laments that "no more Apollo haunts his grot" (I, lxii) and finds the Parthenon "an Abode of gods. whose shrines no longer burn" (II, iii). Harold is burning with an adolescent's demand for absolutes and perfection. Harold, acutely aware of his nobility and demanding uncompromised morality, is drawn to shrines which speak to him of a perfect world in the absence of adequate adult guidance. Sometimes in his own voice, sometimes in Harold's, Byron projects back onto shrines much of the knowledge he has just received at Cambridge. Winston Churchill said, "We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us."[26] Following this precept, Byron, who has left "the

dome of my sires" ("Newstead Abbey"), shapes his verse and philosophy to the templates of several domed buildings. In fact, the architectural keynote, or keystone, for the first two cantos is the dome, and herein exists an interplay between the brain's (dome's) projections from nature onto stone and impressions spontaneously formulated in contemplating revered structures.

As the shrines map the journey and the poem itself, they become, like De Quincey's opium, "the true hero of the tale," since they allow the brain to access its deepest knowledge and highest reach. Michael Vicario states that, in Harold, "the edifice, not the poet, inspires the continuous meditation."[27] This process of pausing for guidance in the contemplation of shrines in Cantos I and II actually shapes the original pilgrimage and the course of the poem's second half wherein such meditations are writ larger.

In Canto I Harold expresses ambivalent feelings about coming home. Donald Howard maintains that Chaucer's pilgrims were on a one-way journey "from Creation to Doomsday" and that adding on home-comings was an unnecessary secularization drawn from Romance."[28] At the end of Canto II Harold follows the circular and maternal form of the Hagia Sophia home to his mother and his abbey.

Since her death upon his arrival and the untimely demise of several of his closest friends gave Byron "fresh cause to roam," this second pilgrimage seems open-ended. In fact, Byron, like Dante, used the format of sacred structure "as a rule book for writing vision quests."[29] Like the great cathedrals, Childe Harold plots a course across heavens and hells of earth from east to west, culminating in a shrine centrally located in an ersatz Jerusalem, "the Eternal City," or Rome.

The structure of Harold demonstrates a relationship to the Gothic cathedral's super-structure as well as a more nuanced similarity to the labyrinths located in ecclesiastical architecture, including Newstead itself, and in medieval patterns of interlace.

Harold, in hagiologically stationing himself with his openly flowing heart before the shrines and temples of the world, provided the public with a sense of titilating religiosity missing in daily life since the beginning of the Enlightenment. Like the Scott Romances which Childe Harold displaced from the public shrine and the Gothic novel, Byron's early auto-biographical verse lifted the imagination into grand spheres wherein extreme emotions and eternal settings were revalued. Childe Harold displays the relationship between the Gothic cathedral and the Gothic romances

delineated by Devendra P. Varma in The Gothic Flame (1966): "the Gothic novel lifts us from the rut and enables us to join the unspaced firmament; it adds eternity to our trivial hours and gives a sense of infinity to our finite existence. In short, it evokes in us the same feeling that the Gothic cathedrals evoked in medieval man."[30] The shrines of Childe Harold I and II commemorate the eternal beauties of the ancient world now threatened by a deadening secular age which grows more insensitive each day to classical precepts. If the poem had ended with Canto II in 1812, Harold's pilgrimage would have been true to Howard's theory of secular pilgrimage.

The relationship, however, between the first two cantos and the last two conforms very much to medieval interlace as a template for infinity in the journey of life on earth and in heaven. For, like the interlacing initials which herald the beginning of chapters in medieval manuscripts described by Howard, Childe Harold is constituted by two seemingly disparate halves which interlock at the point of rupture.[31] The track of tears which ends Canto II and resumes again in Canto III serves as the juncture which creates a fluidity between the first, more limited pilgrimage from Newstead and back home again, and the more monumental journey from exile on the continent to metaphorical eternity in Rome and before the ocean

at Albano.

Byron, who exhibited an uncanny compulsion to physicalize his fantasies, formed a reciprocal relationship with the shrines he visited in Childe Harold. By taking on many of the attributes encoded in the shrines of war, poetry, love, and pleasure he visited on the continent and across the Mediterranean and the Middle East, Byron intensified both his initial positioning in the shrine of fame as well as his grand fall out its parameters. In resuming Childe Harold after the very public denoument of his marriage and career in the House of Lords which Hazlitt maintained was syncopated with Napoleon's decline, Byron temporarily faltered in composing Canto III. Neglecting the functioning of shrines in traditional pilgrimage, this canto, which contains the least amount of sacred architecture, displays a poet who has nothing to hold on to except the identities of other poets such as Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley. It is not until Byron resumes his visitations at formal shrines in Canto IV that he hits his stride again and brings the quest to a close consistant with the templates of ecclesiastical architecture.

Though Charles Robinson in his study, Byron and Shelley: The Eagle and the Snake Wreathed in Fight (1967),[32] prefers the more ideally Shelleyan Canto III, and Shelley himself decried "the most wicked and mischievous insanity" expostulated in Canto IV, it is

this final chapter of Harold's life that brought Byron to his meditations at the shrines of Michelangelo, Dante, Ariosto, Boccaccio, and St. Peter, his "shrine of shrines." It also brings him to his resolution to find meaning and remembrance in composing an epic work. In creating the epic Don Juan which fulfilled Byron's expectations of himself, the poet followed cathedrals and the vision quest itself to the end of their forms in history. In Don Juan, where the state of the world's great shrines gives the full measure of man's fall, sacred architecture is reduced to the "grotesqueries" and "ribaldries of drunkenness" which Ruskin discovered in the medieval cathedral's transformation in the late Renaissance.[33] Juan's pilgrimage across the world offers copious evidence of the irony, ribaldry, and hypocrisy Howard describes as "the bank-holiday side" of pilgrimage in Chaucer's day (The Idea of the Canterbury Tales, 78). Byron, however, at the end of his road, pivots once again to fulfill his earlier shrine meditations. If Don Juan may be seen as a full-blooded verbalization of Childe Harold's curse upon the world in the Coliseum, Byron's death in Greece, if only as a jaded figurehead for hire, seems a tactic both to save his beloved "shrine," Greece, and receive, from a hardened public, "the late remorse of love."

Footnotes

[1] The Divine Comedy, translated into blank verse by Louis Biancolli. (New York: Washington Square Press, 1966) Paradise XXXI, 31-8.

[2] All quotations from Byron's poetry in my text are from The Poetical Works ed. Frederick Page. London: Oxford UP, 1970.

[3] Mark Twain, The Innocents Abroad (Pleasantville, New York: The Reader's Digest Association, Inc., 1990) 181.

[4] Harold Bloom, Ruin the Sacred Truths (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: Harvard UP, 1989) 20.

[5] Paul West, Byron and the Spoiler's Art, (1960; New York: Lumen Books, 1992) 9.

[6] Stuart Curran, Poetical Form and British Romanticism (London: Oxford UP, 1986) 153.

[7] Victor and Edith Turner, Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture (New York: Viking Press, 1975) Preface xv, Introduction 2.

[8] M.H. Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism (New York: W.W. Norton and Co. Inc., 1971) 13.

[9] Jeremy Black, The British and the Grand Tour (London: Croom Helm, 1985) 165.

[10] Stuart M. Sperry, Keats the Poet (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1976) 98.

[11] All quotations from John Keats's poetry in my text are from The Poetical Works London: Oxford University Press, 1930.

[12] All quotations from William Wordsworth's poetry in my text are from Wordsworth: The Oxford Authors. ed. Stephen Gill. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990.

[13] Jerome J. McGann The Romantic Ideology (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1988) 87.

[14] W. Jackson Bate identifies Staffa as the inspirational location for Saturn's realm. John Keats (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Pres of Harvard UP, 1982) 359.

[15] All quotations from Percy Shelley's poetry in my

text are from The Complete Poetical Works, Oxford: Oxford UP, 1975.

[16] All quotations from William Blake's poetry in my text are from Blake: Poetical Works. ed. Alicia Ostriker, Oxford: Oxford UP, 1979.

[17] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Extracts from 'The Biographia Literaria,'" Chapter XIV in Coleridge: Poems and Prose Selected by Kathleen Raine (London: Penquin Books, 1957) 191.

[18] Abbott Suger On the Abbey Church of St. Denis and its Art Treasures edited, translated and annotated by Erwin Panofsky. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1979) Preface to the First Edition, xi.

[19] Wiliam Hazlitt, "Mr. Wordsworth" in William Hazlitt: Selected Writings. ed. Jon Cook (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1991) 343-178, 348.

[20] William Hazlitt, "The French Revolution" in Selected Writings, 86.

[21] William Godwin. The Adventrues of Caleb Williams, New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1965.

[22] Frankenstein, Mary Shelley, 1818; New York: Bantam, 1991.

[23] James Hogg. The Private Memoirs and Confessions of Justified Sinner, New York: The Norton Library, 1970.

[24] Jane Austen, Northanger Abbey, New York: Signet Classic, 1965.

[25] Washington Irving, "Newstead Abbey," Wolfert's Roost and Other Stories, (New York: The Century Co. 1910) 1-95, 9.

[26] Quoted in The Temple in the House by Anthony Lawlor (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 994) 128.

[27] Michael Vicario, "Implications of Form in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," The Keats-Shelley Journal 33 (1984) 123-29, 128.

[28] Donald Howard, The Idea of the Canterbury Tales (Berkeley: U of California P, 1976) 72.

[29] Barbara Nolan The Gothic Visionary Perspective. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1977) 135.

[30] Devrendra P. Varma, The Gothic Flame (New York: Russell and Russell, 1966) 212.

[31] Donald Howard, Writers and Pilgrims: Medieval PIlgrimage Narratives and Their Posterity (Berkeley: U of California P, 1980) 316-17.

[32] Charles Robinson, Shelley and Byron: The Snake and the Eagle Wreathed in Fight (Baltimore: The John Hopkins UP, 1976) 89.

[33] John Ruskin, The Stones of Venice (1851; New York: Da Capo Paperback, 1985) 239..

BYRON AND THE MEDIEVAL CATHEDRAL

Chapter One

Byron is the only major English Romantic poet to use Christian shrines as a valid destination for the vision quest. Unlike Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Shelley, and Keats, who objected to "papish" superstition, Byron declared himself to be delighted by the palpability of Roman Catholicism: "What with incense, pictures, statues, altars, shrines, relics and the real presence, confession, absolution - there is something sensible to grasp at."[1] In Childe Harold shrines in particular offer a palpable presence of God for the young protagonist who brings a medieval grasp of divinity encoded in stone to both pagan and Christian sacred structures. Though Byron shares with his brother Romantics a Miltonic need to re-establish Paradise on earth, he insists that the mind is not always its own place, despite his plagiarism of Milton's famous line in Cain. For Byron, the mind requires ecclesiastical architecture and shrines to template spirituality, relics to authenticate the existence of godly acts in history, and sacred ground to inspire and apotheosize his versifying.

Whereas the younger and older generations of Romantic poets aligned themselves with Hazlitt's Jacobin sentiments regarding the partnership between sacred edifices, church land, class privilege and the Crown, Byron often stood with Edmund Burke on the other side of the Revolution. In direct opposition to Hazlitt, who believed the abbeys should be razed and "the fat lands" redistributed more fairly among the lower classes, Burke asserted that the future of the French and British empires rests squarely upon "an inheritable crown; an inheritable peerage; and a House of Commons and a people inheriting privileges, franchises, and liberties from a long line of ancestors." This is the government as an indissovable family unit constituted of "our state, our hearths, our sepulchres, our altars."[2] In 1790, Burke warned that to support the fervor which was turning the great abbeys of France into "slaughter houses" would "uncover our nakedness, by throwing off the Christian religion which has hitherto been our boast and comfort, and one great source of civilization" (227).

As Hazlitt realized, Byron as an heriditary Peer residing in Newstead Abbey was one of those privileged persons whose nakedness was subject to uncovering in times of unrest. Championing Wordsworth's "homily" Muse, which descends "to the common ground of a disinterested humanity," Hazlitt denounces Byron's

Muse, which stagnates in "patricianly haughtiness and monastic seclusion" ("Mr. Wordsworth," 115). Engaging in a display of what William James colorfully termed "Protestant pulverization,"[3] Hazlitt congratulates Wordsworth for the effects of "a leveling muse" and "a popular and inartificial style" which dismisses "at a blow" "cloud-capt towers, the solemn temples, [and] the gorgeous palaces" (348).

Byron, on the other hand, was writing in an antiquated, quirky, pseudo-medieval style in the popular Childe Harold. He was an aristocrat willing to strip a little in public. Though it is the setting of Newstead which templates Harold's aspirations to seek out the bygone heroes who have "Gone - glimmering through the dream of things that were" (II, ii), and creates Harold's affinity with shrines, Byron's Muse brought poetry to large numbers of readers of different classes. In publicly meditating at Newstead, "Religion's Shrine!" in Hours of Idleness and various other shrines in Childe Harold, to realize and reveal who he was, Byron gave tantalizing glimpses of the nobleman at home as he opened up the shrine and the heart. The publication of Childe Harold was called "a spectacular event."[4] Byron, feeling his star rise, insisted it was paradoxically the now conservative Wordsworth who was moving away from the people as "the converted Jacobin having long subsided into the clownish

sycophant of the worst prejudices of the aristocracy" (Letters, vol. 5, 252).

The "self-critical" and "revisionist" (The Romantic Ideology, 110) later phase of Romanticism called for a new way of viewing the world, and the distinct intensity of Byron's voyeurism in penetrating sanctuaries provided a fascinating option. Paul West's portrait of Byron as an "aristocratic lame voyeur" and "the swanking Lord with the spilling heart," as a deployment of Byron's own "spoiler's art," captures an offcolor but alluring sight. As pilgrims establish new shrines by "voting with their feet," Byron and his sacred sites quickly picked up a following. Byron's eyes in Childe Harold treated the Europe of the Alliance as a transparency, allowing the sacred precincts a fresh visibility.

Byron, like all the Romantic poets, faced an unorganized conceptual space. Angus Fletcher in The Prophetic Moment[5] (1971) bifurcates this field into the parameters of the labyrinth and the temple or shrine. The shrine, in Fletcher's paradigm, orders chaos by containing God and the law; the labyrinth perplexes the traveller with tempestuous, profane, negative space: "In essence, the temple is the center of gratified desire, the labyrinth is the image of terror and panic" (13). Abrams points out that the prototypical epic for the Romantic pilgrimage into

such sacred and profane space is Paradise Lost.[6] Milton, having learned full well the limitations of regicide, is careful to place the responsibility for morality in individual conscience, and not in physical shrines which are particularly subject to moral decay. Pandemonium, the most highly wrought architectural form in Milton's great poem, is placed firmly in Hell to represent the fallen angels misguided efforts to restructure their torturous new space. This demonic palace and the "Turrets and Terrases, and glittering Spires" in "great and glorious Rome," with which Satan tempts Christ in Paradise Regained (IV, 57), distinctly recall the form of St. Peter's. It is at this juncture where Byron and his fellow Romantics experience a marked parting of the way. Whereas the older and younger Romantics disfavor ecclesiastical architectural structure, Byron, in charting a course through the wilderness, finds the temple, whether in its classical form in Greece, its Byzantine design in Constantinople, or its Renaissance completion at St. Peter's, indispensable. An examination of this contrasting usage of shrines positions Byron in his usual place of opposition, this time, however, as a uniquely Romantic / medievalist religious.

I

Byron and the Older Romantics

a.) Establishing Sacred Ground

Like Milton's Adam and Eve, the first generation of Romantic poets understood that they would have to reconstruct a "paradise within, happier far." Aware of the the danger awaiting in Milton's "Fool's Paradise" where pilgrims "stray so far to seek / In Golgotha him dead who lives in heav'n" (III, 476-7), they do not travel to established shrines. As Adam and Eve prepare to enter history, they begin pressing into memory the exact places in nature where they once were privileged to apprehend deity directly: Adam foresees the day he will tell his unborn sons, "On this mount he appeared, / under this tree / Stood visible, among these pines his voice / I heard, here with him at this fountain talked" (XI, 320-1). Though they are careful to mark in memory actual locations, they realize their experiences of God are unique and therefore not replicative.

The first generation of Romantic poets also walk uncharted courses in nature in the absence of God. Unlike Byron who heads directly for the shrines in the city center or the antiquated shells of communal worship believing that "the best prophet of the Future is the Past," Wordsworth embarks in The Prelude, "from yon city's walls set free . . . enfranchised and at large." Byron, who is conscious of his feudal ties to the old abbey lands, encrusts himself and his second self, Harold, into a heavy, medieval style of modified

Spenserian stanza. Wordsworth feels "singled out, as it might seem, / for Holy services," not as Coleridge says, as someone who can "feel something within themselves ineffably greater than their own individual nature."[7] Wordsworth sanctifies portions of the earth and spots of time by his private meditations which arise at unique junctures of secular space and time unmeasured by the church calendar. For Wordsworth, the ground of Grasmere is made sacred by an iconography of "Nature's holiest forms."

Coleridge finds personal apotheosis and the soul-strengthening trials of pilgrimage in the Lake District. Anticipating a walking tour, Coleridge remarked, "I shall have a tendency to become a God - so sublime and beautiful will be the series of my visual existence."[8] Though passing through Keswick "on the Hither side of Sobriety" almost proves Coleridge's mortality, the awesome river Derwent acts as a patron saint providing the name for a son, "perhaps to please the spirit of the place," as Richard Holmes says (283). When it came to making pilgrimages to foreign lands, Coleridge, however, preferred to stay home. Though he vowed, "I would make a pilgrimage to the deserts of Arabia to find the man who could make me understand how the one can be many," he felt no need to place himself upon time-honored land: "I believe I should walk over the plain of Marathon without

taking more interest in it than any other plain of similar features."[9]

Byron, showing a true medieval mentality, cherished Troy for the relics and martyr's bones. In response to Thomas Campbell's remark that "No one cares about the authenticity of Troy," Byron vehemently protested: "But I still venerated the grand original as the truth of history (in the material facts) and the place. Otherwise, it would have given me no delight. Who will persuade me when I recline upon a mighty tomb, that it did not contain a hero? - its very magnitude proved this. Men do not labour over the ignoble and petty dead - and why should not the dead be Homer's dead" (Letters, Vol. 8, 22)? For Byron, who unlike Coleridge refused to be "a closet pilgrim," pilgrimage involves experiential contact with the soil where heroic or godly events occurred. When readers of Childe Harold assumed Byron had written a newly published account of a journey to the Holy Land, Byron appealed to simple logic, asking: How the devil should I write upon Jerusalem, never having yet been there" (Vol. 5, 138)?

William Blake, seeing the Heavenly Host on Primrose Hill and the columns of the new Jerusalem in St. John's wood, brought the Holy Land to England. For Blake, the mind truly is its own place. For all Byron's attractions to shrines and sacred ground, Blake was convinced that he never made it out of the labyrinth:

He dedicated The Ghost of Abel "to Lord Byron in the Wilderness." Robert Southey, engaging in Puritan-like typology, in The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo also locates the new Jerusalem in Britain, "a land of milk and honey," where "the living waters of Religion flow" (III, iv).[10] Southey rushes to "this flame sublime," where the sacrifice of English blood sanctifies the earth, declaring, "I must not tarry now to tell / Of picture, or of church, or monument." This bloody ground yields relics and martyrs bones: Major Howard's remains return home "with a special grace," and the English colors are to hang as trophies in the great cathedrals.

In Byron's view, the English are not righteous enough to achieve a moral victory over the French. In Childe Harold III French and English blood run together to yield a Biblical rich harvest. Blood and bone here are too fresh for relics, and current victories too unstable to reach the mythic, heroic stature of Marathon or Troy. Byron prefers the skulls of the Newstead monks and the virgin bones at St. Ursula's. In seeking Paradise, England, "that tight little island," whether in glory or defeat would be the last place Byron would look, and Southey's muse to Byron, in Regency slang, is bound for earth, not heaven: "Because you soar too high, Bob, / And fall, for lack of moisture quite a-dry Bob" (Don Juan,

Dedication, iii).

Though Wordsworth too is drawn to history-making places and considers a stone from the fallen Bastille a "relic" of his pilgrimage, his sympathies lie foremost with the lands surrounding lakes Windermere and Grasmere, where nature provided hymns, sublimated God, and witnessed daily the sacramental acts of the common man's industry. Byron's affections for laborers were more removed and patricianly. Despite Byron's periodic revolutionary fervor and his sympathy for Milton's devil, it is the abbey lands at Newstead which qualify him to stand before temples and recite soliloquies at the outset of Harold's pilgrimage. The Byrons received their lands from the king for service; during the Stuart reign they remained royalists. In the hierarchy of Byron's sometimes facetious, sometimes earnest, view the bones of saints, ancient warriors, barons, and Renaissance men sanctify the soil, requiring reliquaries, shrines, and massive edifices to command attention and record the grand standards of the past.

b.)Inner Shrines

In Athens, Florence, and Rome, Byron is concerned with the integrity of shrines. The core or inner shrines are given as much attention as the outer, more visible structure. Byron in Childe Harold curses Elgin for fragmenting the Parthenon, shames the Florentines

for not providing a cenotaph for Dante in Santa Croce, and remembers that under the weighty St. Peter's basilica lies "the martyr's tomb." Southey, on the other hand, ridicules shrine seekers in The Pilgrim to Compostella, and seems troubled by the miraculous shrine where flames ceased at Christ's feet on a small crucifix at Hougoumont in The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo. Like a careful householder, Southey rues that the conflagration set by the English marred the crucifix's base. Yet this disproportionate concern for an icon in the presence of massive carnage and loss of limbs seems almost idolatrous; and to expect soldiers to destroy enemy ground yet protect a small icon seems less than rational.

As Byron's quaintly chivalric tone sets the shrines which appear early on in Childe Harold I snugly into a medieval milieu, in keeping with Harold's courtly lineage, Wordsworth's plainer speech in The Prelude compliments the "mountain-chapels" and "Virgin groves" of Mary of Buttermere, set in the brisk, clear, open air of the dales. Byron cavalierly invites the reader, "Rest ye at 'Our Lady's house of woe;' / Where frugal monks their little relics show" (I, xx). In his search for the God who locks the Gates of Eden, Byron is willing to look in high and low places, from the Parthenon to monkish reliquaries. Wordsworth, concerned that the human spirit must "lodge in shrines so frail"

(V, 48), locates the deepest shrine in the interior of the human heart. As Abrams points out, the presence of God in The Prelude is largely expendable (90). As a Protestant Wordsworth responsibly keeps a quiet watch over his own heart and discovers in nature "the calm existence that is mine when I / Am worthy of myself" (I, 360-1). At the end of his pilgrimage Wordsworth bows to God, then to nature, then to man. In opposition to this "visionary quietism," Byron stands more traditionally ad lumina as he enters shrines in expectation of the moment when "artistic inspiration is something like a cerebral stroke" (Abrams, 414). Only at Delphi in "Apollo's grot" or gazing up at Parnassus in flights of rhetoric can Byron uncharacteristically "bend the knee" (I, lxii).

Harold, with his great capacity for pain, stations himself in shrines to experience fully discrepancies between the ancient and modern world. Byron, as a medievalist, seeks a unified vision wherein heraldric emblems, "serinio pectoris," inner sanctums, and the temple itself reveal the passions of the heart. Fearing modes of worship where "the honour paid to the image passes the proto-type,"[11] the older generation of Romantics dispense with the exterior structure of sacred architecture along with the relics and inner shrines. Cathedrals disappear into the landscape, abbeys pass with the ancien regime, and imagination provides

unauthorized sacred edifices. Coleridge's Ancient Mariner draws the wedding guests away from church, exhorting prayers for "man and bird and beast." If Harold carries his own cathedral seat with him, the Mariner enshrines secret lessons within his own agonized soul.

Sometimes Coleridge would nowhere seem happier than in the safety of a Gothic cloister, unlocking, like Dr. Faustus, sacred and secret truths. Though the ecclesiastical buildings of his college years were "much-lov'd cloisters pale!" in "Frost at Midnight" Coleridge remembers his smothering life "in the Great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim." Collapsing the cathedral city into "a town of monks and bones" in "Cologne," Coleridge transfers the incense and incantations of cathedrals into the hypnotic character of his verse, believing that religious fanaticism and superstition arise from an over reliance upon sensory impressions. For Coleridge, an arm-chair pilgrimage to Xanadu, inspired by the reading of Purchas' Pilgrimage, yields a relic in the form of "Kubla Khan," a poem which leaves the incense in the trees ("incense-laden trees") and the pleasure dome in the air.

Ultimately, Coleridge's ability to continue versifying drifted away with his fantastical architecture. Coleridge, who stared at his shelved

books in changing light much the way Monet studied Rouen Cathedral and even saw in Byron's eyes "'the portal of the sun, light for light'" (Drinkwater, 256), often lost the light entirely. When Byron urged him to complete "Kubla Khan," Coleridge replied it would have to remain fragmentary for "all the rest had passed away like images on the surface of a stream" (Letters, Vol 4, 85). Holmes cites a contemporary guidebook to the Lake District which encouraged a visit to "'the gigantic Intellect & Sublime Genius of Coleridge'" (327); Coleridge, however, declared, "'I am lost in the labyrinth, the trackless wilderness of my own bosom'" (27). In Don Juan Byron placed him completely in the dark:

> And Coleridge, too, has lately taken wing
> But like a hawk encumber'd with his hood, -
> Explaining metaphysics to the nation -
> I wish he would explain his Explanation.
> (I, ii)

Blake found Byron's own metaphysics in Cain equally irritating. Like Byron, Blake had a very strong sense of place. Seeing London as a biblical city "filled with angels and prophets," Blake, in pursuit of personal visions, charted routes across the dismal city streets (Ackroyd, 34). Declaring, "'I shall be able to present the full history of my Spiritual Sufferings to the Dwellers upon Earth'" (276), Blake occupies the shrine, speaking ex cathedra to articulate spiritual law. As Fletcher points

out, Blake's dictations mimic those aupicious moments when "a divine spirit speaks through him [the poet] informing his speech with a rare self-possession" (The Prophetic Moment, 37). Like the looming figures he enshrines, Urizen and Orc, Blake's own authoritative figure dominates the visual field. Taking the place of the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah, Blake is also determined to seize the poetical shrine from Milton and the upstart Byron.

Blake authoritatively presents his creation, Urizen, as God the architect, an image Otto von Simpson traces back to the Gothic cathedral.[12] Blake, however, warned a young man, "'Our cathedrals were not built to rule and compass'" (Ackroyd, 340). Redefining Gothic as "'an art form and outline, which are themselves the lineaments of the spirit,'" Blake himself becomes like his creations, "an isolated figure with upraised arms in an attitude of fear and reverence" (Ackroyd, 77). Yet the image of the Romantic artist creating extempore on a tabula rasa proves a fallacy. As original as Blake's pictorial and poetical visions may appear, Kenneth Clark cites prints of paintings by the old masters as one of his sources: "Graphic images made so strong an impression on him that years afterwards he could recall them from memory and genuinely believed that they had come to him as visions."[13] Ackroyd posits the tombs of Westminster Abbey which the apprentice Blake engraved and various classical buildings in London such as the Bank of England on Threadneedle Street as templates for Blake's

architectural images in his luminous plates and revelatory verse.

In Blake's process of internalizing engravings and architecture into deeply idiosyncratic visions, images are often deconstructed. Contrary to biblical descriptions of architectural structure wherein, as Bloom points out, "stories of how they were built is what constitutes depiction" (150), Blake presents sacred edifices falling apart. Blake depicts swirling columns, arches, and domes, and open cloisters revealing "The frequent spectres of religious men weeping / In winds driven out of the abbeys, their naked souls shiver in the keen open air" (The French Revolution, 274-5). Ultimately Blake promises a pristine field when the Anglican Church's "cup, / their bread, their altar-table, their incense & oath" are overthrown (Jerusalem, Chap 4, 11-13).

Revealing a particulary Protestant "horror of the physical aspects of religion" (Pilgrims and Writers, 105), Blake refuses to worship in idolatrous churches. He relocates divinity in the service and virtue of chimney sweeps, black children, and the poor, advocating a direct return to reading scripture. Byron, disturbed by an over reliance on the word, considered the people of Timbuctoo: "If mankind may be saved who never heard or dreamt, at Timbuctoo, Otaheite, Tera Incognita, & country of Galilee, and its Prophet, Christianity is of no avail; if they cannot be saved without, why are not all orthodox? . . God would

made his will known without books, considering how very few could read then when Jesus of Nazareth lived" (Letters, vol. 2, 89). Cathedrals and temples serving as "Bibles of the poor," as Nolan says (83), provide a more universal ground for apprehension of deity. Presumbably, Byron, with his method of decoding sacred structure, could have sent Harold to Timbuctoo to read extemporaneously truths embedded there in wood and stone.

Rejecting Coleridge's cerebral spiritual speculations and Blake's biblically modelled prophecies, Byron, like Wordsworth, stays in close proximity to the physical form. Despite their different methodologies, Byron and Wordsworth often arrive at the same place. Byron follows Wordsworth in endowing the poet with spiritual responsibilities, and both poets confer immortality upon the poet's vocation while contemplating the dead. Wordsworth, in being content with the limitations of the landscape, consistantly keeps to the low view. Insisting upon a low personal fall, "Happy is the man, / who only misses what I missed, who falls / No longer than I fell" (The Prelude III, 504-6), Wordsworth confirms the validity of versifying at his teacher's humble grave. Preferring cathedrals like St. Paul's as craftsmen's miniatures in a London window, and cottages as "beacons," Wordsworth's attention is given to abbeys whose edges have been broken by time, like Tintern, or by revolutionary violence, like the Grand Chartreuse.

Though literary figures, including William James,

Harold Bloom, and Byron himself in Canto III of Childe Harold, turn to Wordsworth for priestly comfort, his spiritual insights, lacking religious iconongraphy and architectural armature, fail to sustain their faith. Bloom, drawn to Wordsworth's "dissolving edges," writes: "As the years pass, I develop an ever greater horror of solitude, of finding myself having to confront sleepless nights and baffled days in which the self ceases to know how to talk to itself. Wordsworth, more than any other single poet, instructs me in how to sustain the heaviness of going on talking to myself" (131). Bloom concludes that "nature, however, as hard, phenomenal otherness, is scarcely a surrogate for anything, and is strikingly similar to Freud's reality principle, the context that begins as the universe of sense and ends as the universe of death" (133). Byron, struggling with a sense of duality in possesing both a temporal self as George Gordon, an individual, and a perpetual self as the sixth lord Byron, cannot find a place for the valued ego in nature's generic continuity.[14]

Byron began doubting both Wordsworth's ability to study nature and shrines accurately. Quarreling with the older poet's imagery of a yellow sky in England, Byron compared Wordsworth's phrase, "'the still seclusion of a Turkish cemetery in some remote place,'" to the urban reality of monuments so crowded together "you cannot walk between them," which he personally observed in Turkey (Letters, vol. 4, 324). Dismissing his own Wordsworthian nature

meditations as a confusion of mountains and metaphysics, Byron, in Canto IV, turned back full force to studying monuments. In formulating solutions for his own sense of mortality in Childe Harold IV, Byron positioned himself at the graves of famous men such as Dante, Boccaccio, Ariosto, and Michelangelo, assured that their voices would speak to him through their art so that he would not end up talking to himself.

II

The Younger Romantics

Despite Wordsworth's restructuring of the visual field, with enshrinements of the lives, homes, and rustic chapels of "the manufacturing poor," and Byron's revaluation of traditional Hellenistic and Christian shrines, Keats and Shelley still face an open, uncharted landscape. As Thomas Lui points out in Wordsworth: The Historic Sense (1989), Wordsworth in his late period "rushes in too quickly, we feel, to inscribe that blankness with his hieroglyphics."[15] Whereas Byron fills the field with temples, and Wordsworth often substitutes rocks for cathedral structure, Keats and Shelley seem to tolerate a less physical, more deeply psychologized journey wherein, as Howard says, "the poem with its attendant story of a vision lost to memory is an internalized quest for a kind of enchantment realized in the poem itself" (Writers and Pilgrims, 9).

In contrast to Byron, who leaves initials and voice prints upon sacred form like spoors and is sometimes in

jeopardy of becoming overly dependent "upon the external aspect of his experience for the substance of his poetry," Keats declares, "My imagination is a monastery and I am its monk."[16] Feeling at odds with Byron, the younger poet deftly summed up their major difference: "He describes what he sees. I what I imagine" (Letters, 201). In attempting to concentrate poetical inspiration into specified sections of holy ground such as Robert Burns's cottage in Alloway, Keats grew frustrated at the resulting "flat sonnet," crying, "Oh the flummery of a birth place! Cant! Cant" (Letters, vol. I, 324)! Travelling across the Scottish highlands in highland gear looking like the Red Cross Knight, as an acquaintance observed, Keats measured the height of Ben Nevis, which was to teach him poetry, in terms of cathedrals. Feeling man's small stature, he described himself as "a fly crawling up a wainscot - Imagine the task of mountaining ten Saint Paul's without the convenience of Stair cases" (Letters, vol. I, 352). Declaring that "for solemnity and grandeur it far surpasses the finest cathedral," Keats utilized Nevis, the highest mountain in Scotland, as a humorous prototype for the cathedral, seeing visions of hell in its chasms and heaven in its mists in "Sonnet Written upon the Top of Ben Nevis." Unlike Wordsworth, who picked up his relic at the Bastille (as Lui emphasizes,) "affecting more emotion than I felt" (The Prelude, IX, 71), Keats follows Childe Harold in seeking the full range of both experience and emotion. Nevis serves

as a Celtic Parnassus revealing the intimidating heights the young poet must climb.

Clark describes the distinctive moments of vision in time which Keats contributed to poetry as instances wherein the sudden undulations of supposedly solid ground "shocks us into heightened perceptions" ("Iconophobia," 36). Iona's sacred architecture, unexpectedly emerging from its incongrous island setting and replicating a Keatsian figure, brought Keats to a full stop: Keats questioned, "Who would expect to find the ruins of a fine Cathedral Church, of Cloisters, Colleges, Monasteries and Nunneries in so remote an island" (Letters, vol. I, 347)? It is, however, the natural basaltic columns and vaulted arches of Fingal's Cave on the island of Staffa which provided the architectural structure of Saturn's fallen realm in The Fall of Hyperion where Keats becomes an initiate in the secret shrines of poesy. Both Iona and Staffa provided for Keats the sudden surge of perceptual acuity which Suger felt at St. Denis and Byron experienced at St. Peter's. Projecting his "monkish" powers of imagination upon the clean, pristine, and misty settings of the Hebrides, for Keats an abrupt swell of the waves made the pillars of Fingal's Cave rise "immediately out of the crystal," creating "a cathedral built by the Almighty to raise the minds of his creatures to the purest and grandest devotion" (Letters, vol. I, 349).

In contrast to the lighter candy-like shrine in

Endymion, upon which a Priest "heap'd a spire / Of teeming sweets, enkindling sacred fire" (I, 223-4), "the massy range / of columns north and south" supporting Saturn's realm in The Fall of Hyperion contains the paraphenalia of the Catholic liturgy. Keats, turning like Byron to Christianity for an extemely graphic display of mystery and passion to represent the full ecstatic pain of experience, creates in The Fall of Hyperion a more trying shrine replete with incense, white linen, golden censers, and transparent juice, where the poet must make a Christlike sacrifice and "die into life." Apollo, like Christ in cathedral shrines, appears as a passion figure. Yet, this enclosed room is only "the Antichamber," and in this poem there is no way out, only deeper penetration and risk of seizure.

The initiation into life and poetry in The Fall of Hyperion resembles the legend of St. Owen's descent into the shrine of "St. Patrick's Purgatory." In Southey's retelling of this tale, just when the Christian knight's brain feels "like liquid lead," Christ appears and "the gates of Paradise unclose." St. Peter's Basilica as a renaissance form of the medieval cathedral, in finished form encompassing Christ and man, provides closure for Harold's pilgrimage. Keats preferred journeys which "terminate in open plains" ("To Charles Cowden Clark"). The Fall of Hyperion does not terminate but breaks off, as Stuart Sperry says, "because the visionary framework

cannot sustain the weight of human need and suffering."[17] In the context of Christianity the suffering God would offer atonement for the poet's pain. Byron found all this working up of the imagination in Keats's insular, personal mythology masturbatory. Keats, however, finding fault with Coleridge for "letting go by a fine isolated versimilitude caught from the Penetralium of mystery, from being incapable of remaining content with half knowledge" (Letters, vol. I, 193), was ready with his doctrine of "negative capability" that enabled him to explore more ethereal, less grounded shrines.

Like Byron's final shrines in Don Juan, Keats's most satisfactory shrines and sacred forms express visionary truth in irony. Keats transposed the incense-laden atmospheres of Winchester and Chicester Cathedrals[18] into the "smokeable" verse in Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes, and Other Poems. In "The Eve of St. Agnes," Keats creates, according to Sperry, "a blend of domesticity, elvishness, gothicism, realism, courtly romance, riddle, fairy tale and legend" (217). In this light, "St. Agnes" seems a microcosm for the world of Don Juan. Reading the poem is like entering a cathedral where medieval effigies arise from "silver shrines" to participate fully in the mystery of sensual love waiting at the heart of lush, incandescent, sacred settings. The sexuality of Agnes, lying "clasp'd like a missal" beneath "a casement high and triple-arch'd,"

corresponds to the sleepless Juan about to engage in some "spiritual pit-a-pat" with the legendary Black Friar as moonbeams fall "in silvery showers / Chequer'd with all the tracery of the hall" (XVI, cxx). Byron, however, prefers to place this complete secularization of the sacred setting squarely in the heart of contemporary English society, at Norman Abbey. These amatory scenes follow Byron's dictum: "March, my Muse! If you cannot fly, yet flutter; / And when you may not be sublime, be arch."

Keats's "Ode to Melancholy," like Don Juan, admits a containment of sorrow in a larger field of joy. Melancholy's shrine suddenly appears suspended in the air somewhat like Caspar David Friedrich's disorienting crucifix in the painting "Cross of the Mountain" where the ground below lacks the usual iconography of weeping mother, saints, and soldiers. Keats's shrine to sorrow is so firmly fixed in sight, however, that the poem conveys a complete acceptance of the price of life's ransom:

> Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue
> Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine;
> His soul shall taste the sadness of her might,
> And be among her cloudy trophies hung.
>
> (III)

Byron in Don Juan, admittedly "broken before the shrines of Sorrow," stands with Keats at the end of a vision quest which is complete enough to give pain its portioned ground in a more largely comic view which turns back to the world in acceptance of life's demands. Byron, like Keats,

at the end of his poetical career, was attracted to satire and irony for the conveyance of a broader world view commensurate with Dante's and the cathedral iconography of heaven and hell.

Shelley, too, struggles to create a fresh iconography which will support a re-articulation of human pain and promise. Like Childe Harold, Prometheus Unbound utilizes the architecture of Rome to formulate solutions consistent with Christianity. Shelley, drawing inspiration from "the ever winding labyrinths . . . and immense platforms and dizzy arches suspended in the air" of the Baths of Caracalla, reconciles Jupiter and Prometheus through an act of forgiveness. Prometheus, like Byron's Cain, struggles against a tyrant God. Rejecting the cross, Shelley utilizes the Rock of Caucasus as a symbol of redeeming passion. Here, caves and rock provide a setting of "primitive innocence," in Mary Shelley's words, which outlasts the falling and fractured classical architecture of former realms modeled upon Vatican City and the pagan ruins. However, Shelley's final message, that hope "creates / From its own wreck the thing it contemplates," gives the human mind predominance over religion and sacred architecture.

Romantic iconography requires real martyrs as well as mythic figures. Thomas Chatterton, who was denied a shrine and buried anonymously in a pauper's grave, joins Robin Hood, Rob Roy, and William Tell as a righteous outlaw

whose epitaph is written not by the officials of Westminster Abbey but by the Romantic poets. Byron carved his name into sacred temples just as medieval pilgrims carved their initials into the shrines to which they travelled. Wordsworth and Coleridge likewise embedded their names into the rocks at Dunmail Rise. Keats's epitaph, "Here lies one who name is writ in water," carved into stone creates a rich oxymoron. Wordsworth, who believed in keeping epitaphs "controlled," substitutes for the marble floor marking the more successful emigrant Richard Bateman's birthplace a never built pile of stones dedicated to Michael's lost son. Shelley, trusting in neither religion nor monuments, enshrined Keats in Adonais where Byron makes a rather startling appearance as the Pilgrim of Eternity, "whose fame / Over his living head like Heaven is bent, / An early but enduring monument" (xxx).

Despite the promise of Keats's soaring into "the dome of many-colored glass [which] stains the white radiance of Eternity" and despite Keats's monument being placed near "the one keen pyramid with wedge sublime," Shelley had to steel his heart to see the poem through to its conclusion. In writing a poem to his dead son William, Shelley admitted, "thy funeral shrine / Is thy mother's grief and mine" ("To William Shelley"). In building upon the wreck of hope Shelley cannot satisfactorily answer Byron's question: "Of its own beauty is the mind diseased, And fevers into false creation: where, / Where are the forms the sculptor's soul

hath seized?" (Harold IV, cxxii) Though Byron's heart, at the thought of Keats's shrine, softened enough to order cancelled some unflattering references in Don Juan, Byron had no interest in making a pilgrimage to Keats's grave when in Rome. Disappointed in his own divergence from Pope and Dryden, Byron strenuously objected to Keats's criticism of the Augustan poets. Childe Harold is a quest for a personal identification with the artists of the classical past. Thus, Byron, seeking new directions in poetry, contemplates the shrines of Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Dante.

Byron's shrine meditations and his medieval milieu imply a social system where even outlaws like the Giaour and "the wandering outlaw of his own dark mind," Harold, eventually come to church. Despite his republican sentiments, Byron joined Burke in fearing the day when the tabula rasa becomes "carte blanche," admitting "aetheists and madmen" into the inner sanctum of the law. Byron was reported to have said, "I wish to see the English constitution restored, and not destroyed. Born an aristocrat, and naturally one by temper, with the greater part of my property in funds, what have I to gain by revolution?"[19] Byron thought Marat's and Robespierre's despotism would pale in comparison to Cobbett's and Hunt's "could they throttle their way to power" (Letters, vol. 7, 45). Byron eschewed both "the Cockney school" of poetry and politics; when he said, "God will not always be a Tory" (Letters, vol. 8, 47), he did not imply he would not always be a lord.

III

The Gothic Novel

Byron's retrograde grounding of self, character, and architecture in a medieval milieu in an attempt to revitalize an attenuated blood pact between deity and blue-blooded sacrifice and service has precedents in the Gothic novel. The "Gothick" movement realigned edifice with human passion at its most divine and demonic, qualities of feeling unacknowledged by orderly Georgian, neo-classical architecture. Horace Walpole, who built the Gothic phantasmorgoria, Strawberry Hill, an "'essentially bookish creation'" wherein he appropriately dreamed up the first English Gothic novel, The Castle of Otranto, remarked, "'one must have taste to be sensible of the beauties of Grecian architecture, one wants only passions to feel Gothic.'"[20] In traditional Gothic novels like The Castle of Otranto,[21] The Mysteries of Udolpho,[22] The Italian,[23] and The Monk[24] Gothic architecture provides the reader with the medieval cathedral's "palpable presence of the supernatural" (Von Simpson, 79).

In recovering the medieval world's ambience, ancient edifices in the Gothic novel are fully functional and shrines and relics still speak truth. Castles are connected to abbeys and cathedrals through tunnels and

trapdoors, keeping the bond of church and state. Architecture is righteous; oriel windows appear when revelations are imminent, relics bleed to reveal murderers and encourage revenge, statues pose, inviting mimetic responses. When the Abbott Suger wanted to draw in crowds to St. Denis he ordered the relics to be placed on display, challenging sensibility and assaulting the senses. Fiona MacCarthy finds this histrionic "quasi-theatrical experience" comparable to Radcliffe's "shudder-scape."[25] In Radcliffe's prototypical novels young, unguided orphans enter Fuseli-like labyrinths, but find their way back using their own wits to decipher sacred architecture replete with revelatory oracles and protective shrines. Ancient edifices, even when profaned, serve as relics of the former more godly days, inspiring, as Varma says, "sacred enthusiasm" (18). Though Varma refers to "two-faced architecture" (219), the physical structure is actually unified in Christian purpose as it assists in punishing the wicked, sorting out bloodlines, and witnessing sacramental marriages which promise renewal through the creation of proper heirs to maintain abbeys and estates. Shrines provide statues which model appropriate behavior as trapped protagonists are pressed into searching, in order to free thmeselves, for some force outside their sensibilities. In Udolpho, Emily, whose countenance bears a striking resemblence to the Virgin Mary, evokes the reader's tears as she perseveres against

the evil Montoni who has illegally usurped her late father's estate.

Varma points out that Byron and Shelley were "taught by [Gothic] novels how to feel and think and how to make others feel and think" (191). Cleary Byron came to much of his medieval ethics vicariously through the Gothic novel. Like the early Gothic novelists, Byron included a moral in Childe Harold to edify the reader and counterbalance his lurid scenes. The poem, like the Gothic novel and the cathedral, presents life as a morality lesson wherein celestial and infernal apertures open to display incarnations of purity persistently struggling to root out impurities and new depths of depravity. Bloom points out that in formulating philosophies, "Beliefs can be localized in a shrine or similar place, but fructifications demand a temporal continuum" (Ruin, 156). The anti-Catholic, inquisitional horrors described by Radcliffe and Lewis suggest events taking place in continental Europe under the Bourbons and the Terror. Byron also provides a time continuum by asking the reader to remember Harold's thoughts at "those magical and memorable abodes" (Canto IV, Dedication to Hobhouse) and by drawing out from shrine sites lessons which have applications to contemporary issues of morality in England.

The Gothic novel apparently inspired the most sensational shrines in Childe Harold. Paralleling cathedral niches, which enshrine Christ's passion and the saints'

persecutions, the Gothic novel contain pockets of unbearable sorrow. In The Monk, Lorenzo and the misguided officers of the Inquisition discover his half-starved sister, Agnes, clinging to her dead baby in a sepulchre forced open when the people burn the convent down during the pageant for the annual pilgrimage. By purifying this profaned space the actions of the mob allow Agnes to wed Raymond in his castle in Andalusia. Surrounding himself with momento moris which establish the proximity of life to death, Byron, doubting his eyes, discovers caritas in the dungeon in St. Nicholas where the Roman daughter fed her starving father from her breasts. Several stanzas later Byron sees the future of Britain "darken above our bones," as he relates the death of the king's heirs, Princess Charlotte and her stillborn child. As a martyr to the Prince Regent, wedded in "sackcloth," her fruit turned to "ashes," Byron engages in a mixture of typology, Gothic sensationalism, genuine awe, and an acknowledgement, if not acceptance, of history's perpetual unjust refusal to enshrine Charlotte's memory.

Byron also practices the Gothic protagonists' art of mimetically discovering the shadow self in the lineaments of niche statuary. Walpole's Theodore, whose facial features resemble the medieval effigies in the Falconara tombs, Radcliffe's Emily whose face is contoured like the Madonna, and Lewis' Ambrose whose genteel beauty recalls St. Francis receive visions of their alternative and higher selves in Christian iconography. Byron, like Shelley in

Prometheus Unbound and Keats in The Fall of Hyperion, drawing upon Vatican treasures, mixes Christian and pagan imagery. At St. Peter's he is not Christ but the Apollo Belvedere; physiognomically, Byron's Grecian profile and curling hair allow the comparison. In Byron's theology, the sculptor's skill in creating the great "God of life" niched in the heart of "Christ's mighty tomb" justifies Prometheus' theft of fire by displaying glory "which, if made by human hands, is not of human thought" (IV, clxiii).

In The Last Man,[26] Mary Shelley builds upon this theme of god in man by having Byron, as Lord Raymond, contemplate a replica of the Apollo Belvedere as he considers giving his life in service for Greece. By aligning himself with the Apollo Belvedere and Greece, Byron intensifies his own martyrdom and the consequent curses he places upon the British persecutors in the Gothicized settings of the "saddening shrine": the Parthenon plundered by Lord Elgin and the shrine to Christian martyrs in the Coliseum. Byron draws upon the Middle Ages' "formal character of atonement and revenge . . . wherein injustice is corrected by symbolic punishment" and the Gothic novel's melodramatic exorcism, for purification and atonement, of evil forces.[27]

Dressed in his theatrical shroud, Byron becomes in West's caricature the "ringmaster" and "the Grand Guignol" (25) who damns the hour the Elgin party set sail for Greece.

Like Radcliffe's Emily, Byron is an aesthete whose sensitive soul dilates in the presence of sacred beauty. Centering himself in the Parthenon and the Coliseum, Byron emits from the core of the self and the shrines' bloodied ground a pained cried of innocence wronged. Byron becomes a shrine keeper like Emily and Theodore by displacing usurpers and precipitating a process of restoration. The castles of Otranto and Udolpho are only properly restored when occupied by persons whose psychological and physical forms conform to the edifices' encoded symbolism. As an earnest British philhellenist, Byron correctly occupies the Acropolis, atoning for Elgin's rapine. As a martyr to unChristian British morality, Byron appropriately evokes a perverse Christian nemesis in a curse that is also forgiveness, procuring "in hearts all rocky now the late remorse of love" (IV, cxxxvii).

Submitting to Shelley's doses of Wordsworthian "physic" during the composition of the "shrineless" third canto of Childe Harold, Byron sacrificed his architectural armature. Canto III, written during a period of personal dissolution and public disgrace, deviates from the pattern of shrine meditations formulated in the poem's first half. Strikingly, Gothic novels, which conspiculously lack architecture, often present similar courses of rampant and unstructured angst and hubris, resulting in disintegration of the psyche, the self, and the family. For example, in Caleb Williams,

where fame is metaphorically "the shrine of . . . divinity" (57), the only significant edifice present is the English prison which the protagonist would like to change for the more palpable horrors of the Spanish inquisition. Caleb, whose low social stature is measured by his distance from the Falkland Manor, is imprisoned physically and psychologically. With no secular or church authority to secure justice, Caleb becomes Falkland's judge, jury, and executioner. The agnostic Caleb can never be assured that Falkland will be punsihed by divine wrath; Falkland cannot expiate his sins. Both perish. Terrors and expiations usually acted out in castle and abbey interiors are displaced into the brain. As Varma points out, "[Godwin] displays his horror in a manner that is creditable but intense, like the human body seen in the monotonous brightness of an operating theatre" (135).

The only significant architecture in Godwin's daughter's novel Frankenstein is the laboratory where Victor practices his "unhallowed arts." Frightened by the nightmare vision which inspired the novel, Mary Shelley anchored herself to the hard realities of the parquet floor in Byron's Swiss Chalet: "I wished to exchange the ghastly image of my fancy for the realities around. I see them still: the very room, the dark parquet, the close shutter with the moonlight struggling through" (Preface to the 1818 Edition). Her protagonist, however, cannot locate a supportive structure. Isolated in his pursuit of his "Dantean" monster, Victor

takes no refuge in shrines or sacred precincts. The unhinged doctor flashes by St. Paul's, Oxford's spires, Edinburgh Castle, St. Bernard's curative well, "impatient to arrive at the termination of my journey" (239).

Victor does solemnify his "pilgrimage" to slay the rampant creature by swearing vengeance at the shrines of his slain loved ones. His pilgrim's cry is a rather dismal one. Recalling how the Greeks wept at the sight of the Mediterranean, Victor, upon viewing the vast arctic horizon where the monster has fled, kneels "to thank his guiding spirit for conducting me in safety to the place I hoped, notwithstanding my adversary's gibe, to meet and grapple with him" (306). Victor, however, has no guiding spirit. Ignoring the potential store of salvational iconography in ecclesiastical settings, Victor plunges to his ruin with unmitigated Promethean pride.

James Hogg's Sinner also presents a setting devoid of Christian architecture and shrines, wherein unstructured mania reaches new heights of sensationalism and self-destruction. Covenanter Robert Wringhim, believing he is one of the Elect, thinks he might tempt fate and "commit acts that would exclude him from the limits of the convenant" (79). Robert, having no saintly or demonic statues to imitate, mimics other people to gain possession of their souls. The dilating form in this novel is Robert himself, viewed by his hallucinating brother, George, climbing Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh. In this

novel the illegitimate brother Robert wins the property but loses his identity and his soul by following, without guidance, an indeterminate doctrine. Believing himself condemned by Adam's sin, Robert commits fratricide, a crime "for the due punishment of which the Almighty may be supposed to subvert the order of nature" (73).

The injustices which troubled Caleb, the pursuit of excellence which drove Victor, and Robert's unforgivable sin were for Byron all dilemmas to be penetrated at shrine sites. Byron evokes Athena's tears and public approbation at Parnassus to punish Lord Elgin's transgression against the Acropolis, and he evokes, when martyred by the British public, nemesis at the Coliseum to "pile on human heads the mountains of my curse" (Canto IV, cxxxiv). Byron reads in fallen secular architecture, such as the tenantless "chiefless castles" along the Rhine, the dire results of hubris, and takes occasion at St. Peter's, Santa Croce, and the Pantheon to rejoice in man's pride when appropriately displayed in the arts. Although Byron could not reconcile Cain with God, he felt that the first fratricide and consequent unpardonable sin resulted when God wrongly rejected Cain's agricultural "shrine without victim" (Cain, III, i, 266-7). Harold, bearing "that settled, ceaseless gloom / The fabled Hebrew wanderer bore" (I, "To Inez, 5), bears away the pain at the poem's conclusion, allowing Byron to declare," My Pilgrim's shrine is won, and he and I must part" (IV, clxxv).

In displaying unjust wounds, protesting injustice, and hinting at sins in such potent settings, Byron found that his own life easily became a Gothic novel. The Gothic movement prepared the public for associations between personal character and environment. Like the characters in the Gothic novel and like Scott at Abbotts-ford, Walpole at Strawberry Hill, and Beckford at Fonthill Abbey, Byron became inseparable in the public imagination from his sacred settings. Caroline Lamb's Glenarvon (1816)[28] situates the title character in Belfont Abbey, Ireland; John Polidori drew upon Mediterranean settings to intensify the Byronic Ruthven's evil; and the latest fictional account of Byron's life, Tom Holland's The Lord of the Dead (1995),[29] which explains Byron's psychology in terms of vampirism, depicts on its cover Newstead Abbey against a blood red sky.

Eventually, though, even Byron found all this Gothicism excessive. For example, ladies fainting in his presence and the young, disappointed American who expected, Byron surmised, "to meet a misanthropical gentleman, in wolf-skin breeches, and answering in monosyllables, instead of man of the world" (Letters, vol. 8, 146) impelled Byron to view himself, his architecture, and the world itself as comedy. McGann writes that in trying to escape "the poetical myth of his life," (The Romantic Ideology, 126) Byron placed his disillsusionment in "the flux of everything which is most immediate, a flight into the surfaces of poetry and

life" (127). However, in Don Juan, on the return trip, in which the world order is inverted and the sacred is completely profaned, ecclesiastical architecture is penetrated with some very shrewd insights. Juan's destination is not a shrine but a marriage in hell through which Byron anticipated providing closure, perhaps like Radcliffe and Lewis.

In his satirical stance, though, Byron is closer to Northanger Abbey and Nightmare Abbey (1818)[30]. This time out the architecture of Newstead Abbey conspires to promote adulterous love-matches. Don Juan, in fact, breaks off at a moment of social machination worthy of Jane Austen's satiric gothicism, wherein broken arches represent broken promises (Northanger Abbey, 72). Ethereal light streams through the high arches of a traceried window as the Black Friar's ghost, embracing the overwhelmed Juan, is about to be revealed as Lord Fitz-Fulke's wife. In the final verses of Don Juan, the Gothic halls of Newstead Abbey - once "Religion's shrine!" - have become the very "mock Gothic" Norman Abbey where all the evils are social.

Even in its truncated form Byron's appropriation of medieval vision quest and penultimate shrine in Don Juan yields a sense of final truth in his revisitation of the place of origin. Don Juan, as a legendary mocker of the dead, is the perfect anti-type to Harold who worships in earnest at the shrines of the dead and the lost past. Byron manages to present through Juan's eyes the returning

pilgrim's "alienated viewpoint" which ultimately "invites comparison with behaviors and customs back home [turning] us upon ourselves" (Writers and Pilgrims, 130, 117). Regency England serves Byron as a mirror of the self and society where, as McGann says, "the truth emerges with an almost unbearable clarity" (The Romantic Ideology, 144). In creating an epic work which fulfills the poetical longings expressed at Santa Croce in Childe Harold IV and which also allows for direct verbalizations of immediate observations, Byron becomes, in a sense, one with his vision.

Yet the final shrine for Byron was Greece. With a true medievalist's demand for a recovery of "the dream of heroic life in its extreme form" (Huizanga, 304), Byron persisted in transubstantiating dreams into reality. As Huizanga points out, the medieval visionary located ideal form in religious, but creditable, symbols, culminating with the cathedral. In Peacock's satire, Nightmare Abbey, Byron as Mr. Cypress is mocked for preparing to go abroad in search of "a perforated Bacchus," "many a one-legged Venus and headless Minerva - many a Neptune buried in sand" in the lands of antiquity; he sings in a final song: "the soul is its own monument" (98, 104). Byron's soul, in reality, required to the end external forms to achieve a full display of inner expression Byron's death in Greece culminates a lifetime of alignments and attachments to classical and Gothic forms. By attaching his spirit to

the place he honored most in Childe Harold and Don Juan, Byron completed a commanding house of memory which conformed to his earliest, purest vision as well as to his last and most honest world view.

Taking his earliest inspiration for Childe Harold from the The Minstrel[31] in which the author declared his protagonist "sacred" and the Spenserian stanza a "Gothic structure" (Preface), Byron created, in his antiquated but flexible Spenserian "experiment," affinities between the young self and the "bleeding land" and "saddening shrine" of Greece. In Don Juan, where, as Fletcher points out, each verse forms a kind of Spencerian temple of truth, fleeting Edenic love, "half naked, loving, natural and Greek" (II, cxciv), vies with the more lasting worldly sexual escapades of the old Gothic abbey. Byron's adventures in Greece may have had many "moments of the purest farce, as if a gothic tragedy were being played by a cast of a comic opera."[32] Byron's eye, however, was on the sublime as well as the ludicrous. Searching for moments fit for "Childe Harold V" and Don Juan, Byron died of fever over the Greek Easter leaving in Greece much of the money obtained from selling Newstead and leaving his lungs, like a medieval warrior, in a depository in San Spirdione. The final tones of Don Juan suggest that if this equivocal gesture is the closest Byron could come to aligning himself with sacred form, it was enough.

Footnotes

[1] George Gordon Byron, Letters and Journals, ed. Leslie A. Marchand, vol. 9 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard UP, 1977) 123.

[2] Edmund Burke, "Reflections on the Revolution in France," Edmund Burke, ed. Charles W. Eliot (New York: P.F. Collier and Sons Corporation, Inc., 1937) 143-378, 173.

[3] William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience (New York: Penguin Books, 1984) 460.

[4] John Drinkwater, The Pilgrim of Eternity (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1925) 180.

[5] Angus Fletcher, The Prophetic Moment, Chicago: U of Chicago P.

[6] All references to John Milton's poetry in my text are from The Complete Poetical Works, ed. Douglas Bush (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1965) Paradise Lost, XII, 590.

[7] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Existence," Coleridge: Poems and Prose, ed. Kathleen Raine (1836; London: Penguin Books, 1957) 157-158.

[8] Stephen M. Weissman, My Brother's Keeper (Madison, Connecticut: International UP, 1989) 327.

[9] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Anima Poetae," Colerdige: Poems and Prose, ed. Kathleen Raine (1895; London: Penguin Books, 1957) 139.

[10] All references to Robert Southey's poetry in my text are from The Poetical Works. Paris: A. and W. Galignani, 1829.

[11] Kenneth Clark, "Iconophobia," Moments of Vision and Other Essays (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1981) 30-49, 41.

[12] Otto Von Simpson, The Gothic Cathedral. Princeton, New Jersey: Bolinger Series xlviii, (Princeton UP, 3rd edition, 1988).

[13] Kenneth Clark, "Metropolitan Art," Moments of Vision and Other Essays, 30-62, 56.

[14] Ernst H. Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies (Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton UP, 1957) 277. Byron, like the king, seems to have "two bodies." His identity

solidarity with kings and immortal artists.

[15] Alan Lui, Wordsworth: The Sense of History (Stan- ford, California: Stanford UP, 1989) 499.

[16] John Keats, Letters, ed. Hyder Edward Rollins, vol. 1 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 1958) 211.

[17] Stuart M. Sperry, Keats the Poet (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1994) 334.

[18] Clark and Sperry identify Keat's inspirational cathedrals.

[19] Andrew Noble, "Byron: Radical, Scottish Aristocrat," Byron and Scotland, ed. Angus Calder (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP,1989) 23-43, 36.

[20] quoted in Varma, 16.

[21] Horace Walpole, The Castle of Otranto, 1764; Oxford: Oxford UP, 1982.

[22] Ann Radcliffe, The Mysteries of Udolpho, 1794; Oxford: Oxford UP, 1992.

[23] Ann Radcliffe, The Italian, 1797; Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990.

[24] Matthew Lewis, The Monk, 1796; New York: Oxford UP, 1991.

[25] Fiona McCarthy, William Morris (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995) 45.

[26] Mary Shelley, The Last Man, 1826; Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1965.

[27] Johann Huizanga. The Autumn of the Middle Ages, trans. Rodney J. Payton and Ulrich Mammitzsch (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1996) 280-1).

[28] Caroline Lamb, Glenarvon, London: J.M. Dent, 1995.

[29] Tom Holland, The Lord of the Dead, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996.

[30] Thomas Love Peacock, Nightmare Abbey, 1818; London: Penguin, 1969.

[31] James Beattie, Poetical Works, 1854; Freeport, New York: Books for Library Press, 1972.

[32] David Armine Howarth, The Greek Adventure (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976) 13.

CHAPTER TWO

CANTOS I AND II: TEMPLATES, MAPPING AND FORM

Though the Grand Tour Byron used as the model for Harold's journey was indeterminate in its goal, the selected genre of literary pilgrimage predetermines shrines as this quest's ultimate destination. Byron had no set itinerary in mind for Harold as he sent him forth across Napoleonic Europe. The format of pilgrimage, however, requires shrines. Shrines, in turn, require penitents and contemplatives who are willing to shape both the course of their journey and their lives upon the shrine's contents. Writing on usage of poetic form, Curran states, "Before pen is put to page the poet will have cast himself into a particular mental framework that limits human options and prizes certain values above others" (11). In this context, pilgrimage is considered to be, for Byron, "a framework," "a generic choice," and "a mode of apprehension." For Childe Harold recovers the genre of the Romantic quest through the contemplation of poetical form in the self: "[Byron's] was a revival beyond the reach of scholarship, and its success came not from his contemplating himself in the poem, but from his contemplating a genre in himself" (157). This contemplation of genre, however, is most available to the reader through Byron's more direct apprehension of individual

shrines wherein the sense of pilgrimage underlying a Grand Tour reveals itself.

The shrines of the first two cantos of Harold are dead; they are abandoned by former tenants, their gods and devotees. Harold serves as a kind of active principle: he galvanizes inactive architectural forms which, in their awakened state, serve to drive the plot, the character's developing persona, and the journey from shrine to shrine until a moral can be retrieved from the ruins of history. History is encoded into devalued, often ruined shrines. Harold is like a member of a search party seeking historical and geographical coordinates for his strident emotions and penetrating questions.

The shrines hold something discoverable but not apparent. As Harold learns to unlock their secrets he moves deeper through layers of history and of his own psychology until his journey proves truly to be a pilgrimage in all the ramifications of the term: it is a journey of life, a journey to shrines and holy places, to the self and God. It is, however, in comparison to both actual pilgrimages and famous literary pilgrimages a most idiosyncratic one. Whereas traditional and literary pilgrimages begin on Feast Days in quest of specific shrines, Harold's pilgrimage commences arbitrarily and moves, initially, away from a shrine. The shrines it does encounter represent many different

creeds and cultures which are often at war with one another. Harold, who is essentially a very skeptical pilgrim, often at war with himself and the profane world, finds himself very much at home at these disparate shrines.

Most pilgrimages commence on dates whose significance is determined by their shrine or destination. This centering of one's journey in the church calendar creates a sense of unity with the seasons and brotherhood with others. Chaucer's pilgrims "longen to goon on pilgrimages" in April, the month of the resurrection; they disembark from the secular Tabard Tavern for St. Thomas' great shrine at Canterbury entertaining each other along the way.[1] Though brutally murdered in a cathedral, Thomas' miraculous sense of truth and dedication, like Christ's, survives death. Piers the Plowman, who "nolde fange a ferthynge for Seynt Thomas shryne," shrouds himself away from the cares of this world on a replendent "May mornynge" to seek "treuthes dwellyng place."[2] The author of Pearl envisions Paradise in dreamy summer or "Augoste in a hygh seysoun."[3] The Castle of Indolence, Byron's acknowledged model, begins "in a season atween June and May."[4] Even the Protestant Henry Adams went on his pilgrimage to Mont-Saint Michel on the Archangel's Day, October 16th.[5]

The more individualized vision quests may emphasize place over time. Dante's La Vita Nuova begins on his

birthday, emphasizing rebirth, and The Divine Comedy, which ends in miraculous light, begins "midway in life's journey" in a dark wood. John Bunyan, who makes a point of rejecting "silver shrines," moves away, in The Pilgrim's Progress, from the City of Destruction towards the bucolic Beulah.[6] Harold, however, simply moves away in a moment suggestive of summer: Basking "in the noontide sun, / Disporting there like any other fly," Harold is suddenly "chill[ed] ito misery" (I, iv). He leaves his mother, his ancestral home, "venerable pile," and his ennui, and is exhausted before he begins his "weary pilgrimage" (I, x).

Usually, pilgrimages beginning on holidays cause floods of pilgrims to converge upon a shrine. Harold, very much a modern and alienated figure, travels alone. Renouncing his former days "spent . . . in riot most uncouth," when he tread "Sin's long labyrinth," he enters the chaos or, in Diego Saglia's words, the "palimpsest" of Europe structured and restructured by Napoleon's conquests.[7] The slippage of the ground beneath his feet gives him little to hold to in the present, and, as a young man seeking absolutes in evil and goodness, he turns to the past which is retained in shrines at sacred sites.

At home in Britain Harold, though weary of the profane, feels betrayed by the sacred. His native land strikes him as "more lone than Eremite's sad cell," and

his ancestral abbey is addressed as "Monastic Dome! condemn'd to uses vile." Harold's lineage is long but mysterious, but he is identified to the reader by his abbey, which is both real and allegorical. Newstead has no dome but the fictitious structure serves to link the abbey thematically to the major domed structures which dominate the first half of Harold and to Thomson's The Castle of Indolence, which Byron acknowledged as one of his "Spenserian" models. Thomson's castle has a "peaceful" but cloying dome, capping "a dolorous mansion" wherein people die of lethargy. Thomson chose to use Spenserian language to convey an allegorical interpretation of modern day inertia. Byron, however, is interested in the wide range, from the tender to the satirical, which, according to Beattie, the Spenserian stanza, allows. Introducing his protagonist in the courtly style, Byron suggests a medieval knight departing a castle to grapple with the world's evil. "Childe Harold was he hight," and "whilome in Albion's isle there dwelt," but in the first draft he was "Childe Burun." This antiquated spelling of the Byron surname brings him one step closer to the young lord who lived at Newstead and cavalierly wrote the poems of Hours of Idleness. The public, of course, quickly saw through the ruse and insisted on crossing the lines Byron tried to draw between himself and the character. This was an actual lord writing a risky but revealing travelogue to the real self and to revitalized

sacred architecture. The sacral sense of self and historical places which kept breaking through the allegory intrigued readers and helped make the poem popular.

In need of mentors, Harold, who does not know who he is and has no one to look up to, turns to shrines for tutelage. Without any dialogue with the mother he leaves behind, he says farewell to his mysterious edifice. Byron, often at odds with his mother, felt Newstead represented his deepest tie to England. Though he glorified his forefathers in "On Leaving Newstead Abbey," (in Hours of Idleness), his real family fell short of his ideals: the only reference to church architecture in his father's hand is a description, written to his sister, of his latest "'piece'" being "'wide as a church door.'"[8] Newstead, as a tangible symbol of his responsibilities in the House of Lords, weighs heavily upon Byron's shoulders. In medieval times, the building of Newstead itself would have provided Byron with indulgences. Byron seems to miss those times when as Mark Twain said, "a murderer could wipe the stain from his name and soothe his troubles to sleep simply by getting out his bricks and mortar and building an extension to a church" (83). Feeling at a loss in his own secular time, Byron forms a spatial relationship to the sacred by sending his friendless being, or second self, Harold, across the world to speak to shrines and the gathering audience. In Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture, the Turners point out that times of war and

revolution show an increase in shrine activity as individuals search for healing, guidance and explanations. Despite his skepticism and often facetious tone, Byron manages to experience moments of inspiration and psychological wholeness at shrines.

Byron's alias, "Harold" suggests everyman's pilgrim. Henry Adams points out that "of all our two hundred and fifty million arithmetical ancestors who were going on pilgrimage in the eleventh century, the two who would probably most interest everyone, after eight hundred years have passed, would be William the Norman and Harold the Saxon."(17). As a child, Harold is everyman's son and every vulnerable man. He is someone pristine and believing enough to unlock sacred secrets. Though he is "the puer aeternus . . . skimming the surface of life,"[9] pausing to meditate at shrines deepens him. He emerges from his abbey and his childhood to face the world. A cloying sense of childhood easily pulls him back, and he must tell himself, "To horse, to horse," to spur on the quest. As a child he loses things. Having a short attention span he often loses his place (shifting abruptly from Spain to Greece (I, lx) and loses his way, eventually leaving his author crying, "But where is Harold?" and, most importantly, loses his innocence. As a child of Adam, he feels predetermined to course though the labyrinth of sin. But he insists upon Paradise. Contemplating his misspent youth, "his aching eyes grew dim." Cintra, however, the

first place he encounters on the continent, evokes an "Oh! Christ!" and dilates his pupils as it strikes him as "the unlock'd Elysium's gates," and the lost Eden.

Soon, however, Harold sees the degradation of Portugal's "dinghy denizens . . . unkempt, unwash'd, unhurt" (xvii). The first two cantos of Harold dichotomize the distance between the ideal and the real. The architectural keystone for the first half of the poem is the dome. Circular forms dilate the eye to the full rim of the circumference so that Harold may take in the full measure of truth. The domes Harold encounters across the continent represent corrupted leadership. Newstead, as point of origin, measures how far the pilgrim has traveled. Cintra, in Robert Gleckner's phrase "the blasted Eden," measures how far the world has fallen.[10] When describing the extreme beauty of new places Byron will often add "'always excepting Cintra.'"[11] Byron, would like to trace firmly into memory and verse this rare delight: "Ah me! what hand can pencil guide, or pen, / To follow half on which the eye dilates / Through views more dazzling unto mortal ken" (I, xviii). Soon, however, his spirit falls, his pupils contract. He sees "domes where whilome kings did make repair/ But now the wild flowers round them only breathe." Then a full stop occurs before Beckford's "Fairy Dwelling," where Byron addresses William Beckford: "Vathek! England's wealthiest son once formed thy Paradise," but which is now in ruin, "swept into wrecks anon by Time's ungentle

tide." This is all capped off, as it were, by the latest turn in fortune, wherein political betrayal "turned a nation's shallow joy to gloom." Portugal, allied with Britain as a member of the Coalition of 1793, was left unsupported by the British and occupied by the French.

Byron errs in placing the convention in the dramatically domed hall "with diadem hight foolscap" adorned with "a fiend, a little fiend that scoffs incessantly." The actual convention was held in a more mundane setting. Byron wants to emphasize the distance between pretentious architecture and the helpless humanity it is designed to represent. Portugal is the first fallen nation which Byron broods over as he begins mapping out nations in need of redemption, culminating in Greece. The pilgrim needs atonement and a connection is formed but not yet made. Caught between dreams of Eden and the present reality of Pandemonium, Byron's most elemental quarrel with God begins to underpin his desires to uplift the outcast nations. They deserve a better reality then present political stewardship allows.

The dome motif unifies these persistently troubling discrepancies between man's godlike potential and sobering realities. Newstead itself is divided between the ideality of its Gothic religious beauty and the reality of its former pederast monks, and its current owner. Its original purpose, the expiation of Henry II's involvement in the murder of Thomas Becket, was thwarted when it was "dismonasteried"

and secularized by Henry VIII. Newstead's moral laspses are echoed across the continent where defiled architecture strikes at the heart as Byron finds political mismanagement under Cintra's dome and sexual dissolution at Beckford's Moorish Paradise. Byron emphasizes the viewpoint of the Childe in Canto I in order to heighten the tension between the innocence of the perceiver and the corruption of prominent edifices.

Harold is not always so innocent though. In beginning the composition of Childe Harold on the verge of adulthood, Byron faced an identity crisis on a grand scale as he saw himself reflected in both the mirror of righteous architecture and its profaners. Byron's "dome of his sires" at Newstead represents a reality and responsibility often at odds with his obscure and troublesome origins. As Harold he laments, in his song, "My Native Land Goodnight," that "I leave no thing that claims a tear." Byron as a child of ten, had burst into tears at school when the headmaster pronounced him "Dominus de Byron," and he acknowledges in "On Leaving Newstead Abbey," the tear which "dim[s] his eye at this sad separation" from his baronial home. Harold, whose appetite is satiated by laughing dames whose seductions would "shake the saintship of an anchorite," runs through "a labyrinth of sin." Byron, as Doris Langley Moore writes, was fleeing "a labyrinth of debts," "a labyrinth of emotions" (Accounts Rendered, 109, 330), and an incident involving Lord Grey at Newstead,

so distressing he felt he could only hint at its nature. The real struggle was for solvency. Debts and exile, despite his proud and defiance stance, threaten his stewardship of Newstead. Declaring that he will stand or fall with the ancient abbey as if he "regarded his destiny as bound up with the abbey" (Accounts Rendered, 196) Byron wrote irrationally declared to his mother, in defiance of his financial reality, "Newstead and I stand or fall together" (Letters, vol. i, 195).

In Canto I, however, Byron already seems to present himself as a displaced person. His mother, Catherine Gordon, had set a bad precedent in losing estates. Like the great shrines of the world, Gordon Castle, with its extensive land outside Aberdeen, and Newstead Abbey were prophetic places. The common people delighted in reading signs that their unstable owners would soon lose their royal lands. The birds who fled Gight Castle and the warship drawn over the dry lands of Nottingham to participate in the former Lord Byron's mock sea battles on Newstead's lake had been interpreted as occult signs that ownership was about to change. Catherine, in helplessly feeding her husband's ruinous spending habits, lost the Castle. The fifth Lord Byron, the poet's paternal uncle, kept the estate but left it in ruins and heavy debt to the poet whose own mounting debts were now threatening its loss. Byron, without his ancestral architecture, seems like Cain locked outside Eden or the ultra-Gothic Melmoth the Wander-

er who can only " . . . wander, scream and groan / round the mansions once your own."[12] Lady Caroline Lamb, portraying Byron as the outre Irish aristocrat who preaches revolution while holding fast to his Belfont Abbey lands, had publicly cast doubts on his pedigree; the hero-villian insists upon being called "Lord Glenarvon" "although he had received no positive assurance that his claim [to his grandfather's forfeited title] would be considered" (138).

Byron, in parting from England the first time, found architectural support for his imperilled self-image on the continent and in the Mediterranean as he began to transfer allegiances and emotional ties. His particular attraction to diadems and domes in Canto I amalgamates personal and political concerns. The diadem crowning the domed hall where Byron situates the betrayal of the Portuguese recreates the form of the hill at Annesley, "crown'd with a peculiar diadem of trees" ("The Dream"), where Byron's heart and self-image were crossed. Overhearing his beloved Mary Chaworth callously remarking in reference to his infatuation, "'Do you think I should care for that lame boy'" (A Portrait, 27), Byron was always to associate the hill of Annesley with lost ideal love. Viewing the ruins of the Beckford estate, he is not unsympathetic to "this martyr of love." At this point the Childe seems a martyr to architectural domes: Facing Mafra's dome, which Byron declares "the Babylonian

whore hath built," Harold closes his eyes and takes to horse as Byron delays to denounce the palace of Mafra where church politics lead to the spilling of innocent blood.

As Richard Cronin points out in "Mapping Childe Harold I and II" (1994) Byron as poet is "a true pilgrim . . . as he travels not to assuage his own ennui but to visit the holy places of his craft."[13] By plotting a course from dome to dome Byron has demonstrated a competency in matching emotional states and political observations to place and architectural form. He is not however a very traditional Christian pilgrim. For Byron, expressing feelings of martydom tied to places of passion and violation does not imply an alignment with Christ. He does move away from domes at this point, though, to confront the image of the cross. He is attracted to, but disturbed by, the roadside shrines, the "rude-carved crosses" which mark the spots where "the assassin's knife" has claimed fresh victims. Byron warns, "Yet deem not devotion's offering - These are memorials frail of murderous wrath" (I, xxi). In his notes Byron tells the reader that he and his companion John Hobhouse could easily have become victims to political assassination in Portugal, and that under such markers "we should have 'adorned a tale' instead of telling one" (876).

Michael Vicario interprets Byron's reaction to these

small crosses as an example of "the failure of religious symbols accurately to reflect the realities for which they stand" (135). In Christian doctrine, however, the cross has always signified the murder of Christ and the atonement. Byron, like most Romantics, ignored Paradise Regained, and clearly preferred the bloodier Old Testament to the New, which he considered "a task." The atonement, perhaps the best opportunity open to Byron to effect a reconciliation between the deity and humanity, is clearly rejected in a letter Byron wrote to Francis Hodgson, an ordained minister and victim of the Edinburgh Review: "The basis of your religion is injustice, the Son of God the pure, the immaculate, the innocent, is sacrificed for the guilty. This proves His heroism; but no more does away with man's guilt than a schoolboy's volunteering to be flogged for another would exculpate the dunce from negligence, or preserve him from the rod" (vol. 4, 78). Thus, for Byron, Christ's death is just another example of the injustice which has frozen up the pilgrim's heart. Paradoxically, despite this rejection of the cross, the pilgrimage in Childe Harold, true to form, courses toward St. Peter's and Byron's pilgrimage in life moves towards a Quixotic if not Christlike "gesture of relinguishment" (West, 104) in Greece.

The presence of the cross regains validity in war torn Spain where a return to the heavier medieval tones evokes the days when knights could fight for the holy land and

their savior, Christ: "Whilome . . . legions throng / Of Moor and Knight . . . the Paynim turban and the Christian Crest / Mix'd on the bleeding stream" (xxxiv). Here not Christ but the soldier bears the cross, the Red Cross, upon his breast, signifying his willingness to offer sacrifices to the metaphorical shrine of war. The jaded, skeptical Byron as a modern man is not really enamored of war. Men who stain the ground with "Gothic gore" and feed this "shrine the blood he deems most sweet" live on only "in the worthless lays the theme of transient song." War, "a Giant on the mountain," shakes "blood-red tresses" and soon Byron beholding "Conquest's fiery foot intrude, / Blackening lovely domes with traces rude," concludes shrewdly, "it is a splendid sight to see (For one who hath no friend, no brother there)" (I, xl).

Yet to follow a template visually or react emotionally to a form, natural or man-made, is to access, in modern terms, another hemisphere of the brain which overides logic and morality. Shrines or enshrined places "go beyond the cognitve, even the moral, to the existential domain, and in so doing become clothed with allusiveness, implicitness, and metaphor. They reach down to the irreducible life stances of individuals (Turner, 248). Spain at war becomes a loca sancta for Byron who would like transcend day-to-day reality, escape his crippling sense of life's meaningless-ness and find a cause worthy to die for. To take on warrior attributes from war's shrine, to die where heroes die, and

be enshrined with a soldier's death, strikes Byron as an attractive fate. Despite his very negative observations of the reality and futility of battle, Byron, carried away by the excitement, wrote to his mother from Gilbraltar, "I should have joined the army" (vol 1, 221).

Saglia writes that "by charting his own mental Spain, Byron mirrors himself in its bundles of contradictions" (37). Caught between his emotions and reason Byron soon concludes that architecture will not support the glory of a soldier's death forever: "Can Volume, Pillar, Pile preserve thee great?" he asks above "the engine's roar." Though the slaughters of war trouble his morality, Byron's eye is caught by the pyramidical shape of the stacked cannibals which echo the triangular ridges of the Sierra Morena and he is quite swept away by the "unsex'd" Spanish maids who hang up their guitars to dash, unafraid, into battle. Though later in life Byron will collect about him all the accoutrements of war, including cannon balls, at this point in his pilgrimage he rejects this sacrifice of the young to "swell one bloated Chief's unwholesome reign," and seems unwilling to leave an offering of his blood at the shrine of war.

In a disconcertingly abrupt change of scene which throws the poem geographically, though not topographically, off course, Byron is suddenly in Greece, "surveying" Mount Parnassus. This brings him and the reader back to the beginning of the poem. Childe Harold opens with a sad

evocation of the muse at "Delphi's long deserted shrine." Parnassus serves as yet another marker of how far mankind has fallen off. This time the plunge is poetical. Newstead's monks were unworthy of their grand edifice, Spain was unworthy of her devoted soldiers, and Byron is unworthy of Parnassus. Byron, as votary, is not ready to make a poetical deposit here, but longs to bear away "some remnant, some memorial," "one leaf of Daphne's deathless plant" (lxiii).

Parnassus speaks to Byron of eternal remembrance, one of his most pressing concerns. It is the most suitable and satisfying shrine at this point in the pilgrimage. Its unnerving presence makes service of fallen nations only a memory. Though the negative construction of this sentence allows Byron to hold back a little, Parnassus almost claims that reluctant tear: "I turned aside to pay my homage here; / forgot the land of Spain; Her fate, to every freeborn bosom dear; / And hail'd thee, not perchance without a tear" (lxiii). The unusually garrulous Byron falls silent, and, in stepping into a new character, steps out of character by deigning to "bend the knee." Even in the humility of this imposed silence, Byron felt a sense of superiority. Describing how Hobhouse with his "greed for legendary lore, topography, inscriptions," stayed below, Byron presents himself as more devout pilgrim: "I rode my mule up . . . I gazed at the stars, and ruminated; took no notes, asked no questions" (Letters, vol 3, 353).

Though silent on Parnassus, this is where Byron paradoxically hopes to find a lasting poetical voice, pluck "a deathless leaf," and gain a sense of immortality. The sacral sense of Parnassus which aggrandizes Byron's sense of himself. He walks here in Apollo's footsteps, and, in the god's absence, occupies the shrine. Byron, at this stage of his development, was concerned equally with death and vocation. Aware of the dangers of pilgrimage, he had made out a will, distributing his lands and his library, and considered his own shrine. In an indictment of mankind's shortcomings, he ordered himself to be buried at Newstead beside his faithful Newfoundland dog, Boatswain, with only his initials and date of death. He generously left room for the old servant, Joe Murray, who apparently held a more traditional view of personal shrines. Murray said he did not mind lying next to his lordship but was uncomfortable with the dog's presence.

Despite the quirkiness of this earlist of many proposed shrines, Byron was very serious about death. In his notes he relates how the guide at Delphi told the story of the king had died hunting along the mountain path from Chrysso. Kingly Byron, walking where gods and kings have tread, makes obeisance in exalted places the way a modern European sovereign, like Elizabeth, removes her shoes at shrines such as the Buddhist shrine at Ceylon. Submitting to the template of Delphi's twin fountains of "memory and forgetfulness," Byron remembers Apollo and

forgets Spain. He centers the early cantos of the biography of his passions at the omphalos of the pagan world in order to give birth to himself the poet Byron. The ascent up Parnassus emphasizes the dangers of physical pilgrimage and the steep risk involved in attempting to take one's place on the poetical ladder. Though some critics feel this egotistical imposition of the Byronic self ruins both the poem and the view, from that moment foreward Byron would be to his readers one who stood upon Mount Parnassus even when the verse was less than immortal and failed to soar.

Remembering Spain, Byron now focuses on Cadiz, and refers to vice as a "Cherub-hydra," a metaphor for the profane carried over from his recent association with Greek gods and heroes. This beguiling beast represents the earthly cares which dismantle the lofty positioning and religious silence of Parnassus. Vice, though located at the mountain base, is also a template for the profane: "Vice! . . . the Cherub-hydra round us dost thou gape, / And mould to every taste thy dear delusive shape" (lxv). This proximity of the profane and the sacred emphasized in both the war conditions Harold is about to reexperience in Spain and in the bullfight to follow. As chevalier, Harold, at the mercy of the seven deadly, is caught between the forces of good and evil; Byron, with his strongly developed visual sense, is at the mercy of form, sexuality and "the eye of appetite." Byron, who has a

compulsive need to confess his private guilt, brings to shrines the twisted agony of a soul trying to right itself with the divine.

In facing the world he finds that Venus' shrine is ubiquitous: "[Venus] fixed her shrine within these walls of white; Though not to one dome cicumscribeth she / Her worship, but devoted to her rite, / a thousand altars, rise, for ever burning bright." Byron is disillusioned, but awakened to truth, when he finds the religious and the sexual shrines so alike. In the Venereal shrine, "love and prayers unite" and "nothing interrupts the riot, though in lieu / Of true devotion monkish incense burns" (lxvii). Like Keats's Melancholy shrine in the midst of Joy, sad realities intrude into the most exalted of places and passions: "A long adieu / He bids to sober joy that here sojourns" (lxvii). In the "Ode on Melancholy" it is Joy "whose hand is ever at his lips / Bidding adieu." Byron keeps the actions, and their consequences, in the pilgrim's hands, granting him the responsibility and, in failure, the guilt. Byron finds no opportunity to find salvation in the myriads of Spanish shrines and churches whose sanctity has been polluted by Venus' spreading, uncircumscribed, thousand burning altars. The only purity of vision available to counter the profanities filling the streets and sanctuaries in Spain is the youthful pilgrim's vision which maintains an innocence despite his familiarity with

sin.

Throughout the poem Byron apostrophizes places to convey the excitement felt in approaching an anticipated shrine. The shouts Byron had grown used to on the Grand Tour, "Sir, Sir, the town!" for example, become a "Mountjoie!" or pilgrim's cry in the poem. Parnassus, though out of place, inspired two apostrophes as its reality surpassed Byron's dreams. Spain presents no shrine the pilgrim's vision can sanction and no shrine to inspire the pilgrim's cry. More interested in excavating below Christian surfaces, Byron profanes his vision and takes on a more ferocious identity as he witnesses the bullfight. Harold drops out of sight as Byron's narration begins to approximate the tone of Don Juan. Byron, at this point, sees double, keeping his eye simultaneously on the Sabbath in London and Cadiz. England's sacred rituals in Childe Harold are as baffling as its sacred architecture will be in Don Juan.

In Britain crowds flock to Stonehenge, asking, in Don Juan, "What the devil is it?" The English Sabbath in Childe Harold baffles "the Boetian Shades" (lxx) as "spruce" and "smug" citizens concentrate their presence into churches to worship "the solemn Horn," then drink and "dance to morn." In Cadiz, the church bell competes with the bullfight's trumpet for attention. The only virgin at chruch is Mary as "Saint-adorers count the rosary," and "Much is the Virgin teased to shrive them free." Freed "from crimes

as numerous as her beadsmen be," the Spaniards head for the arena to bait the bull and reveal the underside of their saintly character. The bull, a massive dilating form circumscribed by the circular arena, goes to the shriven Christians as Christians once went to the lions. This pagan "shrine," with its animal sacrifice, sacrificial blood, and moments of truth about human nature and society, energizes Byron's verse as he witnesses the bull falling, "Foil'd, bleeding, breathless furious to the last," while members of the audience plot vengeance against one another, perpetuating "private feuds."

Byron's pilgrim Harold wins no shrine as Canto I comes to a close. Harold learns the truth about love (it "has no gift so grateful as its wings") and steals away to wander endlessly. Byron, asking, "Flows there a tear of pity for the dead?" enshrines the memory of a fellow Harrovian, John Wingfield, who died of a fever in Coimbra while serving in the Guards. Though this soldier is "unlaurel'd" and "by all forgotten," Byron's effusive expression of love for Wingfield creates a shrine for the war dead which will one day contain his own "frail frame" when "mourn'd and mourner lie united in repose" (xcii). Unready to place his sensitive pilgrim and himself before the public, Byron begs indulgence to continue the poem, enticing the reader with more shrines and monuments in Greece where he has stood literally and emotionally upon his highest ground.

Canto I has laid out the groundwork which Canto II

will build upon. Curran feels that the Coliseum's structure, arches upon arches, or layer upon layer, serves as an "intricate architectural metaphor that will ultimately emblematize his own poem" (156). Canto II replicates Canto I's housing of personal memories and aspirations in historical shrines, elevating meditations, verse, and vocation by articulating and formulating expectations at sacred sites, and concentrating into the present moment's perceptions resonances of the divine. In Canto II, however, Byron reveals more of the psychological disequilibrium which accounts for his strong attraction to shrines as he deepens his knowledge of self and history. The poem moves forward in time, gradually shedding its quirky medieval tone and Spenserian diction as shrines become more active and revalued, as Byron invests more of himself in poetical vocation, politics, and philosophy.

Canto II opens, however, on a very ominous note. Lord Elgin's removal of the famous Parthenon marbles shakes Byron's expectations of sacred antiquities, and brings the issue of shrines into a more personal arena, its implications touching upon Byron's sexuality and deformity.

Reprising the theme of transitory glory in battle, Byron then moves from being a frequenter of shrines to a shrine keeper who defends his sites by showing Jehovah-like force to those unworthy of approaching the tabernacle. Athena's shrine in Athens is "a nation's sepulchre! Abode

of gods whose shrines no longer burn" (ii). Her "men of might, thy grand in soul," have "gone glimmering through the dreams of things that were," only to be replaced by shrine molesters like Lord Elgin. Byron warns, "Come - but molest not yon defenceless urn," then sits upon the still secure base of Zeus' temple to steady himself. "Here let me sit upon the massy stone, / The marble column's yet unshaken base." Byron's faith is completely shaken by the transitory status of even the highest god's position, as evidenced by the yielding of shrines to other gods, and, in the unkindest cut of all, to Elgin. Man learns that: "Vainly his incense soars, his victim bleeds / Poor child of Doubt and Death, whose hope is built on reeds." Correlating broken architectural arches with the structure of the human skeleton, Byron moves body and temple closer together. Removing a skull from the ruins, Byron commands, "Look on its broken arch, its ruin'd wall, / Its chambers desolate, and portals foul." Herein, emptied shrines correlate with empty-headed men. How can Byron build on arches to articulate his lofty thoughts in verse when his necessary templates are bespoiled by mindless men, like Elgin? Byron asks of the silent skull, "Is this a temple where a God may dwell" (v)? Foreshadowing the graver curse that later resonates in the moonlit Coliseum, Byron, as shrine keeper, draws upon the shrine's latent occult power to damn the day when Elgin's party sailed for Greece: "Curst be the hour

when from their isle they roved, / And once again thy hapless bosom gored, / And snatched thy shrinking Gods to northern climates abhorr'd." Even the elements supernaturally cooperate with Byron's displeasure at the removal of the frieze to Britain. The marble contracts, and the ocean, "the long-reluctant brine," balks at conveying the sculptures overseas.

Although Gleckner points out that biographical data, such as Byron's early sexual traumas, are "slippery counters for reckoning the origins of a coherent vision" (Introduction, xvi), Byron's unfair ethnic slurs against Lord Elgin seem to indicate the presence of powerful personal issues pertaining to self-image, sexuality, and survival instincts. When Hobhouse appealed to Byron's reason, saying that in England the marbles would be instructional to "'an infinitely greater number of rising architects and sculptors,'" Byron coolly replied that the British "'were as capable of sculpture as the Egyptians are of skating'" (A Portrait, 78). The imagery used in Harold, however, to convey Byron's unrelenting hatred of Elgin for his exploitation of Greece's most prominent shrine is sexual. Elgin is one who "molests" a shrine, Greece is "a bleeding land," and "Cold is the heart, fair Greece! that looks upon thee, / Nor feels as lovers o'er the dust they loved" (xiii, xv). Athenian Greece, Gleckner remarks, "was to be for him throughout his life the closest man has come to recovering Eden"

(Introduction, xx). To remove the contents of Athena's shrine is to mutilate and desecrate a prelapsarian sanctuary of innocence and intimacy. It is an act which takes advantage of the weakness of sons to attack the mother or source of origin: The ideal maternal shrine is plundered as Athena's "poor remains" are carried off, "her sons too weak the sacred shrine to protect" (II, xii).

Douglas Dunn, seeing Byron as a weak son in the hands of disreputable adults, considers Byron's vehemence against the Scottish Elgin "an act of instinctive revenge for humiliations experienced in childhood."[14] Elgin's removal of the "misshapen monuments and maim'd antiques" (English Bards and Scotch Reviewers, 1030) seems to evoke in Byron awareness of his complicated relationship with his mother and his attitudes toward his own flawed body. Byron, who felt that his mother would protect him against anyone and anything but herself, had particular cause to feel violated by Scottish adults. Believing his corpulent mother's corset had caused his clubbed foot, Byron remembered how she "in a fit of passion uttered an imprecation upon me, praying that I might prove as ill-formed in mind as I am in body." In Aberdeen, where he was "Mrs. Byron's crokit devil" (Drinkwater, 95), he lashed out with a small whip against the nurse who contrasted his good looks with his weak leg. His Scottish nanny initiated him, he recorded in his journal, into a precocious sexuality by coming into his bed "to play

tricks upon my person" (A Portrait, 20) and the Edinburgh Review had attacked his youthful Hours of Idleness and his vanity in "having the sway of Newstead Abbey."[15]

Athena's shrine, as vulnerable as Byron's childhood body and his precocious poetry, provokes an attack against Elgin in Childe Harold which is carried further in "The Curse of Minerva." Byron removes himself as far from Elgin as possible, even at the expense of his own Scottish ethnicity. Though Byron will thoroughly accept his Scottish side in Don Juan, saying "I am half a Scot by birth, and bred / a whole one" (X, xvii), here, in the incompleteness of his identity, he attacks Elgin as one whose heart is as "cold as the crags upon his native coast," and he rejoices that Elgin is not a proper Brit: "Blush, Caledonia! such thy son could be! / England! I joy no child he was of thine" (xiii).

In contrast to cold Scottish hearts marble has warm human feelings. In English Bards and Scotch Reviewers Byron had metaphorically brought down the architecture of Edinburgh upon Francis Jeffrey, the alleged reviewer of Hours of Idleness: "Arthur's Steep summit nodded to its base, / The surly Tolbooth felt - for marble sometimes can, / On such occasions feel as much as man - The Tolbooth felt defrauded of his charms," as Jeffrey prepares to die dueling Thomas Moore in England. Elgin, as an ultra Gothic villain, merits an extremely Gothic penalty for his illicit entry into the shrine's inviolate inner core.

Evoking curses from this trespassed center in "The Curse of Minerva" Byron stands below the towering Minerva who promises vengeance "beyond the tomb" upon Elgin's "stone shop." As an adopted son of Athens, Byron empowers Greece, "the shrine of the mighty," as he chivalrously defends the classical but pagan marbles while the Christianized Greeks, as Howarth points out, favored the tombs of their saints and the Byzantine ikons (70).

Byron, endeavoring to heal the breach between man's dust and deity, seeks in shrine sites an architectural structure embodying perfection of thought and physical form in order to heal man's fragmented state of being. Byron's question to Athena, "Is this the whole?" emphasizes the missing pieces. Athena's temple, envisioned with the marbles as intact as time will allow and in place upon the pediment, against the colors of a Grecian sky and landscape, would recapture for Byron a direct manifestation of the ancient Greek mind. In Vincent Scully's words, viewing the pristine Grecian temple in its landscape constitutes "an integrally physical embodiment of the qualities of its gods."[16]

Even in its fragmentary state the Parthenon offers for many a highly satisfying experience of responding viscerally to form. For Scully, the Parthenon is an opportunity to taste immortality, "a stopping of time . . . a reconciliation beyond thought between the old and

the new, and between the earth and man" (184). For Athena's temple is "above all else the opening of a people's heart." Nikos Kazantzakis, too restless and young at the time of his first viewing to appreciate its sense of stasis, later felt that "infinity had entered this narrow, magic parallelogram . . . and took its repose there."[17] For Herman Melville, the Parthenon embodied "art and nature - imperceptible seams - frozen together."[18]

Byron, more demanding, more sensitive to fragmentation, could find no such occasion on the Acropolis for such bliss. Gleckner feels there is stasis in the impasse reached at Parnassus and the sudden return of Harold who "remains properly stationary and in a sense dimensionless, Byron's symbol of defeated man with no resource left other than the obduracy of his hardened heart and invulnerable mind" (75).

As opposed to Harold, Byron reacts to the Parthenon's perfection and the loss of the perfect simultaneously: "In his mind's eye the poet sees that paradise as if it had never been lost; but the reality of the ruins pricks each dream's bubble at the moment of formation" (85). Thus, time and space are kept at odds. Gleckner concludes that the narrator poses a solution in attacking Turkey.

The more immediate solution, however, is to utilize the Parthenon to secure a continuation of Byron's mimetic act of entering shrines to take on new attributes to compensate for loss. As a collection point and prefigure-

ment of St. Peter's encompassing form, the Parthenon contains, as Gleckner says, "Harold's deserted hall, his exile from his native land, Beckford's 'paradise,' and the many historical scenes of Canto I, as well as deserted Parnassus" (71). Ultimately, Athena, or her city, Athens, allows Byron to fulfill all his shrine meditations as he becomes a lover, poet, and protector of Greece.

Byron, fulfilling his promise to visit more Grecian shrines, uses the ancient glories of Greece as the poem's "selling point," anticipating the philhellenes who, as Howarth emphasizes, rallied support for the war of independence by exploiting antiquities and reliquies (70-1). Like a medieval pilgrim, Byron imprints himself quite literally upon these shrine sites by carving his name at Delphi, the Acropolis, and Cape Sounion. This graffiti serves as a memory device, ensuring public remembrance of Byron; it also acts for Byron as a pledge and a reminder of his responsibilities to Greece.

Athena's shrine imposes more taxing labors than Delphi where Byron, as bard, simply had to fill in for the wandering deity, Apollo. Not in repose but in exhaustion and bewilderment, Byron declares, "Here let me sit upon this massy stone, / The marble column's yet unshaken base" (II, x) of Saturn's temple in order to stabilize himself and contemplate fallen men, fallen nations, fallen architecture, the fallen world, or the physical "ruins of Paradise." At the Acropolis, the core of the world seems

as violate and fragile as a child's sexuality or a young adult's vanity and artistic striving. Byron's correspondence reflects, at this point, an existential and physical tiredness. He still believes in "seeking the terrestrial Paradise," but he also feels the impracticality of a lame leg for endless wandering. He expects in the afterworld "a better pair of legs than I have moved on these two-and-twenty years, or I shall be sadly behind in the squeeze into Paradise" (Letters, vol. 2, 98). Caught in an impasses between the ideal and the practical, Byron's state of mind can best be described as "weary," the most common adjective in this second canto.

Byron begins a marked separation between himself and Harold as he resolves to substitute the golden age of Greece still latent in the fallen monuments for his vanishing childhood. Reminding himself "to urge the gloomy wanderer o'er the wave" (xvi), Byron rues, "Little reck'd he of all that men regret" (xvi). However, as Byron prepares to leave his "childe" behind, childhood cloyingly calls him back. Unlike the unresponsive Harold whose heart is hardened, Byron gives his second tear to childhood itself as his soul "flies unconscious o'er each backward year, / None are so desolate but something dear, / Dearer than self, possesses or posses'd / A thought and claims the homage of a tear" (xxvi). Distinguishing between loneliness and meaningful solitude in nature, Byron is swept by the "Queen of tides on high consenting" to Greece, "the

sad relic of departed worth," where "to the remnants of thy splendour past / Shall pilgrims, pensive, but unwearied throng" (xci). Greece's golden age, even in brokenness, captures in satisfactory reality "the scenes our earliest dreams have dwelt upon," "till the sense aches with gazing," a substantial fulfillment for one whose object in life is sensation.[19]

As the journey moves forward to its culminating dome, its endpoint at the Hagia Sophia, architectural forms begin vying with nature's forms to provide several climaxes. Lows again occur when shrines are desecrated or emptied of the contents Byron requires for the creation of his identity. In sensing the danger and excitement inherent in the surge towards the final shrine which will pivot the journey back to Britain and societal responsibilities, Byron briefly explores more insular, secular, and esoteric vocations which present safer, alternative pilgrimages.

Byron ponders the role of an eremite safely removed from the profane world. The sense of experiencing solitude in climbing "the trackless mountain all unseen, / With the wild flock that never needs a fold" (xxv), pales in comparison to becoming a watcher in a desert shrine: "More blest the life of godly eremite, / such as on lonely Athos may be seen, / watching at even upon the giant height." The desert fathers are rewarded with a perpetual Eden which the peripatetic pilgrim or Knight Errant must relinquish. Though longing "to linger on that hallow'd spot," Byron

sees himself as one who will "slowly tear him from the witching scene, / Sigh forth one wish that such had been his lot, / Then turn to hate a world he had almost forgot" (xxvii). Whereas Byron played at being a Monk at Newstead, here he seems to flirt with being a desert father. Although the role seems incompatible with his "Cain" persona, Byron was often attracted to sequestration in monasteries where sinning would cease and sins be forgiven. Byron's turning "to hate a world which he had almost forgot," after leaving sacred grounds, is obviously unChristian; it foreshadows the curse in the Coliseum which perverts the tenets of Christianity. This idea of loving a hateful world enough to force oneself not to shirk hereditary, worldly responsibilites exemplifies how mixed Byron's emotions really are as he realizes the spiritual journey soon must terminate. Although his alternative vocations are related to shrine meditations, they seem to offer an avoidance of the responsibilities Byron feels compelled to assume as lord and legislator over a world only as sacred as its polluted shrines will allow.

Byron considers the monastic existence involved in serving, as did his father, "Foul-Weather Jack," in the navy. The ship is a kind of shrine, too. With its stainless, white "sacred" deck, it is a "sea-girt citadel," containing "the little warlike world within." Although Byron is not about to embark upon a naval career, this ship will convey him to the poem's culmination at the Hagia Sophia

where soldiers and sailors will be needed to serve the cross as they did in medieval times, for "turbans now pollute Sophia's shrine" (lxxix). "Masts, spires and strand," the Boatswain's call to the crew, the rising of the moon and the cry, "lo, land! and all is well," create a feeling of "Mountjoie!" signaling the arrival at the penultimate shrine. True to the form of pilgrimage, as the general movement of the poem rises with the ship's surge, Byron reprises, then joins together, several earlier themes and motifs to bring the poem and journey to a crescendo and a satisfying completion at a traditional shrine.

Byron builds the poem's component themes truly like arches built upon arches as childhood dreams, poetical, political, militaristic, priestly service, the consecration of sacred spots and consequent retribution for those who disturb their relics, and the meaning of traditional religious symbols fuse into a comprehensive vision which uncannily prefigures Byron's last acts in Greece fifteen years later. Images of domed forms in nature and in Western and Eastern architecture thread through the fast-changing scenery as Byron approaches Constantinople's great church. The Turks, whose presence pollutes the Hagia Sophia, recall Lord Elgin to Byron's mind. The struggle between the Turks and the Greeks provides a realization of a modern-day holy war which positions Byron as a defender of Greece and wisdom, exemplified by Athena and Sophia, on one side and Elgin and the infidel Turks on the other.

Harold and Byron lead separate lives at this point. Byron, more willing to respond to the mountain path leading to Albania, declares himself nature's "never wean'd, though not her favour'd child" (xxxvii). With his "marble heart," Harold rejects love's shrine. Albania recaptures Byron's lost childhood as well as the meaning of religious symbols as mountains and minarets, cross and crescent, Turk and Christian, struggle for superior positioning in history and in Byron's eyes. Harold declaims again war's shrine, "loath[ing] the bravo's trade," and begins his recess standing "at a little distance" and taking refuge under Albanian roofs (lxxii, lxvi).

Byron, more responsive to the swirling confusion of often disjointed images and the excitement of the wild Albanian scenery which turns the pilgrimage into "a Gyro Tour," claims the foreground as the tale's true hero. "Minarets in the sky" (lv) are shaken by the call, "There is no god but God! - to prayer - lo! God is great." The bloodied "red cross" becomes revalued as a spiritual symbol for Byron as it struggles against the Moslem crescent and the infidels who occupy the Hagia Sophia. Despite his sometimes facetious undertones, Byron invests in his journey all the values of the traditional Christian pilgrimage as the poem reaches what was originally intended as its endpoint.

In Cathedral: A Gothic Pilgrimage (1936) Helen Huss Parkhurst refers to pilgrimage as "a funded experience

incorporating a wealth of values derived from many antecedent encounters."[20] Nolan feels that a successful pilgrimage yields "a temporal cause" and opportunity for service wherein "personal history [is] raised up and transformed into a segment of salvation history" (Introduction, xvi, xiv). Byron, charting his way from the West to the East by shrines, as did the Crusaders, discovers an objective correlative for Byronic competition and a future for his burgeoning philhellenism in Constantinople. The great Byzantine church, "an adjunct to the imperial image," allowed the Emperor Justinian to declare, "'Solomon, I have vanquished thee,'" and served as the measure Suger hoped to surpass with St. Denis. Curran calls the Hagia Sophia "a subtle rounding out of the canto itself, whose first line is an apostrophe to Athena, goddess of wisdom" (243). Truly, it contains many of Byron's themes in one unified structure. Sophia, as wisdom, is linked to the pre-Christian Athena-Minerva, Byron's ideal goddess.

The interaction between Byron and the Hagia Sophia is an example of breeding speaking to breeding. Byron was impressed with the long line of kings and emperors who had been crowned at St. Sophia's. Its size, however, struck him as inferior to St. Paul's. Fearing to sound like an ingenue British patriot, Byron wrote to his mother that the Hagia Sophia "should not be mentioned on the same page with St. P's. (I speak like a cockney)" (Letters, vol. 1, 250). Elizabeth Longford, in Byron's Greece (1992),

feels that Byron's belittlement of St. Sophia's acts as "a thrust against Turkish prestige."[21] At this point in his pilgrimage pagan shrines still dominate Christian ones and St. Sophia's is valued most for its potential for occupation by the Greeks who would reassert the cross over the sickle.

St. Sophia signals the pivot home and reasserts Greece's position as the world's most pivotal shrine. At the end of Canto II Greece is "a sad relic of departed worth" lying in "a sepulchral strait." Yet, as Byron asks, ""Who from true worship's gold can / Separate thy dross" (xliv), Greece, despite its decay, provides the most lasting demarcation between the sacred and the profane. Infidels luxuriate in "marble-paved pavillions" which act as snares. The true pilgrim, in contrast, viewing Greece in descent on "an autumn's eve," heeds the call "to change the robe of revel for the shroud" (lxxxii). The clarion call to pilgrims is "Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not / Who would be free themselves must strike the blow" (lxxvi)!

The reprise of Byron's cry to "spare the relics" of Greece indicates the precariousness of the sacred as Byron prepared to present Childe Harold's Pilgrimage to the public and himself to the House of Lords. In attempting to assume an authoritative poetical and political voice, Byron can only conclude with a series of interrogatives. The poem does not end resolutely, as traditional vision quests do. Spenser finds eternal rest for the questing soul: "Sleepe

after toyle, port after stormie seas, / Ease after warre, / death after life does greatly please."[22] The Pilgrim's Progress ends with visions of Beulah. The Prelude ends with hopes of "A lasting inspiration, sanctified / By reason and by truth" (XIII, 443-4). But Byron closes Childe Harold I and II still questioning the meaning and sting of mortality.

The unexpected and sudden deaths of his mother and two close friends precipitate the question, "What stamps the wrinkle deeper on the brow" (xcviii)? The answer is, "To view each loved one blotted from life's page, / And be alone as I am now." Yet the solitary image of the poet alone before the sacred mysteries enshrined in Grecian monuments and, now, alone in the world, enshrining personal losses in the text precipitated Byron's great awakening to fame. In Greece, Byron's keys to immortality were quite literally lying beneath his feet. Elizabeth Longford's answer to Byron's "Oh! where, Dodona! is thine aged grove, / Prophetic fount and oracle divine?" is that "Much of that past had actually been beneath his feet" (27), awaiting excavation. By drawing out of Grecian soil, out of "haunted, holy ground," a poetical vocation and a political cause worthy of continuing public service, Byron secures lasting fame through lasting associations with Greece while presciently foreshadowing his own controversial death. Byron concludes Childe Harold II with a litany of salvational Grecian elements by playing upon the word "save." All

perishes "save well-recorded Worth," "Save where some solitary column mourns," "save where Tritonia's airy shrine adorns Colonna's cliff," and, lastly, "Save o'er some warrior's half-forgotten grave . . . while strangers only not regardless pass, / Lingering, like me, perchance, to gaze, and sigh "Alas! (lxxxvi). Thus, the ultimate memorial shrine in Byron's first pilgrimage is an ambivalent, endangered soldier's grave remembered by the faithful few who recognize divinity in clay.

Byron carried over into England an aura and revaluated persona by drawing upon the sanctity and mystique of shrines. Pilgrimage, in opposition to the concept of Grand Tour, represents an "exteriorized mysticism" (Turner, 7), and Byron, aggrandized by sites recently visited, found that his "'changeling self'" was able to "'astonish and mystify'" the general public, "'precipitating everybody into a midsummer's night's dream,'" as Thomas Moore observed (quoted in Drinkwater, Introduction, xxviii). The sacred sites visited and the sacred self were merged in the public's perception of Byron as a "primer inter pares," a worshipper at foreign altars who was about to cross back over the line demarcating the sacred and "plunge again into the crowd."

As Byron found, to his amazement and amusement, the crowds were quite drawn to his collation of grandiose imaginings and renderings of poignant reality recorded on location. Walter Scott, pushed from his pedestal, grudgingly yielded the literary shrine to Byron, complaining:

assure the noble imp of fame that it is not my fault that I was not born to a park of £5,000 a-year, as it is not his lordship's merit, although it may be to his great good fortune, that he was not born to live by his literary talent or success."[23] But, in a few year's time, even Walter Scott was writing a novel, Guy Mannering, in which a young, Byronic laird returns to his mysterious estate to retrieve his identity.

Footnotes

[1] Geoffrey Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales, ed. Louis O.Coxe (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc. 1963.) I, 12

[2] William Langland, Piers the Ploughman, ed. Walter W. Skeat (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968) I, 300.

[3] "Pearl," Pearl, Cleanness, Patience, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, ed. A.C. Cawley and J.J. Anderson (London: Dent, 1982) 1-30.

[4] James Thomson, The Castle of Indolence, J. L. Robertson, ed. (London: Oxford UP. 1965)

[5] Henry Adams, Mont St. Michel and Chartres (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1936) 17.

[6] John Bunyan, The Pilgrim's Progress, New York: Lancer Books Inc., 1968.

[7] Diego Saglia, "Spain and the Construction of Place," The Byron Journal (No. 22, 31-42) 33.

[8] Doris Langley Moore, Lord Byron: Accounts Rendered (New York: Random House, 1974) 21.

[9] Frank McLynn, Robert Louis Stevenson (New York: Random House, 1993) 3.

[10] Robert Gleckner, Byron and the Ruins of Paradise, Baltimore: The John Hopkins UP, 1967.

[11] Leslie A. Marchand, Byron: A Portrait (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1970) 71.

[12] Charles Maturin, Melmoth, the Wanderer (London: Oxford UP, 1989) epigraph, Chap. 2, 21.

[13] Richard Cronin, "Mapping Childe Harold's Pilgrimage I and II," The Byron Journal (No. 22 14-30) 15.

[14] Douglas Dunn, "Lord Elgin and Lord Byron," Angus Calder, ed. Byron and Scotland (Edinburgh" Edinburgh UP, 1989, 86-107) 98.

[15] Jon Curt, "Byron and the Edinburgh Review," Byron and Scotland (108-118) 109.

[16] Vincent Scully, The Earth, the Temple and the Gods

(New Haven: Yale UP, 1979) 187.

[17] Nikos Kazantzakis, Report to Greco, trans. by P.A. Bien, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1965) 137.

[18] Herman Melville, Journals, The Writings of Herman Melville, ed. Lynn Horth vol. 15 (Evanston: Northwestern UP and the Newberry Library, 1989) 99.

[19] Byron took great pride in both his eyesight and sight seeing. He bragged that people were so impressed with his far-sightedness in a Bologna theatre that they "thought it was a trick" (Letters, vol. 9, 12). Of the Rev. Francis Hodgson, Byron remarked: "What would he give to have seen like me the real Parnassus" (Letters, vol. 2, 59)?

[20] Helen Huss Parkhurst, Cathedral: A Gothic Pilgrimage, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1936) 6.

[21] Elizabeth Longford, Byron's Greece, (New York: Harper and Row, 1975) 89.

[22] Edmund Spenser, The Faerie Queene, ed. Thomas P. Roche, Jr. (Hammondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1978) Bk. I, Canto IX, xl.

[23] Quoted in "Byron and Scott," P.H. Scott, Byron and Scotland (51-64) 52.

Chapter Three

CANTOS III AND IV: ARCHITECTURAL VERSUS NATURAL FORM

Perhaps no two-part work of English literature involves as many traumatic life events intervening between the two halves as Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. Though four years passed between the publication of the first two cantos and Canto III, Byron, counting on the reader's memory, picked up the thread of the trail of tears to weave the two parts together. Having predicted in Canto II that present laughter would "form a track for future tears," Byron presents, in the poem's resumption (III, iii), "the furrow of long thought, and dried-up tears, / Which ebbing, leave a sterile track behind." Byron felt that Harold ultimately took on the shape of the oddly appealing mermaid prominently displayed in the Byron family coat of arms with Canto IV as the tail.

It may be more helpful to view the relationship between the poem's two halves in terms of Howard's theory of medieval interlace (Writers and Pilgrims, 316-17). Howard discerns a relationship between the format of literary pilgrimage, the medieval cathedral, and the interlacing letters which appear at the beginnings of chapters in medieval manuscripts. This figure serves "in the end to bring us back to the

beginning" and as "the point at which the story line must be held in memory until its later continuation" (306, 307). According to Howard, the interlacing initial is also labyrinthine with a disappearing design which wanders, weaves, and dangles within a visible plan ultimately turning in upon itself. Byron, seeming to equate formal constructs with fate or predestination, often strives against the constraints of given form. Like Blake, Byron seems to perceive classical form as mathematical but Gothic as "living form."[1] Byron requires both architectural and literary structure to serve as parameters to thrust against as he asserts the prototypical Byronic protest against given conditions. The format of Harold, and the dramatic biographical events which play such a vital role in the poem's course, best fit the interlace pattern with its implied sense of freedom to wander within a bifurcated but seemingly disjunctured shape which finally winds to a tortured closure.

Staying in compliance with pilgrimage's obligatory pauses at shrines, Byron added to his public persona attributes drawn from the shrines of Apollo, Venus, and Athena. Not content to live, like Blake, a marginal existence, Byron assumed, as the poem was being published, the formal place in society anticipated in Childe Harold I and II. Arriving fortuitously in Kent on July 14, 1811, Bastile Day, Byron, too thinly disguised in the poem, soon became a very public melancholy poet and insatiable lover

and defender of victims of injustice in the House of Lords, deferring only the soldiering contemplated at the shrine of Mars. As "Lord Harold,"[2] Byron became "the idol of society" (Drinkwater, 187).

Byron then, in what seemed to many of his contemporaries bad form, slipped in public, first by criticising in verse the Prince Regent who, paradoxically, approved of Childe Harold. "Spectacular in his sins" (Drinkwater, 254), Byron "fell as idols fall, with shattering impact" (Accounts Rendered, 215), losing in one year, 1816, his wife (in a legal separation), his sister, his daughter, and his position in the House of Lords. He lost Newstead to spectacular debts and his usual social world to exile. Feeling his sanity threatened, Byron anchored himself to the scenes of his early travels as he began living out the disastrous fate formulated and foreshadowed in Childe Harold I and II. Byron wrote to Thomas Moore, "I know not why I have dwelt on the same scenes, except that I find them fading, or confusing (if such a word may be) in my memory, in the midst of turbulence and pressure, and I felt anxious to stamp before the die was worn out. I now break it. With these countries and events connected with them, all my really poetical feelings begin and end" (Letters, vol. 5, 45). Struggling to comprehend his fated downfall, Byron began a second journey and the second half of his poetical pilgrimage, again tracing a self-created map comprised of shrines layered over a Europe restructured by Napoleon's

recent collapse.

The first journey serves thematically as a template for the second. The countries visited vary, the itinerary itself still subject to chance and outside factors beyond Byron's control. During Byron's first tour, France, as a political enemy, was out of bounds, and Byron's funds ran out before he neared the Holy Land. In 1816, France was still not open to Byron, and financial constraints limited the second journey to a more concentrated area that included Switzerland, Belgium, the Rhineland, the Netherlands, and Italy, where the ubiquitous shrines replicating the sites of the Holy Land served perfectly as further vocational templates in Byron's attempt to restructure his public and private identities. Byron moves, in Canto III, from nature worship in the predominantly Protestant countries which discourage pilgrimage to the dramatic climax at St. Peter's shrine in Rome at the end of Canto IV.

Byron's first concern in the new canto is memory. A cardinal function of shrines is to memorialize or fix in memory some special quality too precious to forfeit. His house, no longer a prepossessing abbey, now consists of the "sole daughter of my house and heart," whose features the poet struggles to recall. "Is thy face like thy mother's" (III, i) Byron asks his daughter Ada as he leaves behind "a sterile track . . . where no flower appears" (iii). Here Ada represents Byron's share of

immortality: he had no male heirs and his marriage was virtually over.

From its beginning, the marital relationship behind Byron's journey into exile, "sterility," and further poetic display of his deepening wounds was distinctly expressed in terms of architectural imagery, religious iconography, and shrine metaphors. Lady Byron, who believed that the architecture of their residence would require "a sulking room" for her brooding husband, initially set herself above other devotees who, as Thomas Campbell observed, carried incense to Lord Byron, by declaring, "'I made no offering at the shrine of Childe Harold'" (A Portrait, 120). Believing that Byron's Calvinism made him "see God as an Avenger, not a Father,'" Annabella, the marriage's martyr, kept an "issue," a perennial wound in her arm.[3] Her testimony about the tortures of her marriage convinced Harriet Beecher Stowe that Childe Harold was "'a monument of what sacred and solemn powers God gave to this wicked man'" (quoted in Drinkwater, Introduction, xxiii). Like Wordsworth, who found Childe Harold "'ill-planned, and often unpleasing in the construction'" (quoted in Saglia, 85), Annabella walked too straight a line to follow Byron's unorthodox path. As W.E. Henley wittily concluded, she should have married Wordsworth (Chew, 21).

Byron, in quest of truth, ran into "Truth Itself" in the person of Miss Milbanke. Though Byron said that without her he felt "as uncomfortable as a pilgrim with a pea in

his shoe," life with Annabella provided Byron with images of the demonic marriage which was possibly to substitute for hell in Don Juan. Knowing Lady Byron was "'too good for this fallen spirit to know" and that together they formed "two parallel lines prolonged to infinity side by side, but never to meet" (Letters, vol. 2, 231), Byron provided the public with a display of personal martydom as he temporarily soured on religious monuments and fled unhoused into a Shelleyan and Wordsworthian worship of nature in Canto III.

A renewed pilgrimage in Harold's medieval milieu would have provided an escape from the impasse Byron faced in 1816 when he found the door to his Piccadilly mansion "shut in my face" (Letters, vol. 8, 140). As a nobleman on official pilgrimage his estate could not be seized; his taxes and debts are deferred. In the full parameters of the medieval pilgrimage, visiting a shrine would have provided remission of punishment in the form of indulgences from the church. In Regency terminology Byron was beyond the pale, a psychological "wandering outlaw of his own dark mind," trapped by his own Byronism. In traversing the continent in 1816, Byron perpetuated the public's association of the dark pilgrim with esoteric locations. As Philip W. Martin points out in A Poet before his Public (1987), "Byron was confronted by an unsophisticated reading public that was tempting him to produce material through which his image could be sustained or strengthened."[4] As follows

began rutting Byron's tracks deeper in the soil and the imagination, the Byronic legend, "historically dangerous, but touristically productive,"[5] grew.

Byron, however, tiring of his limited and limiting persona, was more interested in deepening the pilgrim's psychology and meeting the expectations of pilgrimage than remaining "a byeword for melancholy" (Letters, vol. 8, 74). In their study of pilgrimage the Turners delineate a profile of the psychological pilgrim: a pilgrim is one who is willing to abandon goods and status to enter a mental limbo consisting of conflicting desires. In their study, the pilgrim is often an unstable, social pariah who develops an independent moral system by engaging in bisexual and/or other taboo activities. Such pilgrims find that their sacrifices of status are "compensated for by . . . the resurgence of nature when structural power is removed, and a reception of sacred power" (249). Oddly enough, Byron fits this profile. In Childe Harold III and the contemporaneous Manfred, Byron, in a state of mind he later qualified as being "half-mad . . . between meta-physics [and] lakes" (Letters, vol. 5, 165), is interested in penetrating the depths of the psyche while seeking a Faustian empowerment through the occult forces of nature and the spiritual realm.

Although Byron, in this state of disequilibrium, seems to take refuge in the identities of other writers such as Shelley, Wordsworth, and Goethe, he remains faith-

ful to the format of pilgrimage. Byron does indicate a dissatisfaction with religious shrines because they seem to "circumscribe" devotion. Nature's more expansive, natural vistas seem more promising as catalysts to more catholic meditations:

> Not vainly did the early Persian make
> His altar the high places and the peak
> Of earth-o'ergrazing mountains, and thus take
> A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek
> The Spirit, in whose honour shrines are weak
> Uprear'd of human hands. Come, and compare
> Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,
> With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
> Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy pray'r!
> xci

Consequently, Canto III contains the least amount of sacred architecture and the two brief reference to churches are unpropitious: the revelry of the Duchess of Richmond's ball, held on the eve of Waterloo, rises "merry as a marriage bell," beckoning the participants to the battlefield's carnage. Byron's "pure" union with his sister is one "bound by stronger ties / Than the church links withal" (lv). Mountain regions, like temples and cathedrals, elevate Byron's writing. In his "Alpine Journal," kept for Augusta, he described the corollary: "Being out of mountains my journal must be as flat as my journey" (Letters, vol. 5, 103). Life in the Alpine wilderness is exhilarating, positively divine. Byron's verse becomes as elevated as it was at Parnassus and the Parthenon:

> Above me are the Alps,
> The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
> Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
> And throned Eternity in icy halls
> Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
> The Avalanche - the thunderbolt of snow!
> (lxii)

The Jura separates itself from the landscape to awe the viewer. Alpine heights provide Burkean sublimity and an environment in which Byron can feel independent of society and worthy of himself. Like Mary Shelley's scientist and his creation, Byron, as an exiled overreacher, strides confidently over such regions which prove insurmountable to inferior men. The backdrop of Alps, the dramatic thunder and lightning, like cathedrals, remind the reader that we are in the presence of a divine figure.

Ultimately, though, Byron is happier in chapels than mountains whose valleys prove commensurate with peaks. Byron engages in hagiography and martyrdom even in the midst of icy Alpine serenity. Byron recorded in his journal that he found himself sweating visible drops of moisture into the snow. Snow blind, he saw a hallucinatory "'pale horse' on which death is mounted in the Apocalype." Feeling his mortality, he became convinced that the Alps lacked a sense of humanity. With the practical concerns of a lame man, Byron thought that "the devil must have had a hand (or a hoof) in some of the rocks and ravines" (Letters, vol. 5, 115). The isolation of the region

reminded Byron of both Jesus and Napoleon. In his notes to Childe Harold, Byron reminds the reader that "Satan chose this wilderness for the temptation of the Saviour" (890). Napoleon, whom Byron thinks only "a pagod who walked off his pedestal," fell "for want of community of feeling" (notes 88). Finding the whole region "Alpine and Proud," Byron takes warning. Despite the world's worthlessness and the bleeding heart which "heal[s] to wear / That which disfigures it" (lxxxiv), Byron, having gained a clarified view of life, forsakes the high place to throw his lot in with mankind. Humorously, he kept a preRomantic, pragmatic view of the Alps as barrier: they would always serve as a sort of continental divide between himself and Annabella's inflexible English morality (Letters, vol 5, 141).

Decisions made by Byron according to Alpine contours prove less resolute than those formed at shrines. Byron was looking for a firsthand experience of divinity. Problematically, his apprehensions of the divine in nature were second hand, that is, borrowed, and, often, considered second-rate. In his journal, Moore recorded Wordsworth, in 1820, complaining of Byron's plagiarisms: "'the feeling for natural objects . . . not caught by Byron from nature herself, but from him (W.), and spoiled in the transmission. 'Tintern Abbey' of it all'" (quoted in Chew, 123). Martin feels Byron's nature meditations reveal more of a Rousseauistic influence. Charles Robinson emphasizes Shelley's imprint. Robinson feels that Byron, in Canto

IV, descends into the usual despair because he has become separated from Shelley. Although even Lady Byron felt that her husband was capable of "natural religion," Byron ultimately dismissed his raptures in nature as a sort of temporary aberration. Admitting that Shelley "used to dose me with Wordsworthian physic even to nausea" (Letters, vol. 5, 297), Byron, in Don Juan, concluded that Wordsworth's metaphysics only "add a story to the Tower of Babel" (Dedication, iv). Perhaps Byron found in Wordsworth the limitations voiced by Aldous Huxley and C.S. Lewis. Lewis calls Wordsworth "a cheat" for substituting "the vehicle" or nature for God.[5] Huxley criticises Wordsworth for allowing his "meddling intellect" to interfere with his apprehensions of the sublime.[6] For Wordsworth, however, a sense of the infinite intuited in mountain regions was sustainable: "The infinity" and "by underpresence, / The sense of God," felt on Mount Snowdon bestows a sense of liberty which may be "preserved, enlarged" for a lifetime (The Prelude, XIII, 68-70, 120, 121). Byron, as Huxley points out, was "as tragi-comically Byron as he was before" such encounters with the natural world.[7]

What Byron lacks most in nature is a unifying structure. In Paul Elledge's view, "Byron's communions with Nature were bleakly frustrating experiences, supplying him with neither insight into absolute truth, nor more than an instantaneous relief from the sense of his own 'wretched identity.' He was sincerely striving

towards a union with the great whole."[8] In Canto III, Waterloo, the spot where Major Howard fell, broken trees and glacial alpine surfaces formed of lakes, streams, and ice, coalesce into a broken mirror, an emblem for the broken heart, which optically increases fragmentation. The heart, even after its communion with nature,

> will break, yet brokenly live on:
> Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
> In every fragment multiplies; and makes
> A thousand images of one that was;
> xxxii-xxxiii

Yet Byron does not exactly fail in drawing upon nature for inspiring meditation. Thorslev adds "nature child" to his collection of Byronic types, and nature's most dramatic scenery becomes part of the accumulation of shrines. Nature, like Keats's shrine to melancholy, takes a significant place in Byron's growing conglomeration of shrines.

At this point, Childe Harold's Pilgrimage itself is becoming a collection of shrines. The poem remembers so many lost or deceased personages: Ada, the abandoned daughter, occupies the shrine earlier dedicated to the young Peris, Ianthe (Canto I), and Inez (Canto II): Frederick Howard, Napoleon, Marceau, are all memorialized as victims of war. Byron himself now walks like a dead man "in a shroud" realizing it is "all over on this side of the tomb" (cxiii, xvi). Byron, living out "a posthumous existence" on the continent, promises Ada, "though the grave

close between us - t'were the same (cxvii). Byron sees himself mirrored in Ada, the war dead, and, in leaving the rarified Alpine heights, in the skeletal baronial architecture lining the Rhine valley. These fallen structures, which resemble the human soul as "a frail tenement" (Letters, vol. 3, 225), call Byron back to the present reality.

Secular architecture cannot vie with the Alps for height, but "the chiefless castles breathing stern farewells" whose former owners lie in "bloody shrouds" sound a chord in his heart. Castellated towers are of no use in restructuring a world torn apart by political and personal revolutionary events. The "tenantless . . . Gothic walls" are mocked by "the wild rocks shaped as they had turrets been" as they fall into elemental states of decay. The Rhine Valley is often seen as a terminal point for either the pilgrim or the pilgrimage: The vacant castle is read by Elledge as a"symbol of his [Harold's] spiritual death" (68), Vicario writes of "the discontinuance of pilgrimage" (122), McGann of Harold's "demise",[10] and Jump declares that Harold is, at this point, "absorbed into the narrator" (77).

Actually, both the pilgrim and the pilgrimage continue. The pilgrim Harold briefly reappears in Canto IV to "win the shrine" and the pilgrimage has many more formal shrines to visit, including "The Westminster Abbey of Italy," as Byron termed the series of great tombs in Florence's Santa

Croce, which is vital to the vision of the self as artist in Canto IV. As Marchand points out, the pilgrimage actually ends, after St. Peter's, in Albano with Byron before the ocean, "finishing IV, working on Beppo" (Byron's Poetry, 59). What is reached in the valley of the Rhine is the terminal point for northern, Gothic, or "wintry" architecture, as the pilgrim pivots toward Italy.

Despite the displacement of the English fears, abductions, murders, and sexual crimes on to Italian settings in British Gothic novels, Gothic architecture, itself, is least successful in Italy. In Gothic Europe (1969) Sacheverell Sitwell maintains that "the temperment and energy of the Gothic has not survived the transit or passage across the Alps."[11] The model for Radcliff's Italianiate Castle of Udolpho was actually Haddon Hall in Derbyshire. In Italy itself too much southern light and too much evidence of the classical past seem to break in to allow dark, architectural settings for torturous strife with one-dimensional morality and contrived selves. Gothic architecture carries with it such a weight of ethnicity that it is interesting to note that Queen Victoria's architect, Gilbert Scott, balked at forsaking his Gothic style in order to design the Albert Memorial in that "positively immoral" Italian Renaissance style Palmerston desired.[12] In A Celebration of Death (1980), James Stevens Curl points out that even Italian funerary architecture lacked the truly horrific elements since the death seemed

more serenely acceptable in Catholic Italy than Northern Europe.[13] In "The Brigs of Ayr," Robert Burns has the more enlightened New Brig telling the Auld Brig, "a Gothic hulk," it is "fit only for a doited monkish race" willing to worship its form on bended knee.[14] Byron, in the Rhine Valley, begins throwing off some of the elements of the Protestant or Calvinistic morality along with the Gothic masonry which precariously hovers over the tides.

Byron witnesses the fall of feudalism and the rise of Rousseau in the strife between the revolutionaries and the Old Regime. If, as Blake declared, "Gothic is Living Form," then it, more than any other architectural form, is subject to decay. Simon Shama[15] and Prince Charles,[16] following Bishop Warburton, emphasize Gothic forms as imitations of the diverse shapes of the primeval forest. As a rising, struggling, organic form returning to its elements, Byron identifies with it in collapse. "Withered trees," which in Manfred and Byron's Alpine Journal now represent the Byron family as a new coat of arms, fall along with the turrets mocked by the shape of the crags and "emblems well devised by amorous pride," as Byron watches over the Rhine. Pilgrimages often move towards a source or mystical point of origin; the plunge of baronial masonry is a strike at Byron's origins. The Rhine does receive something of its medieval sense of "mystic divinity" (Shama, 363) as its waters wash away feudal bloodlines and family shrines, leaving only the essence

of a dream:

Their graves are gone, and what are they?
Thy tide wash'd down the blood of yesterday,
And all was stainless, and on the clear stream
Glass'd, with its dancing light, the sunny ray;
But o'er blacken'd memory's blighting dream
Thy waves would vainly roll, all sweeping as they seem.
(li)

Rousseau provides an awakening, or resurrection, a morning as new as the creation day. This morning, "with breath all incense . . . and living as if earth contain'd no tomb," signals a renewal of "the march of our existence" (xcviii). Byron almost becomes ensnared as a "gyrovagus," a guideless pilgrim caught up in endless wandering, rolling "on with the giddy circle, chasing Time" (xi). Thinking of Rousseau, he becomes a true pilgrim again, walking, book (Nouvelle Heloise) in hand, over the spots where Julie and Saint-Preux loved and suffered. By spreading his tribute to Rousseau over the lovely environs of "Sweet Clarens," Byron recreates the experience of visiting the famous "park" shrine to Rousseau with its stations to nature at Ermonville on the Isle Of Poplars (created by Rene de Girardin in 1783). Byron saw Clarens, like Waterloo, as ground which preternaturally revealed in its contours the historical events to come. Finding at Clarens "a sense of the existence of love in its most extended and sublime capacity," he recorded in his Notes, "If Rousseau had never written, nor lived, the same associations would not less have belonged

to such scenes" (890). Byron believed that the plain of Waterloo, too, predetermined a great battle scene. Stepping out of character, Byron does not seem to require the presence of the author's bones which is fitting since the ground is sanctified not by actual events but by the footsteps of the fictional lovers. Byron had promised at the opening of the canto that Harold would learn a new "mutual language, clearer than the tome / Of his lands' language" (xiii). Drawing close to Rousseau, Byron turns towards the articulation of a more direct confessional style which validates any true feeling of the human heart. Emotions were often more real to Byron than the physical. When Walter Scott pointed out to Byron that he had mistranslated the shrine of "Our Lady of the Rock" as "Our Lady of Woe," in Canto I, Byron added an explanation (he said he was confused by the tilde) but chose not to alter the passage, justifying his decision "by the severities practised there" (Notes, 876). He was, however, angry at the monks and Napoleon for not respecting Rousseau's "airy nothings." He condemned the St. Bernard monks for acting like the Newstead monks of old, taking the trees selfishly for wine casks, and Napoleon for cutting the rocks to improve the Simplon road. As a true pilgrim and relic lover, Byron could not agree with the remark he overheard: "La route vaut mieux que les souvenirs" (Notes, 890).[17]

In addition to discovering a more positive and lasting grasp of love's shrine through Rousseau, Byron begins

devoting himself to shrines of war. He links Rousseau's legacy, followers who "made themselves a fearful monument" (lxxxiii), to the slain, "unsepulchred" soldiers who lie beneath Morat, "themselves their monument" (lxiii). Byron draws together the articulation of a "lightning word" and death by the sword. Byron's credo, stated at the end of this canto, calls for a word which can demonstrate its validity by physicalizing itself: "I do believe, / Though I have found them not, that there may be / Words which are things, hopes which will not deceive" (cxiv). During the composition of Canto III he was reading Goethe's Faust. Goethe's protagonist translates the opening of the fourth gospel, "In the beginning was the Act" (Part I, iii). Byron begins seeking a text which will enshrine the essence of the self into the reader's memory and, simultaneously, a spot of earth sacred enough to expire upon but one distinctly not "forever England."

In this canto things are often defined and implied by what they are not. Rousseau politically is the beginning and the ending of a dream. He "from him came, / As from the Pythian's mystic cave of yore, / Those oracles which set the world in flame" (lxxxi). In endless cycles, new and revolutionary structures "leave but ruins, wherewith to rebuild / Upon the same foundation, and renew / Dungeons and thrones" (lxxii). Following them is "the last eagle," Napoleon, who falls from "'pride of place." Rejecting self-aggrandizing men, Byron enshrines Frederick Howard

and Marceau as just warriors who consecrate the cycles of war by selfless acts. "Gallant" Howard as a relation contributes to the "blood harvest" which enriches the soil by spilling family blood. His enshrinement in Harold also helps Byron expiate the slight he gave to Howard's father in English Bards and Scotch Reviewers. Byron, asking a guide to show him the exact spot where Howard fell, notes that there had been three trees, two still green, one cut down in battle. This truly makes Howard one of the family, although Byron's withered tree is the oak associated with Zeus and British kings. Marceau's "small and simple pyramid / Crowning the summit of the verdant mound" (lvi) recalls the pyrimidal stacks of cannon balls and the diadem at Cintra. This pyramid and crown, however, is consecrated, for Marceau "had kept the whiteness of his soul" (lvii). Like the world's great shrines, the individual places where these men were slain define sacred precincts within a vastly profane landscape.

The battlefield of Morat, going further underground and back into time, collectively adds a new sanctified burial mound, "a pyramid of bones diminished to a small number" by the Burgundians who take the relics back to their native land. The primitive state of these burial mounds and pyramids of bare bones suggests barrows which Shama calls "the first marks that man made upon the European landscape" (26). Their primitive, Rousseauistic, uncorrupted purity is emotionally moving. Byron, as in Greece, becomes

a relic protector: Restoring the Swiss to former heights of nobility by recalling their dignified fifteenth-century defeat of the Burgundians, he prevents the modern Swiss from taking away more bones to make knife handles by purloining some himself. Where, without Newstead, which had held a collection of Attic and monks' bones, Byron was going to protect these is questionable. He does declare he got away with enough bones to make "a quarter of a hero" (Notes, 888). This hero may perhaps be seen in "the new one," Don Juan, and Byron in Greece, heroes who stem later from this reconciliation of love and war shrines.

At this point Byron does not seem to have the dimensions for these coming protagonists. They require development in Italy where the architecture of shrines is more comprehensive and inclusive. What Byron is sure of is his dissatisfaction with the old. Sometimes he was troubled by those eagles he had witnessed over Parnassus as an omen of Childe Harold's success. They flew into his mind "with nothing to induce the recollection" (Letters, vol. 230). Hobhouse thought they were vultures. Perhaps Byron worried that Hobhouse was right in view of how his great overnight fame panned out. Perhaps it was his exhaustion with keeping up the Byronics for which the public clamored without cease.

Byron was tired of the strain of keeping up his Gothic scenery, carrying heavy medieval Harold and contending with hypocritical Protestant morality. In England, Caroline

Lamb was publicly mocking him, in Glenarvon, as a Gothic villain who failed to fulfill sacred vows, at the same time as Byron, at the age of twenty-eight, was entering his age as one hundred in the registry of the Hotel d'Angleterre outside Geneva. Byron had prematurely lost his youth, like everything else, and the Gothic spirit was, as Henry Adams discovered, only for the young. For those "whose life has been a broken arch," Adams recommended a sense of Norman "repose" (7). Byron, in discarding appropriately enough of the medieval armature in the Rhineland, is reduced to wearing a shroud, as he risks a stripping away of former identities and philosophies. His quirky use of medievalisms, his "absurd" penchant for "attaching a pastiche of archaic language to the utterly modern character" (Cronin, 22), had disappeared. Swinburne felt the first two cantos of Harold written "in falsetto."[7] Canto III moves to the point where Byron can, as McGann has put it, "subdue his own Harold-spirit" (Fiery Dust, 155). He also subdues Shelleyan, Wordsworthian, and Rousseauan influences by a process of synthesizing them with his own personal and literary needs.

Byron, despite solid sales, wrote that the public were "tolerably tired with me, and not very enamoured of Wordsworth" (Letters, vol. 4, 157). In looking for a new portal to the self, feelings of rootlessness symbolized by restless eagles, doubts about his literary shrine, and displaced bones show up in his new choice of personal shrine. Telling Thomas Moore he was choking on the silver spoon

he was born with, Byron lamented that he had lost his burial shrine along with Newstead: "I had built myself a bath and a vault -and now I sha'n't even be buried in it" (Letters, vol. 3, 96). In Geneva, the English tourists were spying on him through binoculars, contorting his image further with some "'very distorted optics'" (A Portrait, 242). Though Byron was burning his bridges to Britain and beginning a new life in Italy, where he found the weather, the language, and the mores softer, he soon clashed with hard English morality over a personal shrine.

When his request to bury his small natural daughter Allegra in the churchyard of Harrow, with a small marker inscribed with a Biblical inscription, was rejected, Byron cried, "The story of this child's burial is the epitome or miniature of the story of my life" (Letters, vol. 10, 55). Byron "love[d] to remember the dead for we see only their virtues" (Letters, vol. 2, 83). Allegra was too young to be anything but virtuous. Harrow accepted the body but would allow no stone. The missing inscription implied that without a name there would be no acknowledgement of illegitimate Allegra. With no identity, no record, no name, there would be no existence, and no memory. This was too much. She was Byron himself, and a person in her own right. Of her temperment, her looks, her scowl, her language ("'pure Venetian with a very Scottish pronounciation of the letter 'r'"), Byron asked, "'Is not that B. all over'" (A Portrait, 311)? Harrow's rejection of Allegra's small

shrine brought out all of Byron's antipathy and fired up his ongoing struggle against English hypocrisy. Arguing fiercely and wittily with his "most unnatural publisher," John Murray, not to "make canticles of my cantos" in Don Juan (Letters, vol. 6, 105), telling his critics that it was right that his devil not "speak like the Bishop of Lincoln," he now confronted the Vicar of Harrow over Allegra's place of repose.

As fate would have it, Lady Byron, his Clytemnestra, had a pew at Harrow. In Don Juan, Byron would take some revenge by having a little foreign girl, Leila, see and reveal the hypocrisy of England's famous shrine at Canterbury. Losing his own shrine at Newstead and the fight to get Allegra a marker, Byron considered composing verse solely in Italian and began favoring Catholic graves. Of the tombs he observed in Ferrara, "Implora Pace" and "Implora Eterna Quiete" imprinted under the name of the deceased, he wrote "Can any thing be more full of pathos? Those few words say all that can be said or sought - the dead had had enough of life-all they wanted was rest - and this they 'implore.' There is all the helplessness and humble hope and deathlike prayer that can arise from the Grave - 'implora pace'" (Letters, vol. 6, 149). Though in Italy he would reside in a series of rented palazzos and visited shrines, his life would be less peripatetic than Harold's in Canto III.

His mountains and metaphysics in Canto III provide

no rest and no Faustian moment of satisfaction worthy of delay. The pilgrim heads in his shroud high into the Alpine clouds for a sight, and not a Pisgah one, of Italy where pilgrims "have eternal churching" (Letters, vol 5, 200). With a new mountjoie, he cries, "Italia! Italia!" to signal the coming of the final shrine for Harold's long journey. This is now a one-way pilgrimage to eternity with no turning back. His only hope is "the trust they won't think of 'pickling and bringing me home t clod or Blunderbuss Hall." I am sure my Bones would not rest in an English grave - or my clay mix with the earth of that country" (Letters, vol 6., 149).

Byron opens Canto IV grandly in Venice, carefully placing himself between the Doge's Palace and the prison: "I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs; / A palace and a prison on each hand" (i). The bridge strikes an architectural keynote here for this final canto takes Byron from the old Gothic world, heavy baronial guilt, and the reponsibilites of Childe Harold toward the new world of Don Juan where Byron finally can "create, and in creating live / A being more intense," as he projects in Canto III. Nature continues to supplement and sometimes enlarge the view but is no longer adequate itself to mold visions. The ubiquitous Renaissance architecture of Canto IV reapportions architectural structure to the humanly grand scope of man. Rome, the Eternal City, serves, as it did after the close of the Crusades, as a substitute for the

Holyland, the final mecca replete with a shrine which opens up a Promised land. Rome is "a fine thing to see - finer than Greece" (Letters, 5, 221). Urban Rome becomes an appropriate resting place for the Cain-like wandering pilgrim and for Byron as cosmopolitan and continental man of the world. Two years passed between this canto and the compostion of Canto III, eight between it and the poem's beginnings, but Canto IV begins the looping back inherent in the interlace design which unifies two disparate yet complimentary shapes.

Canto IV contains many healing images of earlier broken forms. Nature and human nature draw closer in resemblance and purpose. Rather than working in opposition to architectural form, nature often echoes and affirms its impact upon the beholder. This process, which culminates in Rome, begins in Venice. In the opening of Canto III Harold rides over the waters, declaring that "the waves bound beneath me as a steed" (ii). This links Byron's pilgrim with saints like Columbo and Christ whose crossings to holy places were succored by a taming of the waters. Pilgrims to Compostella, envisioning the Lord's brother James striding, on a magnificent steed, over the waves from Jerusalem to Spain, brought home shells as tangible proof of their completion of pilgrimage. In Canto III, Byron quickly loses the reins, becoming "a weed / Flung from the rock on Ocean's foam to sail / Where'er the surge may sweep." In Canto IV, the city of Venice itself swells up upon the

waves, "Rising with her tiara of proud towers / At airy distance with majestic motion, / A Ruler of the waters," to display man's apotheosis in literature, architecture, and statecraft, though it is not until after Rome and the ocean view at Albano that Byron will declare of Harold, "he wore his sandal-shoon and scallop-shell" (clxxxvi).

Venice is for Byron foremost a writer's city. Byron fittingly combines Venice with Florence and Rome to form a geometrical pantheon which conquers time through natural beauty, architectual splendor, and memorable literary creations inspired by the wondrous settings. However, the most lasting of these three entities is literature. Politically, this city has been vanquished, the steeds of St. Mark's are "bridled:" "Venice, lost and won, / Her thirteen hundred years of freedom done, / Sinks like a seaweed" (xiii). Gleckner remarks that Byron was on "a real journey into the bowels of nothingness and despair, a pilgrimage without faith or shrines, Cain's journey further, further, and further east of Eden" (225). Actually, Byron fancied Cain a poet, "a bloody poet" in contrast to the "pastoral" Abel. Byron implies a poet who gives back to God the blood required, a poet in touch with the spice of life. Even in letters sent home to his British friends during his first voyage Byron, possessive of space, referred to Britain as "your country" and the English countryside as "Your scenery." In Venice, he said, "We Venetians."

Venice brings to Byron's mind Shakespeare, and characters so embedded in Venetian architecture that they rise like spirits which will outlast their rich settings. Since Venice is "bound in story," mankind's history is "a trophy which will not decay / With the Rialto; Shylock and the Moor . . . cannot be swept or worn away" (iv). As demanders of flesh, Shylock and the Moor are very bloody people, but they are true to life as it has been since Cain's first bloody deed. Byron would like to write as Shakespeare did before Bowlder. Like the Italians, he longs now to write from a seat he records as being a little lower than the heart. Venice, as a precursor to Rome, encompasses all men in a catholicism accepting of the fall, allowing for a brotherhood of Cains who keep life going, for, as Byron noted, Abel had no progeny. The need presses in upon Byron to create a magnum opus worthy of life as it is and of the shrines he has visited.

In seeking immortality in authorship the text of Childe Harold begins to turn in upon itself, like an in terlace, as it becomes a shrine itself. In dedicating Canto IV to Hobhouse, Byron, feeling a kind of postpartum melan choly, regrets the completion of Childe Harold: "It has been a source of pleasure in its production, and I part with it with a kind of regret, which I hardly suspected that events could have left me for my imaginary objects" (Dedication, 226). The text of Childe Harold actually embodies these places and their ideals. It is the pilgrimage's offering

to Apollo at his Grecian shrine and the relic or proof of the journey's successful completion as well. Byron wants to turn the stones back into new histories, "a poetry of life" where "flesh and blood will have the last word." For a while, the poetry of Childe Harold sufficed to secure Byron's memory. His sister Augusta literally enshrined the text by erecting a plaque above Byron's shrine, honoring him as "the author of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage." However, the series of further contemplations in the poem at literary and artistic shrines in Florence point to Byron's growing need to create a work of grander scope.

Byron, though, balked at Shelley's and Murray's badgerings to create "'a great work' an Epic poem I suppose or some such pyramid." Contemplating layers of sacred history turned secular in the perfections of Venetian structure, Byron was weighed down by the time such an epic would demand. Shelley, who had put his seal upon Canto III, found in the current canto "'a most wicked and mischievous insanity" (Robinson, 89). Wanting to improve Byron's personal life and his muse, Shelley urged him to be "'a fountain from which the thoughts of other men shall draw strength and beauty.'" Byron refused to place himself back as the same "idol" in the public shrine. Unlike Shelley, who often was offended by Italian hygiene and Italian graphic sculpture, especially, in one case, a "drunken, brutal, and narrow-minded" Bacchus, Byron felt so at home in Italy he proposed writing his greatest poetry

in Italian. Showing his "porcupine" quills, he responded to Murray's request for "a great work": It would take "ten years to unteach myself even your language," "nine years more to master their language," and "seven or eight years" for the epic itself. These proposals total almost thirty years; he had only six more years to live.

Byron's observations in Canto IV, on the mark the Bard had left in Venice, reconcile him to his own language. Byron was to settle for more verse in English, though with softer rhymes and triple rhymes. In stanza ix, Byron sees his body resting in foreign soil but his spirit in England entwined with its language. Speaking of England, "the inviolate island of the sage," Byron declares:

> Perhaps I loved it well: and should I lay
> My ashes in a soil which is not mine,
> My spirit shall resume it - if we may
> Unbodied choose a sanctuary. I twine
> My hopes of being remember'd in my line
> With my land's language.

In turning to language for immortality in a city more contrived in its development than Rome and Greece, Byron seems little concerned with lack of authentic bones and purloined relics. The famous San Marco steeds he celebrates were stolen from Constantinople, along with the dubious bones of the martyr, then again were looted by Napoleon in 1797 and carried off to Paris. San Marco's, adding mockery to theft, replicates the style of the Hagia Sophia. Ruskin called it "a shrine at which to dedicate the splendour of miscellaneous spoil" (154).

Byron, content to have the horses back, ignores these desecrations. The setting seems too unreal to warrant the kind of protection Byron wanted to give Athens when Elgin began his plunder.

Venice as "a fairy city of the heart," whose "image" was "stamped" in Byron by "Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shakespeare's art" (xviii), is an imaginary place Byron can "repeople with the past" (xix). It forms for Byron "the magic space or mental cartographic" that Fletcher describes as "a referential vacuum to fill . . . visions" (The Prophetic Moment, 304). Fascinated with the Doge's Palace which, like Newstead, had gone from sacred to precarious secular owership, Byron used it for the setting of Mario Faliero, Doge of Venice and The Two Foscari. Ruskin, however, disparaged "the Byronic ideal of Venice" as "confectioner's candy," "a stage dream which the first ray of daylight must dissipate into dust" (126). Byron no longer minded the dust as long as it revealed the fire of the mind. Catholicism as ritual pageant and sequence of mimetic acts was attractive to him. He knew his Venetian plays were not The Merchant of Venice, and in Harold he moves on to Ferrara to meditate at the tombs of other writers. Byron did leave an eternal mark upon "the fairy city": Herman Melville, touring Europe and recording findings of Byronic graffiti at Stratford-upon-Avon, Venice, and Ferrara, sought out Shylock's Rialto, the palace of Cristoforo Moro sometimes identified with the Moor, and

Byron's Palazzo Mocenigo.

Byron begins clustering and concentrating literary shrines, creating a figure suggestive of St. Peter's, a comprehensive shrine of myriad smaller shrines as he seeks to define a literary model. As Byron approaches Arqua, nature cooperates by providing a sunset, "a mantle o'er the mountains" as the "parting day / Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues / With a new colour as it gasps away" (xxix). Soon the pilgrim Harold too will "fade." Petrarch's shrine compliments in its rusticity Rousseau's shrine of nature for "his mansion and his sepulchre; both plain / And venerably simple" are set in "the deep umbrage of a green hill's shade / Which shows a distant prospect far away / Of busy cities" (xxxi, xxxii). As a faithful lover and writer of sonnets who "arose / To raise a language," Byron delights in this appropriately tender setting which emits "a feeling more accordant with his strain / Than if a pyramid form'd his monumental fane" (xxxi). Here, Byron rejects pyramidal shrines as he rejected Shelley's proposal of a masterwork or pretentious "pyramid."

Italy at this point, as "Mother of the Arts" and "parent of Religion! whom the wide / Nations have knelt to for the keys of Heaven" (xlvii), foreshadows the great cathedral soon to come. Byron's softened thoughts at Petrarch's house have, however, almost snared him again into isolating mountain reveries: "If from society we should

learn how to live, / 'Tis solitude should teach us how to die" (xxxiii). Byron is truly shrouded with the dead in this canto for, as Bruce Haley points out, Canto IV has "no living people, only memories of deceased persons."[18] Realizing here that "man with his God must strive; Or it may be, with demons," Byron throws off this lonely soul, "predestined to doom," and hurries to Ferrara, "whose symmetry was not for solitude" (xxxv). Byron creates the perfect mental space to consider the shrines of Tasso and Ariosto. Byron is more inspired by Tasso's cell which, he tells us in the The Lament of Tasso, illustrates "prison'd solitude." Though this poem celebrates a typically Byronic theme, a persecuted "eagle-spirit" or, as John Varriano points out, "the archetype of the alienated artist,"[19] its popularity placed Byron in a predicament worthy of Don Juan at the next shrine. Byron described to an aquaintance how a Ferrarese, who met him at Ariosto's shrine, asked "If I knew 'Lord Byron'an aquaintance of his now at Naples." Byron denied knowing "the Imposter"; the Italian was incredulous when told this Byron was "real Simon Pure," and another visitor compounded the confusion by asking Byron if he "had not translated Tasso?" Byron, in exasperation, declared, "You see what fame is - how accurate - how boundless" (Letters, vol. 6, 147-48).

Continuing his description of this somewhat preposterous accidental confrontation, Byron declares that Fame "sits on me like armour on the Lord Major's Champion

-I got rid of all the husk of literature and the attendant babble by answering that I had not translated Tasso. - but a namessake had - and by the blessing of Heaven I looked so little like a poet that everybody believed me." In Don Juan, Byron convinces his public that he looks like an unpoetical "broken Dandy," a perversion of an image once sacred. At Ariosto's shrine, though, he still suffers from a crisis of identity. The use of Tasso's shrine in Childe Harold maintains the old Harold spirit. Ariosto's shrine, despite the comic confusion, provides part of the solution. Transposing hemispheres, Aristo becomes "the southern Scott," Scott "the Aristo of the North" (xl). Both sing of "ladye-love and war, romance and knightly worth." Ariosto also wrote of Saracen versus Christian clashes over shrines; but in robust humor and true to life he added, Byron felt, elements worthy of Shakespeare, Voltaire, and Chaucer. In a pyramidal diagram of favorite poets Byron placed Walter Scott at the apex. Scott now has a shrine, "a Gothic Rocket," "in the Athens of the North," Edinburgh, and Byron's premonitory designation of this author as "the Ariosto of the North" mitigates the earlier venomous assaults on Scotland as Byron draws his pilgrimage toward a wholesome close. Byron had entered into a confusion of identities with Scott as well. His sister Augusta, among others, believed Byron to be author of the anonymous The Tales of My Landlord. Byron did not mind this error for he saw Scott as "a man of the world,"

which is also how he saw Ariosto, and, endowed now with all the attributes of these shrines and more to come, himself.

Byron leaves Ferrara for Florence, a city less successful at keeping its shrines intact as Harold reaches his nadir. Byron composed his "Substitute for an Epitaph" for Harold, mocking "but where is his Epitaph? / If such you seek, try Westminster, and view / Ten thousand just as fit for him as you" (60). This is not very complimentary to either Harold or Westminster Abbey. Westminster would later reject Byron's bones. Byron preferred Santa Croce, which he deemed "the Westminster Abbey of Italy." The secular remains of Michelangelo, Alfieri, Galileo, and Machiavelli sanctify the ground of Florence, making it truly "holy precinct," "impregnate with divinity." These are "four minds, which like the elements / Might furnish forth creation" (liv). As Curl explains, the elevation in the Renaissance of the remains of emminent artists, scientists, and statesmen to the status of saints' relics signifies "the celebration of the individual." In Byron's terms, individuals who display rare genius reveal divinity in human clay. The relics or remains, the monuments and accomplishments of these Italians, fulfill the need for "ocular proof" (Lamb, 207) of the sublime. Byron, who thrives on a sense of competition, had earlier challenged: "Match me, ye climes! which poets love to laud" (I, lix). At Santa Croce the implied cry

is "Match me, ye shrines."

Santa Croce, however, is guilty of a sin of omission. Problematically for Byron, the bones of the "Etruscan three," Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Dante, lie elsewhere. Byron asks, "Where did they lay / Their bones distinguish'd from our common clay / In death as life" (lvi)? Although their works should suffice to keep the fire of their dust lit, Byron, as faithful pilgrim, demands more, something tangible and ritualistic that retains memory on a level of religion. Byron's demands for more marble for monuments from Italy's rich quarries proves prophetic. The Italians, like Santa Croce in Canto IV, "want[ed] their mighty dust," and in time quarried ample provisions of marble. Boccaccio, who maintained against his own petition that Dante would be happier in Ravenna where "'No foot can anywhere press her soil, without treading above the most sacred ashes,'" failed in his attempts to have Dante's bones returned.[20] The Florentine envoys who went to procure his remains in 1519 also failed; the Franciscan monks, in fact, hid the bones so securely they were not found until 1865. By then, Dante had two rather Byronic memorials at Santa Croce, a statue in the piazza later positioned on one side of the facade, and the rather Byronic cenotaph by Stephano Ricci, erected in 1830, six years after Byron's death.

Vasari's monument to Michelangelo, whose remains were smuggled from Rome by the Florentines after the

funeral, dispassionately celebrates the artist's accomplishments in painting, architecture, and sculture, represented by three figures. Michelangelo himself longed to design a tomb for Dante. Ricci, in actually fulfilling this desire, sculpted a monument symmetrical to Vasari's, with a trio of figures: Dante, a personification of Italy, and "Poetry Weeping for her Dearest Son." Byron, who prophesizes "the late remorse of love" for himself at the conclusion of Childe Harold, apparently would have approved of both this poignant cenotaph and the scowling, cloaked, sculpted Dante, by Enrico Pazzi, now standing outside.

Boccaccio, Petrarch, and Dante, "whose names are mausoleums of the Muse" (lx), inspired Byron's later poetry. With Teresa, Byron would visit Petrarch's tomb in Arqua, entwining his name with hers in the visitor's book. As Marchand points out, Byron, following Sismondi, did not care for this courtly, formal style which kept "the veil always lowered" (A Portrait, 312). In Don Juan, however, despite the more obvious presence of Boccaccio's bawdy side of life which so many early readers found offensive, there is space for the idyllic love of Juan and Haidee. Dante is the most influential, though, of the three.

By linking Dante to Michelangelo, and Michelangelo to himself in Canto IV, he draws closer to the iconography of Christian pilgrimage, and, ultimately, his own

re-creations of heaven and hell in, respectively, the conclusions of Childe Harold, and Don Juan. Although Byron was ready in 1818 metaphorically to throw off some of the heavy masonry intrinsic to the composition of a magnum opus, he did not want to sacrifice visionary scope. Byron identifies with Dante as an exile and as a poet at the center of a well-ordered universe proportioned to man's needs which includes placement for the deity and the devil, his idols and enemies. Regarding Southey, Byron said, "There is a place in Michael Angelo's last judgment in the Sistine Chapel which would just suit him" (Letters, vol. 5, 221). The linkage, however, between Dante and Michelangelo and Byron as artists who guide men's gaze heavenward culminates not in Florence but in Rome.

Rome receives the deepest of Byron's imprints in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. Of course, Rome is a city perfectly appropriate for the dead, for the enshrined, and for the procurement of eternal remembrance. Rome is, in Shelley's letter to Peacock, "'a city of the dead, rather of those who cannot die, and who survive the puny generations which inhabit and pass over the spot which they have made sacred to eternity'" (quoted in Varriano, 43). Or, as the actress Anna Magnani said more skeptically, in Rome "'only the monuments survive'" (quoted in Varriano, 154). Byron's associations with sacred Roman architecture have allowed him to survive along with the monuments.

William Wetmore Story commented, in 1862, that

"'every Englishman [in Rome] carries a Murray for information and a Byron for sentiment, and finds out by them what he is to knnow and feel at every step'" (Varriano, 45). Individuals as varied as Florence Nightingale, Matthew Arnold, Herman Melville, Mark Twain, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Ralph Waldo Emerson have thought of Byron, almost ritualistically, when in Rome. As a guide to Rome, Byron in Canto IV, seems to transfer directly the image on his retina onto the retinas of all the readers who visited the sites after the publication oin 1818 of the complete Childe Harold. In fact, in The Marble Faun (1960) Nathaniel Hawthorne prefers the Byronic view of Rome as "better than reality."[21] For, in "the intervening years," Byron's moonlit vision of the Coliseum has become illuminated with "starlight instead of the broad glow of moonshine" (678).

Byron, in reality, found Rome's distinctly circular and labyrinthine layout confusing. As Henry Adams points out, however, though pilgrims may grow tired and become lost, "the architecture is fixed" (190). Unlike Melville, who was disoriented by "the extent of the ground not built upon (107), Byron, in Canto IV, quickly orientates himself by following the Via Appia, reduplicating the pilgrim's journey down the sacred way as he did earlier at Delphi and the Parthenon. Byron achieves symmetry between the ending of Canto IV and the poem's first half by reprising the dominance of circular, architectural forms and by again building up layers of meditations from the pagan era to

the Christian.

Amidst emblems of the dead, "cypress and ivy" and "owlets," Byron speculates about Cecilia Metella's mostly unrecorded life. Standing by the castellated drum-like shape which forms her shrine, Byron recalls his own past:

> I know not why, but standing thus by thee,
> It seems as if I had thine inmate known,
> Thou tomb! and other days come back on me
> With recollected music, though the tone
> Is changed and solemn, like the cloudy groan
> Of dying thunder on the distant wind;
> (civ)

"Recollected music" presages "the remember'd tone of a mute lyre" which is to bring "the late remorse of love" to Byron when he is dead (cxxxvii).

Replacing Cecilia as the enshrined figure, Byron, in the Coliseum, plunges his readers into mourning. Like Tom Sawyer, Byron is able to experience the grief which his death will occasion. At this point, Byron has truly arrived at the heart of the matter. Byron's associations of self and Roman monuments form a collation of the commands, "Ecce Homo!" and "Ecco Roma!" Positioning himself in the center of the Coliseum by moonlight, like a floodlit niched figure, Byron attempts to evoke a maximum, emotional response from the reader. It is similar to Caroline Lamb, in Glenarvon, presenting her death to the reader: "A broken heart is a sepulchre in which the ruin of everything that is noble and fair is enshrined" (283).

Though Byron's curse that "shall be forgiveness" stands Christianity on its head, these proclamations of innocence at the site of Christian martyrdom are contrived to generate reverence for Byron in the reader's heart each time the text is read:

> But I have lived, and have not lived in vain:
> My mind may lose its force, my blood its fire,
> And my frame may perish even in conquering pain;
> But there is that within me which shall tire
> Torture and Time, and breathe when I expire;
> Something unearthly which they deem not of,
> Like the remember'd tone of a mute lyre,
> Shall on their soften'd spirits sink, and move
> In hearts all rocky now the late remorse of love.
> cxxxvii

In containing the hyperphysical relics or holy essences of Byron's corporeal self, Childe Harold, like the Coliseum, becomes a shrine for Byron. Like Shelley's actual tomb in Rome, which bears the inscription "Cor Cordium," and like Glenarvon, Childe Harold, at its conclusion, serves as an enshrinement for the Romantic or overflowing heart.

By dying, as it were, in the Coliseum, Byron achieves nothing less than a resurrection at St. Peter's. "Christ's mighty tomb" (clii), for Byron, is a structure capable of reconciling classical Grecian and Christian architecture, Dante and Michelangelo, the mind of man and the deity. In The Prophecy of Dante, St. Peter's "bold Architect . . . whom all the arts shall acknowledge as their lord," revives "the Grecian forms . . . from their decay" (IV). Dante, acknowledging Michelangelo's fulfillment of his own visions

of the damned, envisions the dome: "Into heaven shall soar / A dome, its image, while the base expands / Into a fane surpassing all before / Such as all flesh shall flock to kneel in." By making his obeisance at this crowning cathedral at the culmination of Childe Harold, Byron resolutely ends his pilgrimage at a shrine which unifies his earliest visions in Greece and his formulations of man's divinity exemplified in the arts, as he becomes the successor to Dante and Michelangelo.

In Canto IV, St. Peter's is heralded by competing forms: the Pantheon, which also brings the pagan and Christian together as "the Shrine of all saints and temple of the gods / From Jove to Jesus" (cxlvi), Hadrian's rounded mausoleum, and St. Nicholas in Carcere where the story of the daughter offering her father breast milk provides a metaphorical "Milky way" and "constellation of a sweeter ray" (cli). In Florence, to honor Michelangelo, Byron had paused "midcanto," as Waldemar Januszak puts it in Sayonara Michelangelo (1990).[22] At the Vatican, Byron interrupts his contemplations of Hadrian's "colossal deformity" to cry, albeit in hushed, reverential tones: "But lo! the dome - the vast and wondrous dome." The entire poem has been an exercise in elevating poetical rhetoric to describe moments of enlightenment at sacred spots, then falling off to capture the return to the more familiar, profane world. Having backed himself somewhat into a corner by his use of the vision quest, Byron finds in St. Peter's a form

authoritative enough to dictate the quest's resolute ending. St. Peter's "Roman Renaissance . . .principles of 'superimposition'" (Ruskin, 234), display for Byron a layering up and culmination of centuries of sacred form reaching completion through the efforts of one individual, Michelangelo.

For Byron, biggest is always best. Other, more socially secure aristocrats, such as Lady Blessington, found his oversized, baronial bed and Napoleonic coach distastefully showy. To Byron they offered visible proof of his blue blood. Byron shared this utilization of Roman architecture for literary inspiration with Edward Gibbon and Shelley. Gibbon, of course, conceived The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire on the steps of the Ara Coeli. Shelley, finding in the Baths of Caracalla a replication of the human cranium, composed Prometheus Unbound there. But St. Peter's is not for Byron a setting for a spontaneous or isolated revelation. Rather, the Roman basillica serves as the end of the trajectory of medieval cathedrals.

Suger, striving to surpass the Hagia Sophia with St. Denis, asked visitors from Constantinople to compare the two edifices. Byron, in 1817, anticipating going to Rome for the first time, wrote to Thomas Moore, "Having been to Constantinople, I should like to see t'other fellow" (Letters, vol. 5, 210). Though Byron is being facetious, he claimed to be most sincere in facetiousness as if his pride required defenses against further disappointment.

In Harold, the Hagia Sophia, Diana's Temple, and the Ephesian miracle serve to heighten the final architectural rise at St. Peter's tomb:

> But lo, the dome, the vast and wondrous dome
> To which Diana's marvel was a cell,
> Christ's mighty shrine above his martyr's tomb!
> I have beheld the Ephesian's miracle -
> Its columns strew the wilderness, and dwell
> The hyena and the jackal in their shade;
> I have beheld Sophia's bright roofs swell
> Their glittering mass i' the sun, and have survey'd
> Its sanctuary the while the usurping Moslem pray'd;
>
> But thou, of temples old or altars new,
> Standest alone, with nothing like to thee -
> Worthiest of God, the holy and the true.
> (cliii, cliv)

In Byron's view, St. Peter's is a very human and sexual building which acts viscerally upon the central nervous system. Christ, not valued in his own right, is sublimated in the rising architecture which displays perfection in balancing the humanistic and the divine in a wholistic form. As Januszczak humorously points out, Bernini's ring of columns "greet[s] visitors the Italian way, with a hug, like a pair of embracing arms" (5). Its Greek cross floor plan keeps the proportions of the human body and reveals, in a sense, both the mind of its designer and the face of God. Whereas Santa Sophia may be seen as "a firmament of masonry" (Melville, 67), St. Peter's mass is more individualistically "consolidated out of the thought of Michelangelo" (Hawthorne, 650).

For Byron, the visual impact of St. Peter's upon the

dilated pupil simulates seeing (safely) the face of God: "And thou / Shalt one day, if found worthy, so defined, / See thy God face to face as thou dost now / His Holy of Holies, nor be blasted by his brow" (clv). Yet, as the cathedral "defies at first our Nature's littleness," the exertion of accomodating the gaze and "the spirit to the size of that they contemplate" (clviii) strains the nervous system, perhaps to Abrams' Romantic moment of apoplexy (414). As Byron implies, moments of visionary excitement or religious ecstasy seem to border upon the profane and taboo, and hence invite punishment.

Dilating eyes are actually common in vision quests. Spenser's knight's eyes dilate on the Sabbath of Eternity; Dante's eyes dilate in Paradise as he is let in. In Paradise Lost Eve finds that in eating the forbidden fruit, "Th'effects to correspond, opener my eyes, / Dim erst, dilated spirits, simpler heart, / And growing up to Godhead" (IX, 875). But then, of course, she fell. In The Rainbow (1915), D.H. Lawrence emphasizes the sexuality in Will Brangwen's ecstasy at Lincoln Cathedral, a moment which seems very much influenced by Childe Harold: "His soul leapt up, soared up into the great church. His body stood still, absorbed by the height. His soul leapt up into the gloom, into the possession, it reeled, it swooned with a great escape, it quivered in the womb, in the hush and the gloom of fecundity, like the seed of procreation in ecstasy."[23] In bringing his quest to closure, Byron requires an undercurrent of sexual

excitement, implied danger, and artistic creation, his own and Michelangelo's, to achieve the satisfaction, at last, of "the sating gaze" (clix).

Some critics allow Byron to have his astounding moment at the Vatican. Goethe maintained that Byron's forte was in articulating, directly and spontaneously, heights of emotional response to the physical world, and that his talents fell off only "when he paused to reflect." The poet's ecstasy at St. Peter's, in bypassing the rational and the cognitive, especially displays this capability of evoking in readers feelings of extreme sensibility. Byron's reactions to impressive physical form seem to bear resemblance to Francis Bacon's descriptions of the impact of his strongest paintings: "It is something to do with instinct. It is a very, very close and difficult thing to know why some paint comes across directly onto the nervous system and other paint tells you the story in a long diatribe through the brain."[24] In reaching the end of his old style, Byron, in a sense outdoes his own Byronism at the Vatican, and critics such as Gleckner, Vicario, and Haley acknowledge this moment's grace. Gleckner calls it "a clear-eyed recognition of the nature of man and the world, and perhaps incidentally, of God who created both" (301). Vicario finds in this instance a sign that "History and art are well on their way toward rapproachment" (128). Haley reads Byron's use of St. Peter's "as a symbol of solitary aesthetic contemplation and the free creative imagination"

(263).

Unfortunately, criticism of the cathedral itself often uncannily resembles Byron criticism at its lowest point. When Hilda says of St. Peter's in The Marble Faun, "Such as the church is it can nowhere be visible at one glance. It stands in its own way," adding, it says, "'Look at me! in endless repetition" (791), she sounds very much like an early reviewer of Canto IV: "'We should enjoy Lord Byron's poetry much more if it were not for Lord Byron himself; he obstructs others and himself also; he stands in his own light.'" If Romantic eyes dilate when looking at cathedrals it is also the case that they dilate when looking at the Tuscan landscape in Radcliffean novels or viewing trap doors creaking open in Melmoth the Wanderer.

Byron, living out life in exile in his own inimitable style, found at St. Peter's the sublime and the ridiculous in particularly close proximity. Lady Liddell shielded her daughter's eyes, then fainted at the sight of Byron in the basillica, as if he had imbibed something of the "Papish," supernormal aura, and had added it to his own. The emotional and spiritual rise at the penultimate shrine in Childe Harold, like Byron's unfortunate confrontation with Lady Liddell, does resemble the most contrived moments in Gothic novels, moments which consist of "delineating intense human emotion in a para-supernatural situation."[25]

For Byron, however, St. Peter's provided an appropriate shrine to bring closure to the search for che sacred. Though

he may seem like the last man to complete successfully a religious visionary quest, Byron, in Childe Harold, actually fulfills the expectations of pilgrims, popes, and architects. Suger felt that the physical representation of God would result when the architect perfected the stones nature provided. Adams, however, in a more skeptical era, believed the honest pilgrim would seek out and respond, "putting the feeling back into the dead architecture," forestalling the day when the Virgin and Saints would look down and see only tourists. Gregory the Great had ordered the builders of Christian shrines to build over the pagan shrines but not destroy them so that penitents would bring their primitive faith to church and develop it in accordance with the new dispensation. In the final analysis, by building upon his earlier meditations in Greece, Byron invested more faith in the Christian basilica. As a solid medievalist, he had built up the poem so that "the qualities of the architecture reproduce themselves in the song" (Adams, 29), moving verse upon verse, canto upon canto, toward God. Though Noble says that Byron's "poetry was the verbal equivalent of Beckford or Walpole's Gothic architectural taste" (28), Byron, as an enlightened man, had chosen "a Roman Renaissance" cathedral to center this moment in a celebration of man. Substituting in the inner sanctum the Apollo Belvedere, which Byron was said to resemble though he felt Lady Adelaide Forbes bore the stronger resemblance, for Christ, Byron honored "the Sun in human limbs array'd"

and all man's most ethereal "conceptions . . . gather'd to a god!" (clxii).

The elevations of verse which strive to meet the measure of God's face in the dome and in Apollo's "glance the deity" displayed before the doubting public plausible apprehensions of divinity in sculptural arts, and in Childe Harold itself.

As Harold fades away as a pilgrim who has received his shell, and won his shrine, he is only a shell of himself. To give the text sanctity Byron adds a moral which turns Harold, like St. Peter, into a martyr: "He wore his sandal-shoon and scallop-shell: / Farewell! with him alone may rest the pain, / If such there were -with you, the moral of his strain" (clxxxvi). As Byron explained in the 1813 Preface the moral was that Harold had "lost" an appreciation of even the world's most holiest places. By contrast, the penetration into the core of St. Peter's stands as Byron's most viable proof that he was not Harold.

On the other hand, he was no longer quite the public's familiar Byron. In a journey toward final truth, Byron did not veer from the truth however it presented itself. Fully aware and even appreciative of the ridiculous in life, he acknowledged that "the plain of Marathon had been offered to me for sale at the sum of sixteen thousand piastres, about nine hundred pounds . . . was the dust of Miltiades worth no more? It could scarcely have fetched less if sold by weight" (notes, 889). After the loss of Harold, the only form left to mirror St. Peter's is the ocean. However,

while taking Harold out to sea after his moment in Rome, Byron was also beginning Beppo, perhaps coincidentally a rollicking tale of a long-lost husband's return from the sea. In this pivotal period between 1818 and 1821, society was calling Byron "Cain," Peacock was mocking Mr. Cypress's "many a one-legged Venus and headless Minerva" (97-98), and Claire Clairmont, the mother of the dead Allegra, was speculating that Byron's new poetic style, like Catholicism and its architecture, was "too corporeal" to secure her former lover's immortality. In Italy, Byron found himself "only a spectator upon earth" whose eyes were "fixed unceasingly" upon enemies who left him "alone upon my hearth, with my household gods shivered around me" (Letters, vol. 6, 68). In further securing remembrance through poetry he was to increase the corporality of his verse as he came to see that if Abel would always be a sojourner, Cain, in Don Juan, would truly feel at home in the world even if the sacred architecture was turned upside down and profaned.

Footnotes

[1] William Blake, "On Virgil," Complete Works, ed. David V. Erdman (Berkeley: U of California P, 1982) 269-70.

[2] Samuel Chew, Byron in England (New York: Russell and Russell Inc., 1965) 31.

[3] Doris Langley Moore, The Late Lord Byron (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1977) 318.

[4] Philip W. Martin, Byron: A Poet Before his Public (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987) 2.

[5] Ernest Giddey, "1816: Switzerland and the Revival of the 'Grand Tour,'" The Byron Journal No. 19, 1991 (17-29) 23.

[6] Aldous Huxley, "Culture and the Individual," Moksha, ed. Michael Horowitz and Cynthia Palmer (1963; Los Angeles: J. P. Tarcher, Inc., 1977) 247-256, 250.

[8] Aldous Huxley, The Perennial Philosophy (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1970) 68.

[9] W. Paul Elledge, Byron and the Dynamics of Metaphor (Nashville: Vanderbilt UP, 1968) 41.

[10] Jerome McGann, Fiery Dust (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1968) 89.

[11] Sitwell Sacheverell Gothic Europe (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969) 109.

[12] quoted in Lytton Strachey, Queen Victoria (1921; London: Windus: 1993, 408.

[13] James Steven Curl, A Celebration of Death (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1980) 193.

[14] Robert Burns, Poems and Songs, ed. James Burke, London: Fontana / Collins, 1989.

[15] Simon Shama, Landscape and Memory (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995) 233.

[16] Prince Charles, A Vision of Britain (New York: Doubleday, 1989) 109.

[17] Peter Quennell and George Pason point out that as "an inverterate hoarder of tokens and trifles," "any relic

of the former times commanded [Byron's] interest." "To Lord Byron" (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939) Foreword, xii. Byron collected bones from the field of Morat; he pilfered a single hair of Lucretia Borgia's from the library in Milan and was fascinated when the pope "authenticated the body of St. Francis of Assissi" (Letters, vol. 7, 229). When he was badly sunburned, Teresa Guiccioli kept Byron's peeled skin in a small box or reliquary.

[18] Bruce Haley, "The Sculptural Aesthetics of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," Modern Language Quarterly 44 (Sept. 1983) 256-260, 260.

[19] John Varriano, A Literary Companion to Rome, (New York: St. Martin's / Griffin, 1991) 213.

[20] quoted in Dante Alighieri: His Life and Works, Paget Toynbee (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1965) 105.

[21] Nathaniel Hawthorn, The Marble Faun, The Complete Novels and Selected Tales, ed. Norman Holmes Pearson, New York: The Modern Library, 1937: 589-858.

[22] Waldemar Janusczak, Sayonara Michelangelo (Reading, Massachusetts: Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., 1990) 19.

[23] D.H. Lawrence, The Rainbow, Three Novels (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1983) 285711, 487.

[24] Francis Bacon, Interviews 1962-79 by David Sylvester (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1980) 18.

[25] E.B. Murray, Ann Radcliff (New York: Twayne Publishers, INc., 1972) 165.

Chapter Four

DON JUAN: THE RETURN TRIP

In view of the fact that Harold was sent out in search of divinity in shrines, Byron's selection of Don Juan, the legendary mocker of monuments and the dead, seems the perfect hero to make the return journey. The moment at St. Peter's provides a sense of stasis, indicating rest and the ending of strife appropriate to domed forms. In contrasting the Gothic thrust of Notre Dame to domed forms, Kazantzakis writes: "The temple surges upward as though aspiring to reach heaven, but then, with pious resignation, it suddenly subordinates its impetus to saintly 'measure,' bows submissively, curves inward in the face of unattainable boundlessness and becomes a dome, pulling the pantocrator down to its vertex" (337). St. Peter's, as a domed, culminating form, indicates an ending of the journey in the center of the Catholicism in the Eternal City where shrines and sacred architecture reveal man's capacities as artist and creator.

Though Byron never acted with "pious resignation," clearly the conclusion of Harold, like the interlace and Kazantzakis' perception of classical form, brought him back

to a center where the journey could only begin again. Given the constraints of the format of Harold, there may be more satisfaction in ending Harold than satsifaction in the ending of the poem. Byron's quip qualifying it as "Childe of Harrow's Pilgrimage" (Howarth, 61) is only a step behind James Joyce's punning judgment, "Child Horrid's pilgrimace." Quite ready to forsake posturing and align his thoughts with sacred form, Byron moved in basically two directions during his "posthumous" existence in exile: toward satire and death. One of Byron's earliest memories of pure love had involved lying down, in a boat, with Mary Chaworth in a cavern with low hanging rocks in Derbyshire. It was Byron's most painful misfortune in life to witness the distortion of all he held most sacred in memory. Mary Chaworth, desperate and insane, had reentered his life. In 1816, "The Dream" recaptured the poignancy of this affair, and its melancholy outcome. In Beppo, written in 1817, the coffin-shaped Gondola lays the dream to rest: "For sometimes they contain a deal of fun, / Like mourning coaches when the funeral's done" (xx). This process of providing profane counterparts to sacred forms which is so essential to Don Juan is not really so much an "elimination," as Paul West maintains, as a consideration of negative space and the addition of "the other side of the mountain."[1]

Byron's perception of things upside down from "the ceiling" in Don Juan is like the sculptor's process of

chipping away until a hidden form is revealed. In facing reality Byron often found it easier to define the sacred by the profane or by what it is not. Byron's "beyond-the-tomb freedom to speak his mind about all things"[2] adds "a panoramic view of Hell in training" (I, cci) to Harold's search for paradise. The world's great shrines serve as perfect foils for Byron's measure of the world's fall. Byron comes back as a kind of revenant or pilgrim with a knowledge of truth. Like a true Desert Father, Byron leaves off everything but "the liberty of my soul." Like Dante, Byron transforms personal history into the sacred. Auden had satirized Wordsworth as ultimately a supporter of the Anglican Chruch. In writing about Byron and Dante, Stephen Ellis elevates Byron even higher by quipping that Byron would have become an archbishop if he survived Greece. McGann's reference to Byron's "throne of self-assurance" (The Romantic Ideology, 141) in Don Juan conveys an archbishop-like authorative positioning of Byron above mankind.[3] His compulsion to revisit and profane the pretensions of major sacred sites creates, an eschatological viewpoint as consistent as those of his models, in Childe Harold, Dante and Michelangelo. If the tortured, strivings evidenced in Byron's earlier style bear resemblence to Michelangelo's mannerism, Don Juan presents a new kind of mannerism, wherein "the focus [is] on manner rather than matter" (Martin, 183). In the strength and originality of his satirical last judgment, Don Juan becomes the text

which ensures the immortality Byron envisioned at the literary shrines in Canto IV.

Yet, to the end of his life, Byron reserved a place for Harold and the sacred. In his preoccupation with Greek independence and his personal, Calvinistic eschatology, his sense of impending death and his own shrine, Byron was expecting to find both farce and the sublime in the rigours of war. Satire dominated Byron's writing during his last year of sustained composition. The very last poems he wrote, however, "On this Day I Complete my Thirty-Sixth Year" and "Love and Death," return to the poignant longing for a romantic death of Byron's earliest verse. Byron's death in Greece, a kind of transubstantiation of his body into the soil he cherished most, reveals his affinity for Roman Catholicism, a religion he considered "the most "eloquent worship, hardly excepting the Greek mythology" (Letters, vol. 9, 123). As William J. Donnelly points out in "Byron and Catholicism," "he is drawn precisely to those reconciliatory functions [of Catholicism] that his own religious background had denied him."[4] The closet dramas and religious mystery plays which Byron composed between Childe Harold and Don Juan are predominantly concerned with responsibility and personal shrines as markers and recorders of achievement. These plays capture both Byron's serious and satirical sense of himself as shrine keeper and provide a traceable pivoting from an insistence upon the sacred to a complete acceptance of the world as it is, an acceptance

which does not negate a sense of noblesse oblige or service.

Byron's dramas are frequently concerned with highly wrought architectural estates and baronial responsibilities, including land and social obligations. Personal graves are given serious consideration. In the political dramas secular and sacred architecture is either falling down, under siege, or closing in on the protagonists. For example, in Sardanapalus the king perishes in the funeral pyre of his burning palace; in The Deformed Transformed Lutheran and Catholic soldiers fight over the battlements of the Castle of St. Angelo and St. Peter's; in The Two Foscari and Marino Faliero formerly powerful political icons languish imprisoned between stone walls. Jacopo Foscari anguishes over his unusual fate: "Many are in dungeons, / But none like mine, so near their father's palace" (II, i, 98-9). He is tempted to curse the walls and, Sampson-like, bring them down. The Venetian Faliero, in his "great reverse," is imprisoned in his own Ducal Palace until his severed head rolls down the Giants' Steps.

The remembrances of these heroes hang in the balance. The pacifist Sardanapalus realizes that war would have brought him thousand of selpuchres to serve as "trophies"; Faliero laments his confiscated lands, his no longer "perpetual fiefdom," while the Doge, Francis Foscaro, dies without an heir. In Werner, the hero loses his father's good name, his identity, and his riches to wander through Gothic chambers until his race dies out.

Byron's religious mystery plays and the metaphysical Manfred reinforce these same themes on deeper and higher levels. The protagonist of Cain is depressed over the loss of the first estate, Eden, which precipitates murder when his vegetarian shrine is rejected by God, whereas Heaven and Hell details the loss of the all earth's lands until almost the whole human race perishes and the world itself is "a universal tomb" (I, iii, 926). Manfred abandons his lands and castle, forfeiting his chance for "a quiet grave" and grandchildren, becoming "My own soul's selpuchre" (I, i, 27) and "my own hereafter" (III, iv, 140).

Byron's shrines in his transitional dramas range from alpha to omega, from heaven to hell, and from the sublime to the ridiculous, or, at least, the satirical. The character of Manfred further imprints the dark and gothic image of Byronic men of earlier days. This persona is so deeply imprinted into the public imagination that Langley Moore comments upon the practical straw hat Byron purchased in Genoa that "we have to adjust our 'image' of the Byronic to picture him wearing it" (Accounts Rendered, 366). In The Deformed Transformed and Werner, however, the image of the self is treated with far less sanctity as the often overly pretentious Byronic ego seems less and less sacred. The dramas and Beppo present Byron stepping out of the shrine into a more human role. Byron's new, comical, vulnerable, projections of the self are mirrored in twisted images of sacred architecture.

The devil in The Deformed Transformed mocks his cloven feet and laughs at his own and his author's "penchant for black" (I, i,372). The malformed Arnold rejects taking on a new form with "splay feet" but magically assumes "the dome of beauty" of Achilles' form. Achilles' figure is, like Byron's, uncommonly handsome but weak in the heel. Arnold, laboring "with all deformity's dull deadly / Discouraging weight upon me, like a mountain" (I, i. 330), admits that "deformity is daring," and that "there is a spur in halt movements" (I, i, 313, 315). He goes on a pilgrimage to Rome with the devil but confuses St. Peter's, the Coliseum, and the city itself, confounding the Devil who wants "to resolve the alphabet / Back into hiero-glyphics" in retaliation for the "Babels" constructed by "prophet, doctor, alchymist, Philosopher, and what not" (I, ii, 106-8). In this "imperious Rome" pilgrimage and shrines are parodied as the Devil urges the Catholic soldiers to take home more relics than the Lutherans who loot the city's famous shrines. In a Babel of confusion, constituted of moral looseness, greed, and war, the sacred and the sublime fuse.

The dramas Byron composed following the finale of Childe Harold move closer to the profane but true self who emerges in Beppo and Don Juan. Byron as a man, suffering from a personal disfigurement and a sense of brokenness, is typical of many individuals who are attracted to shrines. Like many pilgrims, Byron finds not a physical healing but a

sense of acceptance. No longer feeling obligated to find sanctity in Peter's great shrine, Byron creates a new world where form, architectural and human, incorporates innocence and profaned experience. Werner and Beppo herald the return of the pilgrim or wanderer coming back into the world and into his estate.

The floods in Heaven and Hell and Werner and Beppo's presumed loss at sea enshrine or remember the eschatololgy in the works of Michelangelo and Dante. The devastating waters recall the scenes of the flood painted upon the Sistine ceiling. Byron's portrait of himself as one of the damned in Beppo and Don Juan follows Michelangelo's self-portrait in the Last Judgment, though the latter poem is Hell itself even in its most sacred shrines and a last judgment upon English society. Heaven and Hell rather heavily presents the whole world going under water, whereas in Werner, though in the exchange of baronial properties "all the world are grown anonymous" (I, i, 286), certain lords are unsinkable. When Werner appears out of the storm, Idenstein quips, "Your noblemen are hard to drown" (I, i, 220).

The narrator of Beppo admits to being "but a nameless sort of person, / (A broken dandy on my travels)" (lii), who recalls England as "a dynasty of Dandies" (lx) and who does in Rome as the Romans do. In Beppo's world no man is a hero to his valet. Though Beppo returns from his "loss" at sea to "reclaim his wife, religion, house, and

Christian name" (xcvii), he does not reclaim his architecture. Beppo contains little architecture. All seems non-linear, fluid and free. Byron in this freedom memorializes Ariosto and Boccaccio. The architecture that fits the character of Byron's new aristocrats finally appears in Don Juan where the view is upside down, seen "when drunk from the ceiling" (opening Fragment). Byron's aspirations to the sacred in Childe Harold contained the seeds of his later satirical views. Unfortunately, Byron even, when in earnest as Childe Harold, has been often mocked. Jump refers to Harold and the heroes who followed, such as Conrad, the Corsair, and Manfred, as "attitudinizing dummies,"[5] and Edward Strickland in "Boxer Byron: A Clare Obsession (1989) calls Childe Harold "the most unintentionally funny major poem in the nineteenth century."[6] Byron himself, however, had often expressed the undercurrent of derision which he felt especially in the presence of sacred architecture.

Byron's calling St. Peter's "t'other fellow," his deflation into cockney humor upon viewing Jupiter's Temple in Greece, "nothing like it in Lunnum, not even the mansion house" (Letters, vol. 2, 37), and his cold statement that Santa Croce "contains much illustrious nothing" (Letters 5, 218) indicate an insecurity underlying his pretensions to authority as well as a protection of his easily-moved heart and emotions. Ronald A. Shroeder finds in Byron's "Addition to the Preface" of Harold a glimpse of "a mature

satirist's mask."[7] Don Juan serves as armour for the vulnerable heart as it works against all that the English hold most sacred. Ironically, as in the case of Jonathan Swift, the satirist holding to the highest ideal sometimes gains the most memorable of tombs. Byron, who between Childe Harold and the conclusion of Don Juan, commits himself to serving Greek freedom, moves closer to a comprehensive view of the self and its origins, to his own literary vocation, and to the world in all its aspects.

In viewing the Falls of Terni in Childe Harold IV, Byron reacted to a natural form which carried no encumbrances of religious or historical conjecture, which simply falls continuously of its own accord, driven by its own nature. Jump admires the quality of Byron's verse here as "a single sentence pours tumultuously through four successive stanzas" (84). Byron blends the fall of Rome and mankind, ancient architecture, and the movement of his verse with the dramatic cataract. This willingness to suspend expectation and judgment in order to follow form where its function leads signals the technique of Byron's most lastingly admired work, Don Juan.

Like Harold, Juan seeks shrines and the sacred, though both are sadly lacking in his modern world. The sacred in the glaring light of reality can only strive towards a certain level of perfection before reality twists it back in upon itself. When profaned, the sacred becomes easier to define by what it is not. Even the great pilgrimage

crusades, when kings, queens, knights, artisans, and peasants felt compelled to go and kneel where Christ lived out his life, degenerated into what has been termed "the bank holiday side" of vision quest wherein the holy is forfeited as secular interests, fetishism, assignations, and curiosity-seeking begin to dominate (Turner, 197). Ruskin and Adams agree that even Gothic form itself, when taken beyond a reasonable height, falls off into grotesqueries wherein "Man, with his usual monkey-like malice, takes pleasure in pulling down what he had built up" (Adams, 248). This moment, when shrines become fit for anything but serious worship, signals the return of the pilgrim with his alienated, ironical view of his own society (Howard, Writers and Pilgrims, 130). Fletcher writes that the "comedy will arise out of the apocalyptic transformation of the fearsome labyrinth" (The Prophetic Moment, 36); for Howard, the end of the labyrinth is the moment when the center is reached and the pilgrim walks "away holding the experience in his mind" (386-7).

At this point, pilgrimage, according to Howard, usually becomes encoded in a book which acts for readers as a surrogate journey of life. Don Juan, like St. Peter's as a shrine of shrines and the fragmented mirror of Childe Harold III, is a tome comprehensive enough to hold all the profaned sacred places and shrines as well as minature versions of Byron's earlier more pretentious works. The Harold figure was gothically damned as a stock figure and

doctrinally damned as a Calvinist. Juan, however, is more naturally damned by his own human nature. Gleckner feels that Don Juan is "written from the view of the fallen" (330) and George Ridenour feels that "Byron is caught" in the poems endless repetitions of the fall" (quoted in Gleckner, 330). Like Michelangelo, Byron may be said to function "as his own executioner."[8] Remembering Dante, Byron wrote on the packet containing Don Juan, "there is no hope for them what laughs," words recalled from a sermon which echo the more dire, "Abandon All Hope Ye Who Enter Here."

Byron finds his forte in setting up classical form only to break out of it repeatedly. His attempts to confine himself to classical constraint in his plays resulted in "a rigid, nonfunctional structure, imposed upon from without," as Elledge puts it (98). In Don Juan, Byron sets up sacred form in order to knock it down. His intent is not to denigrate the sacred but to reveal hypocrisy in high places. It is truly a return journey as Byron pauses to take in all the shrines and sacred places contained in Childe Harold, returning at last in Canto XVII to his own origins at Newstead Abbey where "Norman Abbey" breaks out of its square stability to become the mock-Gothic setting for Juan's final assignation.

Don Juan becomes the text to enshrine Byron's memory earlier envisioned in Childe Harold IV. The architectural keystone for Don Juan is the Tower of Babel. (Byron sent his publisher two cantos as "a brick of my Babel and by

which you can judge the texture of my structure." The poem contains several references to this Biblical structure.) Yet, far from babbling, Byron, in finding a poetical style closer to his speaking voice and the conversational style of his correspondence, has never spoken so clearly in verse. Architecture here is less permanent than ink and in the world of Don Juan Byron is doubtful of mortar: "But words are things, and a small drop of ink" on a page, "even a rag like this," allows a man to "survive himself, his tomb, and all that's his" (III, lxxxviii). As for actual monuments, "We know where things and men must end at best; / A moral (like all morals) melancholy, / And Et sepulchri immemor struis domos / Shows that we build when we should but entomb us" (V, lxiii). Words as things echo Childe Harold but Don Juan is lowered arch upon arch down "into the substratum which will overlay us" (IX, xxxvi).

The substratum contains "relics of 'a former world'" such as Virgil, Dante, Socrates, Marathon, Byron's Grecian looks, and other remnants of the classical world's pretensions to immortality. The literature and architecture of Ancient Greece depend upon mathematical formuli, the satisfying symmetry of two plus two equals four. In Don Juan the study of mathematics is the province of Donna Inez, a character based upon Byron's wife. Donna Inez, who "look'd a lecture," wants her son's "Aeneids, Iliads, and Odysseys" expurgated because she "dreaded the Mythology" (I, xli). Her structured world fragments when Juan falls for, and

with, the tutor, Donna Julia. Byron himself breaks out quickly from Horatian constraint by eschewing "the plunge 'in medias res'" to begin more logically "with the beginning" (I, vi, vii). Like sinful mankind, Byron knows the rules, acknowledges error, and moves on: "As I have a high sense / Of Aristotle and the Rules, t'is fit / to beg his pardon when I err a bit" (I, cxx). In the world of Don Juan profane space is ever widening, shrines and mentality shrinking, as Byron tries to push all limits. His meandering, digressive voice acts like a labyrinth, where the process of remembering and forgetting he began in Harold becomes an art. His pauses to observe sacred precincts still occur though the sacred grows more and more profane.

The Lake Poets who reserve a sacred space in Keswick, Byron says, reveal "a narrowness in such a notion, / Which makes me wish you'd change your lakes for ocean" (Dedication, v). Byron's expansive and digressive voice is flowing, following life's movement. This is quite a contrast to the stasis of pausing to speak before temples and cathedrals in Harold. In pushing parameters in Don Juan, two and two can never be four. Though in awe of his wife's superior mathematical aptitude, Byron's arithmetic was expansive and miraculous. Byron wrote to Annabelle: "I know that two and two are four - and should be glad to prove it if I could - though I must say if by any process I could convert 2 & 2 into five it would give me greater pleasure"

(Letters, vol. 3, 159). In Don Juan British politicians, feeding themselves while increasing the national debt, "though they prove not two and two to be / five as they might do in a modest way, / Have plainly made out that four are three, / Judging by what they take and give" (XVI, xcix). Like the British economy and Byron's phenomenal fame, the classical world of balanced form is in collapse. Doubting whether his "verse's fame be doom'd to cease / While the right hand which wrote it is still able, / Or some centuries to take a lease" (IV, xcix), Byron recalls that standing upon Achilles' tomb "he heard Troy doubted." Accepting the perennial philosophy usually born of deepest spiritual thought, Byron accepts that "the wide destruction . . . leaves nothing till 'the coming of the just' - save change" (IV, ci).

Byron, as in Childe Harold, morbidly pictures his own death, seeing grass growing over his grave as "the very generations of the dead / Are swept away, and tomb inherits tomb, / Until the memory of an age is fled." As Dante once was, Byron is the poet who rejects the "dead" Latin of shrines to write in a strange new style in his mother tongue. The state of the once revered Dante sepulchre in Ravenna matches Grant's tomb today: Byron, cantering by "each day where Dante's bones are laid," discovers that the little cupola which protects his dust is smeared with excrement: "With human blood that column was cemented, / With human filth that column is defiled, / As if the peasant's coarse

contempt were vented / To show his loathing of the spot he soil'd" (IV, civ, cv). Poetry rises, like the incense of Harold, vainly to heaven, but poets like Byron are "broken before the shrines of Sorrow, and of Pleasure." Byron, at the end of fame, laments he "spent betimes - My heart in passion, and my head in rhymes."

The faithful Hobhouse wanted Byron's head to be garlanded with laurel leaves across the brow of the Thorvaldson bust. Byron objected: "I won't have my head garnished like a Xmas pie with Holly" (Letters vol. 5, 243). Rejecting a personal encrustation in the sacred, Byron was thinking of returning to England for the coronation of George IV not in the ermine of a Peer of the Realm but in the character of Punch. Byron's new credo is, "I wish men to be free / As much from mobs as kings - from you as me" (IX, xxv). But if Byron's head, which once lay as if crowned beneath the "domes of his fathers" at Newstead, is now fit for the foolscap, so is St. Paul's. The great cathedral caps off the Blakean black spires of dirty London as Juan and his ward, Leila, view the great city from Shooter's Hill. St. Paul's dome looms over the city as "a huge dun cupola, like a foolscap crown / On a fool's head" (X, lcxxii). To match the architecture, George the Fourth also wears a foolscap crown. This is a lowering down closer to home of the "diadem hight foolscap" over the hall at Cintra in Childe Harold I. Don Juan, however, intends to reach "the Soul's antipodes."

Juan and his ward, Leila, represent the alienated and ironic viewpoint Howard attributes to the returning pilgrim. When Harold set sail from England his author endowed him with the view of an insular islander though his island was Great Britain. Juan and Leila bring a more expansive view of life to Britain. In the world of Don Juan the alienated self becomes enlarged somewhat in proportion to the diminishment of sacred architecture. Juan and Leila are complimentary forms whose eyes dilate upon finding each other. London, like St. Peter's, dilates and sates the gaze: it reaches "wide as eye could reach," presenting life as "jaded, bloated, sated" (X, lxxxi, lxxxvii). They stand upon Shooter's Hill but give no cry of Mountjoie! The world's most revered shrines often suffer at the expense of their humor. As Leila's and Juan's observations of hypocrisy at the highest levels of civilization's spiritual development are, in Byron's view, undeniably true, Don Juan completes the quest for truth in the highest sense of the word.

Byron was broken on society's shrines like a true religious. Something of his tortured self died and he returned to his literary vocation changed. When Harold sailed from Cadiz to see the continent and the Middle East, singing in bittersweet cadence his "native Land - Good Night!" as "the white rocks faded from his view" (xii), his experience and sense of culture was narrow. In Beppo, the English morning showed "weak as a drunken man's dead

eye" (xlii). Juan comes to England as a true Gothic hero, one who traces his lineage "through the most Gothic gentlemen of Spain" (I, ix). Like St. Peter's, the great city of London is compared to other wonders of the world. St. Peter's easily outdoes "the Ephesian Miracle," "Diana's marvel," and "Sophia's bright roofs." In Don Juan, however, "the man who has stood on the Acropolis, / And look'd down over Attica . . . or sail'd where picturesque Constantinople is, / Or seen Timbuctoo . . . May not think much of London's first appearance" (XI, vii). London needs to be excavated for a closer and deeper look.

In Don Juan, the insistence is always upon the real, which satisfies more than "the stone ideal." Juan and Leila, as people of the greater world, have seen all these sites which usefully serve for comparison and spontaneous insight. Their narrator, no longer content with "the model of a statuary" representing "the nonsense of their stone ideal," wants "much finer women, ripe and real" (II, cxviii). In saving Leila, Juan seeks the true message of Christ, not the monuments or whited sepulchres which attempt to represent it: Byron admonishes, "Oh! ye who build up monuments, defiled / With gore . . . Oh ye! or we! or he! or she! reflect, / That one life saved, especially if young / Or pretty, is a thing to recollect" (IX, xxxiii, xxxiv). Here, as in Christ's view, the greatest sacrifice is to lay down one's life for another, and the sacred is in the "antipodes of the soul" with all its weakness and

vulnerability. Leila and Juan live life close to the bone. They delve deep into the meaning of life in viewing the great monuments of the world. Don Juan moves closer to Byron's psyche geographically as the poem approaches Norman Abbey where the architecture reveals British character to Juan who is often as baffled as Byron by all things English.

As outrageous as some of Juan's adventures may appear, the author offers precedents in current and historical events. The Dantean horrors of Juan's shipwreck, Byron insists, "were comparative / to those related in my grand-dad's 'Narrative'" (II, cxxxvii). Don Juan presents Byron's truest self in this process of containing earlier poems much the way St. Peter's was a shrine massive enough to hold numerous smaller shrines. Haidee and Juan in their Edenic love shrine parallel Christian and Neuha in their island paradise in The Island. The satirical portraits of contemporary authors in Don Juan recall English Bards and Scotch Reviewers; its social satire sounds like The Waltz. The twisted pilgrimage in The Deformed Transformed seems a rehearsal for Don Juan.

The movement of Don Juan towards England where, as Martin points out, the scope increases (132) and Byron's ancestral origins, with its visitations of almost all the shrines of Harold's journey, offer a reversed mirror image of Childe Harold. Its satire of the self reveals a mirror image of Byron, of his self truly turned inward, a self which has followed the Delphic precept, "Know Thyself."

Episodes of Juan's life appear as stations in the flow of Byron's labyrinthian but fluid narration. Juan's life, though, is superior to tales of Byron's "epic brethren" for his "story is actually true" (I, ccii). The narration is the true voice of Byron offering, as Jump says, "a direct transcription of life," (127). West sees Don Juan as "a confessional" or a Chinese box of meditations upon the self meditating upon itself. Fletcher, however, elevates the view of Byron's self-contained verse. He cites Don Juan as an example of "templar vision" wherein each stanza forms "a perfect miniature memory house" or "perfect sacred space" (The Prophetic Moment, 130). Events from Byron's life, legends, earlier verse, sacred architecture and foreign locations are each given their encapsulated moment in time. When threaded together they form a life which remembers itself as it enshrines itself in ink, in the author's realization that we build to entomb and that our heroes resurrected from their biers "would only slay us."

Life in Don Juan is always dying as it lives to the fullest. Life is both compressed into each private moment and pressed out towards humanity. Canto III itself contains all the metaphorical shrines of Harold as well as much of the earlier poems's sacred architecture. Haidee and Juan exist in a shrine of love, soldiering and Greece are memorialized in "The Isles of Greece" (following lxxxvi), nature's "altars are the mountains and the ocean" (civ); and, ultimately, love enters death's shrine wreathed in

cypress branches (11).

Canto IV continues the mocking celebrations of revered authors and includes fragments of Childe Harold as Byron quotes himself: Juan, when captured and wounded is "cabin'd, cribb'd, and confined"" (lxxv, Harold IV, cxxvii). Haidee's father is like "peter the Apostle," a patriarchal figure who as a pirate "fishes for men" (II, cxxvi). When Haidee slowly dies in childebirth, she is "Fair Venus," exhibiting "Laocoon's all eternal throes," and "the ever-dying Gladiator's air" (IV, lxi). Haidee's death mirrors the loss of Charlotte in Childe Harold IV. Like the overdone and Baroque shrine in Windsor Castle, which depicts Charlotte and her stillborn baby, Byron's tribute to the king's daughter is heavily laden with "promises like stars to shepherd's eyes" and beaming meteors (clxx). Haidee's death is treated far more poignantly and tenderly. "A vein had burst," and Haidee, trying to live for herself and her child, dies leaving "no stone" but only a mound where soon "nothing outward tells of human clay" (IV, lxxxii). Her good name goes into "living song" or into Don Juan itself.

Haidee's early death precipitates Juan out of his Eden into Constantinople, across Europe, and "back to the starting point," Britain. Moving again in counterpoint to Harold, this time the "crimson cross" rises as "the crescent's silver bow" sinks and Juan makes his sacrifice at Mars's shrine at Constantinople. The cross, however, is still a symbol of slaughter, this time en masse. The message of Christ

and Christian architecture often work at cross purposes in Don Juan, but Leila, Juan, and the narrator fully respond sexually, emotionally, and spiritually to structure and form. Modern society can only guess at the meaning of "hieroglyphics on Egyptian stones" and "what happily be hid, / As the real purpose of a pyramid" (VIII, cxxxvii), just as posterity will puzzle over the great relic, George IV, when he is dug up. As at the Parthenon, architecture still carries sexual connotations: "the Mansion House too (though some people quiz it) / To me appears a stiff yet grand erection" (XI, xxv).

To consolidate his alienated viewpoint with the vantage point of the outsiders, Leila and Juan, Byron disassociates himself from his English half and embraces his Scottish identity: Byron brags, "But I am half a Scot by birth, and bred / A whole one," and disowns the earlier "fit of wrath and rhyme, when juvenile and curly" (X, xvii, xviii). This acceptance of the once threatening Scottishness earlier associated with an overwhelming mother and the molestation of body and mind is appropriate to the labyrinth's end where awe-inspiring marvels are replaced by humorous grotesqueries. Young Leila has Harold's childlike wonderment but posseses more wit. At Canterbury the guide tells of the Black Prince's and Becket's shrine in "the same quaint, uninterested tone," but "the effect upon Juan was of course sublime" (X, lxxiii). Leila, however, asking "why such a structure had been raised,"

is told "it was God's house." She responds, "He was well lodged," but she cannot understand how God, Allah, to her, "should resign / A mosque so noble, flung like pearls to swine" (X, lxxv). Like Byron, all Leila's experiences of the triumph of Christianity in society are negative ones. And she too is a defender of shrines who likes to keep the infidel out of the shrines' sacred bounds.

An examination of who is in the shrine now reveals how supportive of innocence and anti-English Byron has become as he approaches his place of origin at the end of Don Juan. Haidee and Leila, who represents Childe Harold's young Peri, Inez, and Ada as well as the Allegra of Byron's Italian existence, inspire feelings of deepest tenderness in their author who acknowledged that he had grown younger at heart: "the first two Cantos of C[hild]e H[arold] were written as if by a man older than I shall probably ever be" (vol. 9, 11). Westminster Abbey, "yon shrine where fame is a spectral resident" (XI, xxiv), glows preternaturally in the moonlight, like the Coliseum. Outshining "the line of lights" up to Charing Cross and Pall Mall, the Abbey throws across London a "coruscation / Like gold as in comparison to dross." Thus, Byron concludes that it is "not for want of lamps to aid his dodging his / Yet undiscover'd treasure" (XI, xxviii). The dishonest denizens of London, a modern Babylon, prey upon the honest Juan "As Hawks may pounce upon a woodland songster" (XI, xxxv), despite the presence of the illustrious dead

in the Abbey whose "breadth of pavement" forms a limited, impotent sanctuary. Like Dean Stanley, Byron too sees Westminster Abbey as "a mirror of England."

Byron had already established a resemblance between Pall Mall and "the brimstone of that street of hell" (xxvi). With the authority inherent in occupying an oracular shrine, Byron designates his new hero and companions as sacred figures defending themselves against British profanation. Juan is "real, or ideal, - / For both are the same" (X, xxi), a hero drawn by an author who acknowledges that "heroes must die, and by God's blessing" (XI, xx). Juan saves Leila from "the heap one more moment had made a tomb" (VIII, xciv). He brings death, however, into Haidee's island world by impregnating her. Juan's initiation into sexuality by his tutor is a more aceptable version of Agnes Grey's "tricks upon my person."

For Juan, life goes on after Haidee's death and his separation from Leila. Juan does not enter a monastery like the Giaour nor quarrel with God, like Cain, over the vulnerability of shrines and the reward of sin. Realizing "he was no tutor," Juan selects Lady Pinchbeck from "the general competition to undertake the orphan's education" (XII, xxx), entrusting Leila to an older lady whose virtue is in doubt because of her familiarity with the world. Having provided Leila with reasonable protection, Juan moves deeper into the land where Byron

sinned and was sinned against in the ominous and unlucky Canto XIII. As Juan faces Newstead or Norman Abbey, the first shrine as Byron's childhood home and the last shrine as "the family vault," Byron's lay soars "high and solemn, / As an old temple dwindled to a column" (XIII, i).

Byron builds up slowly to the visit to Newstead as he had earlier slowly approached St. Peter's. Juan goes to Piccadilly, which for Byron is a return to the scene of his marriage crime. Piccadilly is "Blank-Blank Square," for Byron promises to let "that pure sanctuary alone": "I must name not square, street, place, until I / Find one where nothing naughty can be shown, / A vestral shrine of innocence of heart" (XIII, xxvii). This edging closer to his matrimonial mansion is a movement closer to autobiography without the Gothic trappings of Harold. Byron, particularly at the close of his epic, finds geographical and architectural placements for the most intimate events of childhood and young adulthood. If anything is sacred and worthy of enshrinement in the world of Don Juan, it is the experiences of the sincere heart. Despite his jaded self-portrait as a poet who has met his Waterloo and cannot prove himself, "a ball-room bard, a foolscap, a hot-press darling," Byron claims in Don Juan to be a religious.

Beginning by ingenuously declaring himself "a plain man," Byron presents himself as "a moderate Presbyterian" and "a temperate theologian" (XV, xci, xcii) who "should have made monastic vows (XV, xxiv). Donnelly sees Byron

in Don Juan as "a relatively accomodated man in what we might call a condition of secular catholicism" (49). Though Byron may not be ready to actually convert, he is quite in earnest about his purity in his native "low, newspaper, humdrum, lawsuit Country" (XII, lxv). In fact, Byron goes so far in a letter as to identify with the pile of Virgin bones in the shrine of Ste. Ursula, maintaining that there is "no one so ravished as me" (Letters, vol. 3, 124).

Byron, taking here William James's view of illness and religion wherein a normal temperature is not conducive to spiritual vision, discovers that "as I suffer from the shocks / Of illness, I grow much more orthodox" (XI, v). In comparison, the healthy, fox-hunting peerage represented by the lords and ladies of Piccadilly and Norman Abbey are immoral enough to place Byron in the pulpit if not the shrine where he sings his "Te Deums," offers himself as an example, and admonishes the reader, "'Read your Bible, sir, and mind your purse'" (I, ccxx).

Lord and Lady Amundeville need no advice to cherish their money. Their old Norman pedigree, still revered by "those who wander still / Along the last fields of that Gothic ground," is displayed in their estate, Norman Abbey, where Lord Henry's "good taste would go forth in / Its glory, through all ages shining sunny, / For Gothic daring shown in English money" (XVI, lix). Cleary Henry has not the old money; the

funds required by the "Gothic bricklayer of Babel, call'd an architect," to restore completely the abbey to this glory set the lawyers "busy on a mortgage." Byron finds, however, that things which are appropriate in church leave a feeling of soullessness in secular hands. Of strong and lasting chambers which speak of immortality and Heaven, Byron says, "I grant you in a church 't is very well" (V, lix). In "huge houses," however, "Perhaps there's nothing - I'll not say appals, / But saddens more by night as well as by day, / Than an enormous room without a soul" (V, lvi). As an abbey, the Amundeville home once displayed the height of "English Gothic beauty."[9] Norman Abbey once represented a sharing of the land in partnership with Christ. In the hands of the Amundevilles and their guests, the Fitz-Fulkes and Crabbies, Newstead, in giving the social measure through its property value, resembles most Jane Austen's Northanger Abbey. The Abbey, speaking now "more of baron than monk," is epic, and is given a Homeric catalog to demonstrate its enshrinement of religious and family history. Its grand arch speaks of the time when "the church was still Rome's," whereas the fallen saints speak of "the war which struck Charles from his throne" and the Byrons, as Royalists, fought for the Stuart kings (XIII, lxi). The Virgin's niche, where "even the faintest relics of shrine" awake "thoughts divine," the garden of saints and grotesqueries, the stained glass and armour are all

listed until Byron, sparing the reader "the furniture and the plate," abruptly ends the catalog.

The description of the abbey breaks off much as the poem itself will in the fragmentary Canto XVII. Juan's dreamy contemplation of the setting which thrilled Byron's youthful imagination is also suddenly interrupted by a sexual encounter with the Black Friar's Ghost. Juan, as a recherche guest and continental man of the world, is quite at home in Norman Abbey where breeding speaks to breeding. Feeling "somewhat pensive and disposed to contemplation rather than his pillow," Juan finds that the stained glass, high burning torches, and paintings of "grim knight and pictured saint" evoke thoughts of death and immutability. This is quite appropriate in a setting where "every tree is a tomb." From his boyish reveries Juan, who left Constantinople in drag, is precipitated into his strangest carnal escapade. In this setting, Byron, evoking images of himself as an adolescent in monk's cowl frolicking with male friends and servant girls, penetrates deeply into his memory and adds touches of the mother and the father he had never had much opportunity to know. All are orphans here, some in "the strictest sense" and "some of the heart." Aurora Raby needs mothering but Lady Amundeville is heartless: "her heart was vacant, though a splendid mansion" (XIV, lxxxv). Lady Fitz-Fulke, however, "was not at all poetic," but reads the "Bath Guide," (a novel by Christopher Anstey.) Byron's mother, of

course, went to Bath to find a husband and met Jack Byron. Catherine Gordon's corpulence, hot temper, and country ways would have made her a good candidate for a character in Anstey's novel. Aurora inspires in Juan "feelings which, perhaps ideal, / Are so divine" (XVI, cvii). As a Catholic, Juan finds Aurora acceptable as a mate. However, in the intimacy of the night amidst the artifacts and architecture of "all that time has left our fathers of the hall" (XVI, xvi) it is Lady Fitz-Fulke, dressed as the Black Friar, who winds her way into Juan's bed.

Juan, "in his nightgown which is an undress," lies alone and vulnerable in the echoing chambers of the old Abbey ("mistresses and mutability being terms synonymous") when yet another opportunity to fall presents itself. The Black Friar is a polymorphous, composite figure combining elements of the Gothic, the religious, father image, and femininity. According to the legend which Lady Adeline sings, the Black Friar appears by the lord's marriage and death beds as "the church's heir." This ghost is a figure of sin and death, chained to earth, requiring prayers for his soul. Seeing this deathly figure hovering in the darkness, with the sounds of "preternatural water" caused by the waterfall emptying itself into Newstead's lake, Juan's mouth and eyes gape open: "Were his eyes open? - Yes! and his mouth too . . . as if a long speech were to come." When the door opens and the moaning hinge "seem'd

to speak, / Dreadful as Dante's rhima," Byron's verse, in its sauciness and sexuality, is not far from Jack Byron's letters on his disappointing "pieces . . . wide as church doors."

Byron, mixing natural lakes and supernatural waters, fuses the natural world and the afterlife. Indeed, this ghost should be long departed. Playfully necrophilic and horrific, at this point Don Juan sounds like Burns's "Tam O'Shanter" in which the old sacred grounds still evoke primeval fears on riotous nights. Norman Abbey, like Northanger Abbey, lets in too much light through its low Gothic windows to keep people in the dark. The Black Frair is revealed to be, like Byron's last love, a married woman. With Juan reaching for the Black Friar but finding only the wall, Byron gives closure to the abbey, which had so imprinted itself into his imagination in boyhood, by a glimpse "through the casement's ivy shroud."

In satirizing the emblems of himself and his society, Byron outdoes Peacock in Nightmare Abbey. Taking "a post obit on eternity," Byron, in closing Don Juan, remembers the mute lyre which was to sound for him the late remorse of love in Childe Harold IV. Now it is a broken "trembling lyre" which presents the morning after. Juan, though old enough to withstand the overly intimate intrusions of the Friar, emerges the morning after with "a virgin face" more appropriate for the boy Byron or for Childe Harold. In the very last lines Don Juan is poignant

enough to echo The Eve of St. Agnes: Juan is back in cold reality,

> with eyes that hardly brook'd
> The light that through the Gothic window shone:
> Her Grace, too, had a sort of air rebuked -
> Seem'd pale and shiver'd, as if she had kept
> A vigil, or dreamt rather more than slept.
> (XVI, xiv)

If Childe Harold is concerned with shrines as thresholds to experience and vocation, Don Juan represents maturation. Byron spoke of all the churches he had "stared at . . . till my brains are like a guide-book" (Letters, vol. 5, 74) during the composition of Childe Harold IV for this was a poem which he "could not continue unless on the spot" (Letters, vol. 3, 168). Don Juan is all from memory. Childe Harold is open vistas and monuments; Don Juan utilizes close-ups and detail. By studying closer the realities of Regency society Byron created, as T.S. Eliot notes, his most successful character, Aurora Raby.[10] The self and its sacred memories are what are enshrined in the last verses of Byron's major work. The abbey is only cold stone but the narrator speaks, as Gleckner states, "in the accents of the human heart" with his gaze "level with life" (351, 330). The narration of Don Juan, though not exactly written in the style Wordsworth proposed, that is, in "the language really used by men," does reproduce the tones used by one particular man.

The reality of Newstead Abbey was not too far removed

from its fade at the conclusion of Don Juan, and the end of the poet's life was a strange mixture of elements drawn from Childe Harold and Don Juan. Byron, who calculated the profits from Newstead's sale in terms of regiments to support the cause of Greek Independence, contentedly wrote: "3,ooo,ooo francs more - thus I could (with what we should extract according to the usages of war) also keep on foot a respectable clan or sept or tribe or horde for sometime" (vol. 11, 47). He was pleased that the new owner, Colonel Wildman, was restoring Newstead in Lord Henry's "mix'd Gothic" decor. Byron, admiring Wildman's military service at Waterloo, was turning his thoughts to the final visionary dream, war in Greece. As always, Byron followed a medieval paradigm wherein "religious commitment and military activity" correlate both in architecture and action. In losing one shrine in the sale of Newstead, he gained another by supporting Greece financially with the proceeds and by expiring upon Grecian soil. As John Ash points out in A Byzantine Journey (1994), "one way to secure a shrine is to die there."[11]

Byron, in satirizing all the world in Don Juan, in a sense left himself no place to go. Everything was either profane or subject to decay. All Byron could spare from a Peer's grave were the vocations consecrated at earlier shrines: soldiering and poetising. A Peer's life is summed up in five verbs: "And having voted, dined, drank, gamed, and whored, / The family vault receives another lord" (XI,

lxxv). Byron felt that, provided poetical immortality was feasible in this fickle world, Don Juan would secure his literary reputation. Though only in his thirties, he was often preoccupied with death. Despite the romanticism inherent in death before one's purity is entirely lost, these concerns with mortality are partially an indication of Byron's neurology. In his last years, he feared "to die a'top" like Jonathan Swift. He often felt on the verge of an unexplained giddiness, and witnesses remarked that his hand shook when he fired his pistols in target practice, though he still hit the mark. Greece offered a fitting repository for his wasted body and a grand enshrinement of his memory. In starving his weight down to cut a more gallant figure in the military uniform he planned to wear in war, Byron hastened the death he was sure would come in Greece. Preferring to die "martially than marsh-ally," the hardened arteries, more common in octogenarians, that the doctors, performing Byron's autopsy, discovered, unfortunately insured the latter form of demise at Missolonghi. Seemingly pressed by some internal disturbance which was to openly manifest itself in physical and emotional convulsive fits in Ithaca, Byron envisioned a death in Greece worthy of the prophecy in Childe Harold IV, "When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall." Forming a reciprocal relationship with his enshrined nation, Byron declared, "'If Greece should fall I will bury myself in its ruins'" (Drinkwater, 3560).

Dying for Greece, of course, makes no sense in the context of Don Juan. Readers and friends, seeing Byron as a custodian of the sacred, expressed a preference for the inflated rhetoric of the old style. Pictorially, the small painting of the young lord standing in Gothic halls pointing to his heart had been replaced with the defiant exile kicking the dust of England with his boots, not exactly in the spirit that Jesus told his apostles to "shake off the dust under your feet" (Mark 6:10). The decision to go to Greece was crucial in Byron regaining the public's adulation; his death in Greece raised rhetorical acclamations, Regency and modern, to levels of religious devotion. Pietro Gamba declared him "the saviour of Greece," and "a delivering Angel," (The Late Lord Byron, 13) and Colonel Stanhope referred to him as "a Saint" (Howarth, 77). Though Doris Langley Moore goes in the opposite direction, naming the final chapter of Accounts Rendered "Down to Deeper Earth," the biographer John Drinkwater entitled the final chapter of his The Pilgrim of Eternity, "Apotheosis." In Julian and Maddalo, Shelley as Julian urges the Byronic Maddalo to become "the redeemer of his degraded country." Elizabeth Longford, referring to seven years of exile, presents Byron as Jacob: "He and Greece waited for one another like Jacob and Rachel for seven years" (120).

Despite his rejection of the Christian doctrine of redemption through Christ's suffering, Byron became some-

thing of a Christlike exemplum in choosing so publicly to support Greek independence. An anonymous poem, entitled Lord Byron Vindicated; or, Rome and her Pilgrim (1874), opens with the precept from The Gospel According to St. John: "Greater love hath no man than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (15:13) as Byron declares his willingness to die for Greece (Chew, 293). As Howard emphasizes, "one can't ask for more closure than martyrdom and sainthood" (Pilgrims and Writers, 291). The Turners view the pilgrim as ultimately "a moral unit" willing to rid the world of evil (8). Voluntary participation in a just war offered Byron an opportunity to secure remembrance and display remorse: "Byron imposed himself not so much through his writings as through his death in Missolonghi; a militant example which was so irrefutable that it could appear as a challenge as well as a token of remorse."[13] Despite the subtitle of his book, The Greek Adventure: Lord Byron and Other Eccentrics in the War of Independence, Howarth, who found in Byron's efforts in Greece "no tangible good," concedes that "outside of Greece, I suppose the death of Byron will always be remembered as the main event of the war" (13).

To serve Greece, whose golden precepts, Byron reminded his wife, preceded the coming of Christ, meant wearing revalued family and classical emblems or, in Fletcher's terms, miniature shrines, closer to his person and nearer to the heart. Lady Caroline Lamb had tried to negate the

Byron family motto, "Crede Byron," by having engraved, in 1816, on her servants' livery, "ne crede Byron." In 1823, Byron was firmly planted in sacred Grecian soil, defending with his pocketbook, if not his life, the shrine from the infidel Turks. He proved a combination of Knight Errant, Crusader, and soldier for hire, as his actions resulted in high flown praise and the usual derision. Wearing the Stewart tartan and a scarlet jacket "a la militaire" and the Byron arms emblazoned upon his Homeric helmet, he won the favor of the Philhellenes who were later to scoff at the idealist Shelley for never setting foot in Greece.[14] Vying with a Bourbon duke and Prince Eugene for the honorary title "king of Rome," Byron became the literary and metaphorical equal of the actual King of Rome, Napoleon's son.

As in everything else, Byron's feelings toward British philhellenism were very mixed. Yet, despite his reference to Stanhope's carrying over "'some high flown notions of the sixth form of Harrow or Eton'" (Letters, vol. 11, 83), Byron, like the youth in Don Juan, seemed afflicted "with a sort of dizziness" in his longings to rush into scenes of battle. Though mocking "Medals, ranks, ribands, lace embroidery, scarlet . . . things immortal to immortal man" (Don Juan, VII, lxxxiv), Byron in Greece surrounded himself with all the accoutrements of war and saints militant. William James points out the resemblance between religious fervour and the glory of battle in the

surreal pageantry which symbolizes the righteousness of a cause worthy to die for. As Howarth notes, "any skirmish in which a few aimless shots were fired and insults hurled at the enemy became in the European papers a second Marathon or Thermopylae" (50). Thus, expiring even "marsh-ally" in Missolonghi with all of Greece, past and present, metaphorically serving as the backdrop, enabled Byron to become an icon.

Pictorially, Byron has become an icon, of sorts. For example, an 1861 painting, "Byron Landing at Missolonghi," shows the poet receiving a blessing from the Bishop of Rogon while a young boy reaches out to touch him. Crosses on staffs and masts in the background surround the glorified figures. A contemporary print on sale at Newstead Abbey shows Byron on horseback with his faithful dog at his side as he gazes with only forlorn hope across the muddy plains of Missolonghi as if it held the grandeur and breadth of Marathon.

As fanciful as some of these images may seem, Byron's actual experiences in Greece ground such grandiose representations in reality. Like Juan, Byron encountered war orphans and provided for their welfare. Landing at Leghorn, he received a twenty-one gun salute, and his arrival at Missolongi was greatly celebrated. Though the remarkable shouts and cries which greeted his bedecked personage as he rode daily on Cephalonia may have stemmed more from the sense of riches he conveyed than from any

hopes of restoring Greece or Grecian values, his presence gave rise to tremendous feelings of hope. Someone recalled Byron on horseback bending to receive a draught of water from a peasant woman. This simple image recalls the thirsty Christ, and all those medieval knights receiving succor for their chivalry.

Byron's death in Greece placed the poet more firmly into a public shrine, though he realized himself that his death was something of a farce, perhaps like Don Juan, a mixture of the real and ideal as one entity. With the doctors hastening his end with excessive bleeding, with the servants weeping, and with a Babel of languages being spoken around him, Byron cried out, "'Oh questa e una bella scena'" (A Portrait, 458). Yet, his efforts on behalf of Greece very much follow his own precepts which began in Childe Harold but only reached maturation in Don Juan. On a starlit night at sea off the coast of Stromboli, Byron felt a surge of the Childe's pure longings to set this world right. Poised before the great shrine of Greece, the pyramidal Stromboli, whose volcano correlates with Byron's "poetry, which is the lava of the imagination," and whose pinnacled Chapel of the Crucified symbolizes sacrifice, Byron was still fitting his meditation to form. Greece, he declared, "had made me a poet," and before her shores he promised, in 1823 on a moonlit evening, "'If I live yet another year you will see this scene in a fifth canto of Childe Harold'" (Letters, vol. 11, 29).

Byron did not have another year to live. Even if he had, it is doubtful Childe Harold V would have seen publication. The author of Don Juan, however, was capable of separating the ideal values of the shrine and the practice of such values in reality, thus, paradoxically, uniting the two. Fighting against the label of "infidel," "a cold and chilling word," Byron admonished, "we must not look always too closely at the men who are to benefit by our exertions in a good cause, or God knows we shall seldom do much good in this world" (Letters, vol. 11, 32). Looking to serve this world, the realistic Byron often felt like the poet for hire in Don Juan who sings "The Isles of Greece" for lucre. Like Don Juan, which could only be written by a man "who has tool'd in a postchaise, in a hackney coach, in a gondola, against a wall, etc," "The Isles of Greece" required a songster who had knocked about the world a bit. The prosaic motivation for the gesture does not negate its usefulness in raising the fire of a dizzying patriotism.

Byron died a very human death. As Howarth posits, the heroism was in the human proportions of Byron's "lonely" demise. By dying "not gloriously but honorably and obscurely" on Missolonghi, Howarth states, Byron's death became "more probable and deserving of respect than the conscious heroism tradition ascribes to him" (157). Wanting his efforts to be taken seriously, Byron was of course upset by a letter from Thomas Moore suggesting

he was "in a delightful villa continuing Don Juan, while the public was picturing him saving wartorn Greece" (A Portrait, 447). As a final shrine of a physicalized pilgrimage, Greece gave Byron the opportunity to keep his word and, thus, in dying, prove his credo in Childe Harold: "I do believe . . . that there may be / Words which are things" (IV, cxiv).

Byron, "in War-paint" (Longford, 123), displayed in Greece both a metaphorical and literal example of selfless service, serving in word and body as a rallying or assembly point for new pilgrims. It was recorded that Byron in dying slowly called out, "'Forward - forward - courage - follow my example - don't be afraid'" (A Portrait, 458). With a respect for the physical which Shelley lacked but honored in Byron, he was willing in Greece to carry supplies across the soggy beach of Missolonghi in the rain when the proud Suliotes and townspeople refused to help. Ultimately, he followed his own command. In "On this Day I Complete My Thirty-Sixth Year," Byron, no longer seeking to implore for peace, ordered himself militantly:

> Seek out - less often sought than found -
> A soldier's grave, for thee the best;
> Then look around, and choose thy ground,
> And take thy rest.
>
> (38-40)

To the last, Byron, persisting in his attempt to answer his own questions and doubts about the capacities and durability of human clay ("Is that a temple where a God

may dwell?" Childe Harold II, v) pushed himself beyond the limits of his own endurance. By managing to expire for his classical shrine over the Greek Easter, Byron serendipitously accentuated his martydom and solemnized the event. In respect for "the great man" Easter celebrations were cancelled. The Greeks, realizing the value of this warrior's or saint's corpse, fought to keep the body which was now truly a relic. Failing to gain possession of the entire trophy, they settled for the lungs, which were interred in the church of San Spirdione.

English and American reaction to Byron's demise was more divided but its impact was profound. The disappointed Emerson wrote that "'His death should have furnished a page to this hungry time. A tremendous exit should have been the fitting tail-piece of his parting. Not an inglorious insignificant asthma or stomache-ache.'"[15] Mary Shelley provided the missing melodrama in The Last Man by sado-masochistically depicting "the mutilated lord" whose body is broken into "dear relics strewed" across the burning city of Constantinople (409, 414), perhaps to counter the earlier, profane death of the brain-scorched Glenarvon, whom Lady Lamb threw into the sea. Tennyson needed to physicalize the significance of the event in a spontaneously created primitive monument by writing "Byron is dead" upon a rock as if it signaled the end of an era if not Romanticism itself. Jane Welsh wrote to Thomas

Carlyle, "'Byron is dead. My god if they had said the sun or moon had gone out of the heavens, it could not have struck me with the idea of a more awful dreary blank of the Creation'" (Chew, 478).

The London Times obituary notice, dated May 15, 1824, dramatically declared, "'His dominion was the sublime . . .'" and that the manner of his death would "'impress the mind with profound and unmingled mourning'" (quoted in Accounts Rendered, 54). John Clare, who in a pathological confusion of identities was to add new cantos to Childe Harold, witnessed the funeral cortege and recorded how the common people "'felt by a natural impulse that the night was fallen and they mourned in saddened silence. The streets were lin'd as the procession passed on each side.'"[15] Clare described an unearthly feeling, like "'the breathing of eternity and the soul of time,'" as if Childe Harold or some mythicized figure had died and not a mortal British lord.

Like many a cult figure, Byron projected a powerful after image. An unwillingness to let go of the poet has given Hucknall Church and Newstead their Gothic moments. Byron's burial at Hucknall in the family vault under the floor in St. Mary Magdalene's church was by no means "the anticlerical" affair that Shelley's cremation in Italy became with John Trelawney presiding as pagan priest (Curl, 302). The setting at Hucknall speaks more of the Byron history and the usual dichotomy between the landholding

aristocracy and Lawrencian coalmining townspeople than of Byron himself. Byron is still granted preternatural powers. Byron's biographer, Doris Langley Moore, chose to wed at the shrine, despite the ominous outcome of Byron's marriage. When the vicar of St. Mary's witnessed the exhuming of the body in 1928 and was able to quell all rumors that the remains had been stolen, he recorded opening the casket "reverently, very reverently."[16] Washington Irving witnessed there a heavenly light "falling through the stained glass of a Gothic window," directly upon the floor marker placed over the vault. Sir Walter Scott claimed he saw the ghost of Lord Byron when he stayed at Newstead. As recently as Halloween 1995 a seance was held at Newstead, though no one can ascertain who or what was raised.

If Byron is something of a saintlike figure in these supernatural events, his rejection by Westminster Abbey points to a far more sinister view. Toward the end of his life, Byron had lowered his sights when it came to personal shrines. He wrote, "I should prefer a grey Greek stone over me to Westminster Abbey - a lease of my 'body's length' is all the land I should covet in that quarter" (Letters, vol. 10, 157). Posing as his valet, Fletcher, he wrote a facetious letter to Hobhouse announcing his death and burial "in the Jewish burying ground" in Venice (Letters, vol. 6, 44). Langley Moore, seeing the world, as Leslie Marchand said, through "Byronic eyes," felt that England's "homage in it most orthodox and formal shape" at West-

minster was unfitting for the unorthodox Byron. Samuel Rogers felt Byron would not have liked the company anyway. The grandiloquent aquatic procession down the Thames envisioned by Leicester Stanhope of course never materialized. In 1969, though, thirteen years after England's national shrine at Westminster acknowledged the agnostic Keats and the atheist Shelley, Byron received the very late remorse of love when a plaque was finally installed in his name. As MacCauley maintained, Byron, like Oscar Wilde, was needed as a periodic scapegoat to enforce British morality, and his sexual indiscretions required many years of ostracism before forgiveness could be procured.

Byron's whole life may be seen as a succession of sacramental placements into enshrined spaces. His childhood inheritance of Newstead's ruined walls, his investiture into the solid, classical building of the old House of Lords before it was rebuilt by Charles Barry, all those reverent meditations at shrines encountered on the Grand Tour and presented publicly and reverently in Harold and diabolically in Don Juan, his enshrined entry into Greece, and finally his burial in the family vault at Hucknall implicate Byron in a procession of shrines. From the day he took his seat in the House of Lords and sat angrily upon the benches reserved for opposition to his landing at Missolonghi, Byron was acutely ware of his positioning in space. Unlike the suggestion of a vertical succession of images at St. Peter's in Byron's feeling of upward movement or the

shafting down into reality and the family vault in Don Juan, these shrines associated with Byron's life offer a timeline of an individual existence. His burial vault, the Christian shrines he marked out for viewing in his poetry, and the columns upon which he inscribed his initials, though no longer the magnets for pilgrims as they have been in the past, still resonate with something of Byron's inimitable but diminishing presence.

Byron's shrines are still remembered, still evocative. Caroline Lamb claimed "that cattle walked out of their paddocks; women, children, pigs, wander after Glenarvon" (113). In the end she maintained they were emotionally sadly misguided. Robert Southey thought the misleading was poetical:

> Lord Byron had brought a stigma upon English literature . . . because he had set up for a pander-general to the youth of Great Britian as long as his writing should endure; because he had committed a high crime and misdemanour against society by sending forth a work in which mockery was mingled with horrors, filth with impiety, profligacy with sedition and slander.
> (quoted in The Late Lord Byron, 112)

This is clearly written in reference to Don Juan which struck out purposely and unduly hard at Southey. Yet Don Juan has secured for Byron his most permanent remembrance. Augusta Leigh's literal enshrinement at Hucknall of Byron as Childe Harold seems out of date. The fame of Don Juan and the letters which parallel so closely its conversational

tone are more pertinent to the modern day assessment of Byron's life work.

The shrines Byron appropriated for his private legend still bear his initials though some are as dubious as Juan thought Becket's bones. In the nineteenth century pilgrims rutted Byron's footsteps deeper into continental soil. Visitors to the Castle of Chillon often paid more attention to Byron's graffiti than to the history of Bonnivard. Melville found remembrance of Byron even in the water: he recorded in his travel journal upon seeing the Hellespont that "a long swim had Leander and Byron." Whether the American author was being serious or droll, Byron's great fame made this a viable observation. Lacking Byron's charismatic presence, these imprints fade. When Nick McCann, a Nottingham artist, swam the Hellespont and the Grand Canal in Venice in Byron's honor in 1989, saying, "As I kick my legs and thrust out my arms, I can feel his presence with me," he represented perhaps more the lunatic fringe than the literati or the average man.

Byron's political and literary shrines still carry validity. Byron was made an honorary citizen of Greece and presidents of Greece have attended special services at Hucknall to honor Byron as a philhellenist. Byron's cenotaph in The Zappion Gardens, Athens depicts the the poet embraced in the arms of Lady Greece, a figure who seems to represent liberty, classicism, and death. Though perhaps too melodramatic for modern taste, it

stands a template to inspire the kind of action Byron adored and prompts local tour guides to declare the poet, "Our Byron." Missolonghi, with its ubiquitous Byron iconography, serves as a Byron shrine. "The Garden of Heroes" displays two statues, streets and restaurants bear his name and shops display etchings and paintings of Byron's landing. Like Suger, Byron did get his image in stained glass upon sanctified ground at St. Mary's in Hucknall. He appears with his Grecian profile and reddish curly hair as a visitant to Christ's birth in Bethlehem. This commemoration, however, has little to do with literature or Greece. Here the honor is to George Gordon, the sixth Lord Byron of Rochdale. The abbey at Newstead, the biggest tourist draw associated with Byron, came back to him. Long after his death, though owned by the city of Nottingham, it is advertised on the signpost and all the gift shop commemoratives as the home of the poet, Byron.

Footnotes

[1] quoted in Michael Cooke, The Blind Man Traces the Circle (Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton UP, 1969) 144.

[2] Leslie A. Marchand, Byron's Poetry (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 1968) 2.

[3] Steve Ellis, "The Prophecy of Byron," Dante and English Poetry (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985) 43.

[4] "William J. Donnelly, "Byron and Catholicism," Byron and Scotland (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1989) 4450, 48.

[5] John Jump, Byron (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972) 62.

[6] Edward Strickland, "Boxer Byron: A Claire Obsession," The Byron Journal 17 (1989) 57-76, 69.

[7] Ronald A. Schroeder, "Ellis, Saint-Palaye, and Byron's 'Addition to the Preface' of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage I-II," The Keats-Shelley Journal) 32 (1983) 25-30, 26.

[8] Charles Morgan, The Life of Michelangelo (New York: Reynal and Company, 1960) 224.

[9] Ralph Adams Cram, The Ruined Abbeys of Great Britain (New York: The Churchman Co., 1905) 160.

[10] T.S. Eliot, "Byron," On Poetry and Poets, 1937; London: Faber and Faber, 1990, 30-41.

[11] John Ash, A Byzantine Journey (New York: Random House, 1995) 60.

[12] Hugh Kennedy, Crusader Castles (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994) 50.

[13] Robert Escarpit, "Byron and France," Byron's Political and Cultural Influence in Nineteenth-Century Europe: A Symposium, ed. Paul Graham Trueblood (Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1981) 48-58, 49.

[14] Jennifer Wallace, "'We are All Greeks?': National Identity and the Greek War of Independence," The Byron Journal 23 (1995) 36-49, 41.

[15] quoted in Pamela Gilbert, ""To Sing in Horror, to

Laugh in Hell': Byron's Influence on Emerson's Poetry," The Byron Journal 23 (1995) 50-62, 53.

[16] "A Short Guide to the Parish Church of S. Mary Magdalene Hucknall" (Ramsgate: The Church Publishers, 1989) 24.

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