



**BYRON,
TIME AND SPACE**

**Proceedings
of the 43rd International Byron Conference
Yerevan, 29 June – 4 July, 2017**

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Ivan (Hovhannes) Aivazowsky (1817 - 1900), “Byron’s Visit to the Mekhitarists on the Island of San Lazzaro”.

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INTRODUCTION

The 43rd International Byron Conference conference “Byron, Time and Space” was held at Yerevan State University, 29 June – 4 July, 2017, to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Lord Byron’s visits to the Armenian convent on the island of St Lazarus in Venice.

Great English poet George Gordon Byron (1788-1824) first encountered the Armenian reality at the end of 1816 – beginning 1817 when he met the clerical intelligentsia of the Mechitarist Congregation on the island of St. Lazarus. Since that time close cooperation between them began which played an important role in the history of the Armenian-English literary links and made an important contribution to the field of Armenology.

At the Armenian monastery of St. Lazarus Lord Byron took up the study of the Armenian language and acquainted himself with the Armenian culture and history. In 1817, Byron, with his Armenian language teacher, Father Harutjun Avgerian, published an English-Armenian Grammar textbook for the use of Armenians, which was followed by an Armenian-English Grammar textbook for English speaking students. In the preface, intended for the latter, Byron wrote: “It would be difficult, perhaps, to find the annals of a nation less stained with crimes than those of the Armenians, whose virtues have been those of peace, and their vices those of compulsion. But whatever may have been their destiny – and it has been bitter – whatever it may be in future, their country must ever be one of the most interesting on the globe; and perhaps their language only requires to be more studied to become more attractive. If the Scriptures are rightly understood, it was in Armenia that Paradise was placed”. Thus Byron noted his admiration for Armenia and its culture in a manner that would last forever.

The organizers of the conference express their gratitude to the International Association of Byron Societies (IABS) for the help and assistance in organizing the 43rd International Byron Conference in Yerevan.

The present volume of Proceedings “Byron, Time and Space” comprises selected atticles written by the participants of the 43rd International Byron Conference on the basis of their papers delivered at the Conference.

Lord Byron: “The bodiless thought? The Spirit of each spot” Versus Time and Space

Naji B. Oueijan

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The Romantic poets’ search for that which lies outside the domain of space and time translates their craving for contemplating the path for higher Truth beaming through their visionary sensibility, which George Poulet believes is geared towards “a rediscovery of the mysteries of the world, a more vivid sentiment of the wonders of nature, a more acute consciousness of the enigmas of the self” [8, p. 25]. These visionary moments of mental and spiritual elevation transcend “Time” and “Space” to liberate Self from its ephemeral physical form to experience glimpses of concealed Truth. In this presentation, however, I argue that Lord Byron’s search for Truth is quite different than his contemporaries’; instead of going beyond the domains of time and space/place, he invades them to achieve mental illumination through an on-the-spot physical, spiritual, and intellectual participation with Other. Known as the least visionary among other Romantic poets, Byron seeks the living spirits of times and places, historical and contemporary, and employs his sharp imaginative powers to consciously achieve what he calls in *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* “The bodiless thought? The Spirit of each spot” [5, III, l. 705]. Consciously invading special times and spaces is also for Byron an act of self-discovery and a process of unmasking the realities of Other. Here one cannot deny the fact that Byron’s mobility in real times and spaces/places are primary sources of his poetic contemplation, inspiration, and creation.

Schelling describes self-illuminating moments as “the sudden brightening and illumination of consciousness”; Goethe considers them as “the flash of now...the center”; Wordsworth asserts that they are “attendant

gleams” or “spots of time”; Coleridge regards them as the visionary moments; Shelley observes them as “visitations of divinity”; and Keats sees them as moments of “Beauty and Truth.” George Poulet explains that the untying of the enigmas of Self is done by liberating it from the limitations of Time; he writes: “As we are living in duration, it is not permitted to us to have anything but glimpses, disconnected reminiscences, of this immense treasure stored in a remote place in our soul” [8, p. 37]. Herbert Schueller further explains that “The infinite Power of the universe transcends the mechanical, the physical, the sensuous; man is in mystical harmony with the universe, and through this harmony he in security derives a knowledge of the universe which is its truth” [9, p. 72]. This attempt by the Romantics, continues Schueller, is intended “to transcend the mundane and the human, even though the human mind is the agency by which this transcendence must be achieved; the difficulty is that the only agency which the human mind has for transcending itself is itself” [9, p. 72]. Lord Byron never transcends the “mundane and human”; he emerges in both through the conscious function of his mind. He becomes aware of the powerful function of the mind in perceiving Truth. In *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*, as Harold travels in nature, he meditates and his “conscious Reason” projects the truth of his early youth’s “maddest whim”; but “as he gazed on truth his aching eyes grew dim” [5, Canto I, Stanza 27]. Byron is also aware of the significance of space and time and their influences on the mind. In another Canto, Byron shows the impact of the Rhine on his mind:

*The mind is colour'd by thy every hue;
 And if reluctantly the eyes resign
 Their cherish'd gaze upon thee, lovely Rhine!
 'Tis with the thankful glance of parting praise;
 More mighty spots may rise, more glaring shine,
 But none unite in one attaching maze
 The brilliant, fair, and soft,—the glories of old days.
 [5, Canto III, Stanza 60]*

Here Byron sees through his mind the present hues of the Rhine and the glories of the past. Here space's impact on the mind is directly related to what Byron calls "mobility," which he defines in *Don Juan*, in a footnote to Canto 16, Stanza 144, "as an excessive susceptibility of immediate impression—at the same time without *losing* the past" [5]. This mental movement between the present and past, both determined by specific times and places, translates Byron's mobility, an ability to live the past and the present while on-the-spot. Again in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, he writes:

*I can repeople with the past—and of
The present there is still for eye and thought,
And meditation chasten'd down, enough,
And more, it may be, than I hoped or sought.
[5, Canto IV, Stanza 19, ll. 163–65].*

To repeople with the past one merge in past times and spaces and become one with the dynamic spirit of ancient people without losing, as he claims above, his eye on present relics. Also in Canto II, of *Childe Harold Pilgrimage*, Byron addresses Athena:

*Here let me sit upon this massy stone,
The marble column's yet unshaken base;
Here, son of Saturn! was thy fav'rite throne:
Mightiest of many such! Hence let me trace
The latent grandeur of thy dwelling-place.
[5, Canto II, Stanza 10, ll. 82–86]*

Sitting on the ancient throne of Zeus, Byron connects ancient Greece with its grandeur which could not be defaced by "Time" to the present. He

recreates the living experience of the past in the present through his imaginative and intellectual power and not through a vision or dream. For Byron poetry is not the spontaneous but the conscious “over flow of powerful feelings” and thoughts at special times and places. Poetry then is a process of perceiving truth by willfully participating with specific places and times, when self-centeredness is annihilated to project the hidden realities of Man. This is what Byron means by poetic mobility, which Harold Bloom elegantly explains when he writes:

Byron’s social version of the Romantic term “Imagination,” for mobility also reveals itself “in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities [here past and present]: of sameness, with difference; the individual, with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness, with old familiar objects [here the ancient relics].” The Great Romantic contraries – emotions and order, judgment and enthusiasm, steady self-possession and profound or vehement feeling – all find their balance in the quality of mobility [2, p. 107].

Jerome McGann, writes: “Byron’s most profound presentation of his idea of Romantic mobility comes, as we might expect, when he draws himself and his own practice into analysis” [7, 42]; in other words, when Byron expresses his on-the-spot experiences in aesthetic forms. Albert Gerard confirms: “It is from the poetic experience so conceived that all romantic thinking on life, art, and the universe ultimately derives” [6, 261]. This is why Byron chose to experience several places and times in his life. His major poetic themes were places, geographic and historical places such as England, France, Italy, Greece, and Turkey and sites and cities, which he actually visited.

No one can deny that at the core of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* and *Don Juan* lies the journey motif with minute records of impressions acquired through the poet’s conscious immersion in the corporal and spiritual aspects of those places at specific times. In this sense, Lord Byron differs from his peers; he employs both the human mind, its intellectual and

imaginative faculties, without losing touch with the conscious time and space. Here, self becomes keenly conscious of itself and all around it, a process that makes a lot of sense to other Romantic poets, who unlike Byron distrusted the truth of reason in favor of the visionary truth created by mere imagination. Byron trusted both, and this is what makes him special. To him, man's real existence could not be measured except by units of Time and Space. To him, spiritual existence is in a constant search for Truth, which is bulged in both real human beings, such as his mother, his wife, his sister, his daughter besides several historical leaders and people he met during his travels, and in tangible Nature such as the mountains, oceans, grooves, etc. and all at specific times and places.

For Byron the movement away from a sensuous reality is a movement away from real reality. Wordsworth's dream of the Arab Bedouin in Book V of *The Prelude*, Coleridge's poetic dreams in "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," and "Kubla Khan," Shelley's poet's dream in *Alaster; or, The Spirit of Solitude*, and Keats's visions in *The Fall of Hyperion: A Dream* are the best manifestations of a process that sets the poet on a visionary pilgrimage towards self-awareness. Here, the visionary traveler constructs visionary times and spaces. But to Lord the term, "vision," is used ironically and sarcastically in his "The Vision of Judgment" to project the realities of his times in England. He also employs the phrase, "visionary gleams," in a humorous manner in his *Don Juan*, Canto VI, Stanza, 78, when he describes Juanna's dream of the forest and the falling apple stung by a bee in a very sarcastic manner.

Edward E. Bostetter rightly confirms: "The external world is the ultimate reality for him [Lord Byron]. His poetry abounds with the mountains, seas, and infinite spaces of the physical universe. But he was skeptical of the visionary experience and had little or nothing to do with it" [3, Online]. Being on-the-spot for Byron meant absorbing the minute specters of reality. To our poet all existence, has a *single* comprehensive design, one which is intended to unveil the truth of life; so to understand himself and the world, he dives into various spaces and times and perceives the analogy of his existing Self with those times and places.

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On Co-Existence of Antipode Time and Space Backgrounds in Poetry

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Time and Space. Ah, what a familiar pair of terms! There are tons of books written about them, and so many philosophical debates have been spinning around them. A true endless topic, which at some point (in Time and Space) has been touched by an international conference dedicated to George Gordon Lord Byron. The people there would like to share their knowledge, their theories and observations on how did Lord Byron reflect the conjunction between Time and Space in his works, or, maybe, in his life. And this is when and where we are now.

Now, due to some favourable conditions (or as they say, right time, right place) the announcement reached someone who had not yet participated in any of the past events organized by the Byron Societies by that time, but who was immediately caught by the idea of contributing his mite.

So, here I am, starting my short report about my vision of Byron's relations with Time and Space concepts. I am happy to know that the audience here includes not only the specialists in Literature, but also those who work in the fields of History, Mathematics, so I hope that Computer Engineering would fit this company the best!

In order to increase the rate of interest (and, obviously, risk) I would like to say that the topic the above-mentioned computer engineer is going to present to you today deals with... music, its song incarnation, to be more precise. Now, this is the moment when this becomes interesting: Byron, time and space, songs. Is there anything in common between all these? Well, having already witnessed so many interesting speeches so far, we should not have any doubts about the former keywords. But... songs?

What songs? The very song that was playing during the reception yesterday, so you might have already realized it was '*She Walks in Beauty*' accompanied by some musical background.

In fact, this short lyrical poem in iambic tetrameter has been inspiring various composers for many decades, including Roger Quilter, Gerald Finzi, Isaac Nathan, and many others. Contemporary composers also provide their sonic visions from time to time. At some point, yours truly realized that he also could add his point of view to the cannon. And so, that version was produced for this conference.

When working on it, I neither tried to approach the essence of my version to the concept of our conference, nor did I try to map the Time and Space concept onto the structure of the song, or affect its emotional component. However, when everything was done, I got back to the title of our conference. I played the recording once again, and that was the very moment when I applied to participate with my paper. But before that, I had just to spend an extra hour in the studio with my brilliant sound engineer to add the last minor (but important!) touch to the recording – the non-musical Intro and Outro, consisting of ambient soundscapes reproducing people voices and laughter, sound of steps, bottles and glasses, and anything else one can hear at a party.

I bet you are still curious about how this will find its way out, aren't you? Let's go back (through Time and Space!) into 1813. It is said that the creation of this poem was inspired by a real event from the life of Byron – a ball, during which our hero met his cousin by marriage through Sir Robert John Wilmot-Horton, Mrs. Anne Beatrix Wilmot (some sources claim it took place not in 1813 but rather in 1814, and even provide the exact date – the 11th of June). Different theory exists suggesting that the subject of the poem could have been Byron's half-sister, Augusta Maria Leigh. Whoever she was, let's not focus on that and imagine just a woman, someone who gained Byron's attention. The story tells she was wearing a black dress set with spangles because of being in mourning, hence are the opening lines:

*She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes;
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.*

And so, Byron was so amazed at her unusual beauty that the next morning the poem was written.

Now, let's get back into 2017, when a fellow non-native English speaker computer engineer decides to do a poll, and involves as many participants as possible asking them to answer just one question, quite obvious one, with no pitfalls hidden: "What '*She Walks in Beauty*' poem is about?". Naturally, some of the participants read the poem for the first time in their lives, which made my experiment even more pure and challenging. Let's imagine them writing down their answers right now, and while they are working on it, let's continue reading that beautiful short poem.

*One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express,
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.*

*And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!*

The poll results were roughly divided in two groups. One group (slightly greater in number) claimed that “in this poem a beautiful woman is described”, while the other was also correct suggesting that “this poem describes a man seeing a beautiful woman”.

The expanded answers from the former group were based on the comprehension of how something timeless and universally perfect could be depicted. The people specially mentioned the descriptions of physical, spiritual and intellectual features of one real woman, who existed in Byron’s life and who appeared during one of his real-life events. “That is what Present Simple Active Voice is used for – to immortalize her particular nature into the eternity”, some of them added, which seemed interesting to me as a non-native English speaker.

At the same time, the representatives from the second group had seen the vivid picture of a storyteller (probably, Byron himself) seeing a beautiful woman in some particular place and at some particular moment. The essence of this point of view was swirled up when some of them noted that the poem (and the story about writing the poem) does not clearly say if she passed by him (meaning that that was a continuous process in Time and Space) or she had just appeared during a fracture of a second somewhere in the hall (meaning that we deal with insignificantly short period of time and absolutely undefined position in space). Still that almost immaterial momentary image had ignited his imagination allowing him to extrapolate his knowledge about her inner beauty – and her state of mind as well. Finally, some of them said that probably such an ethereal and perfect character got then materialized in some of Byron’s contemporaries (and that is why different points of view exist on who she actually was).

It is interesting to note here, that the representatives of both groups were absolutely comfortable with the comparisons Byron uses and the associations they bring. Yet, their Time and Space backgrounds are different in principle.

Now, what did the musician get from the poll results? It wouldn’t be easy

to describe. Frank Zappa once said, and I quote, '*writing about music is like dancing about architecture*'. However, I will need to conclude now, so I'll take my chance.

The main theme revolves around some pivotal basic chord (the song is in G major key, if anyone is interested), with comfortable resolution (in C major). Short harmonic semi-tone deviations just add symbolic shake to bring the listener out of the static flow of the melody, instrumental and vocalize intermissions lead into the last verse, and then the song fades out into the above-mentioned ambience sound effect – the same territory where it appeared from. That was the point of adding those Intro and Outro sections – to make an accent on the permanent existence of the musical theme there, somewhere, in no particular location in the Universe, and its appearance wherever it would be played for eight minutes and fourteen seconds of its playing time, which is actually just a glance if we compare that period with the Eternity. Just like that woman who appeared in front of our Lord Byron.

So, to conclude, from the musician's point of view, giving a new sonic form to this particular poem was a true challenge for me. What kept me through the whole working process, supporting and inspiring, was a clear perception of the fact that the urge to create a personal sonic revision of this beautiful poem arrived from no other source but the poem itself. I hope that by trying not to spoil the lyrical purity, I subconsciously achieved the same balance between those antipode bases of Time and Space concepts in my music.

Byron's Armenian Times and Spaces: Byron and the Armenians

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Byron's Armenian times and spaces began in November 1816 when he first came to the Armenian monastery on the island of St. Lazarus in Venice and established close contacts with the members of the Armenian congregation of Mekhitarists. Being impressed by the level of their knowledge and by the work they did for the enlightening of the Armenian nation, he got interested in the Armenian language and culture and began to pay regular visits to the island of St. Lazarus where in the library of the Armenian monastery he studied the Armenian language and consequently the Armenian history and culture.

Byron's interest in the Armenian language was not a coincidence. Attending different countries Byron displaced special interest towards the history and culture of their people. Byron's attitude towards national languages and national cultures is well expressed in Childe Harolde's Pilgrimage, where he writes:

*I've taught me other languages – and in strange eyes
Have made me not a stranger... (IV, 8-10)*

The friars of the Armenian monastery of St. Lazarus belonged to the Armenian Order of Mekhitarists – an Armenian religious (Catholic) and cultural organization, founded by the Armenian scholar and statesman prelate Mechitar Sebastatsi (1676-1749) in 1700, in Constantinople. In 1706, the Congregation moved to Methoni (Greece) and in 1717 settled down in Venice on the Island of St. Lazarus.

The Armenian Order of Mekhitarists was one of the principle centers of Armenian culture and for its intense scientific and literary activity was granted the title of the Academy of Science by Napoleon in 1810. This role of the Armenian monastery as one of the principle centers of Armenian culture was recognized by George Byron himself. In his letter to John Murray on December 4, 1816 Byron wrote: “They have an establishment here – a church and convent of seventy monks, very learned and accomplished men, some of them. They also have a press, and make great efforts for the enlightening of their nation”. In the same letter he also wrote about his studies of the Armenian language: “I wrote to you at some length last week, so that I have little to add, except that I had begun, and am proceeding in a study of the Armenian language, which I aquire as well as I can, at the Armenian convent, where I go every day to take lessons of a learned friar, and have gained some singular and not useless information with regard to the literature and customs of that oriental people... I find the language, (which is twin, the literal and the vulgar) difficult, but not invincible (at least I hope not). I shall go on. I found it necessary to twist my mind round some severer study, and this, as being the hardest I could devise here, will be a file for the serpent” [2, p.137].

Speaking about his studies of the Armenian language Byron wrote to Thomas Moore (5 December 1816): “By way of divertisement, I am studying daily, at an Armenian monastery, the Armenian language. I found that my mind wanted something craggy to break upon; and this – as the most difficult thing I could discover here for an amusement – I have chosen, to torture me into attention. It is a rich language, however, and would amply repay any one the trouble of learning it. I try and shall go on...”[2, p.130-131].

At the Armenian monastery of St. Lazarus Byron studied Armenian under the guidance of his Armenian language teacher Harutiu Avgerian (Father Pascal). In his letters Byron speaks about his Armenian language teacher with great warmth and respect. On 27 December 1816 he wrote to Murray:”I am going on with my Armenian studies in a morning, and

assisting and stimulating in the English portion of an English and Armenian grammar now publishing at the Convent of St Lazarus. The Superior of the Friars is a bishop and a fine old fellow, with the beard of a meteor. My spiritual preceptor, pastor and master, Father Paschal, is also a learned and pious soul – he was two years in England” [2, p.152].

Byron studied the Armenian language not only because he wanted to “to twist his mind round some severer study” but also because he was interested in Armenian culture, in studying Armenian history and literature and translating Armenian texts. According to Peter Cochran, “Byron was, on closer acquaintance, still more impressed by the age and continuity of the civilisation of which the monks were the modern guardians. He examined in greater detail the ancient manuscripts which they possessed” [6, p.4]. On 5 December 1816 Byron wrote to Thomas Moore: “There are some very curious MSS in the monastery, as well as books; translations also from Greek originals, now lost, and from Persian and Syriac etc; besides works of their own people. Four years ago the French instituted an Armenian professorship. Twenty-pupils presented themselves on Monday morning, full of noble ardour, ingenuous youth, and impregnable industry. They persevered, with a courage worthy of the nation and of universal conquest, until Thursday; when fifteen of the twenty succumbed to the six-and-twentieth letter of the alphabet. It is, to be sure, a Waterloo of an alphabet – that must be said for them” [2, p.130-131].

Byron worked hard with H. Avgerian on the English - Armenian grammar textbook and financially supported its publication. He also assisted H. Avgerian in composition of Grammar Armenian and English for the English speaking students. On 2 January 1817 he wrote to Murray: “In another sheet I send you some sheets of a grammar, English and Armenian, for the use of the Armenians, of which I promoted and indeed induced the publication (it cost me but a thousand francs of French livres). I still pursue my lessons in the language, without any rapid progress, but advancing a little daily. Padre Paschal, with some little help from me as a translator of his Italian into English, is also

proceeding in an MS grammar for the English acquisition of Armenian, which will be printed also when written. We want to know if there are any Armenian types or letterpress in England, at Oxford, Cambridge or elsewhere? You know I suppose that many years ago the two Whistons published in England an original text of a History of Armenia with their own Latin translation. Do these types still exist? & where? Pray enquire among your learned acquaintance. When this grammar (I mean the one now printing) is done, will you have any objection to take 40 or 50 copies which will not cost in all above five or ten guineas, and try the curiosity of the learned with the sale of them. Say yes or no as you like. I can assure you that they have some very curious books and Ms, chiefly translations from Greek originals now lost. They are besides a much respected and learned community, and the study of their language was taken up with great ardour by some literary Frenchmen in Buonaparte's time" [2, p.156].

In 1817 "Grammar English and Armenian" text-book for Armenians was published and some of its copies were sent to England. On 8 June 1817 Byron wrote to Murray: "The present letter will be delivered to you by two Armenian friars, on their way, by England, to Madras. They will also convey some copies of the grammar, which I think you agreed to take. If you can be of any use to them, either amongst your naval or East Indian acquaintances, I hope you will so far oblige me, as they and their order have been remarkably attentive and friendly towards me since my arrival at Venice. Their names are Father Sukias Somalian and Father Sarkis Teodorosian. They speak Italian, and probably French, a little English. Repeating earnestly my recommendatory request, believe me very truly, yours, Byron. Perhaps you can help them to their passage, or give or get them letters for India" [6, p.358].

In 1819 "Grammar Armenian and English" was published (reprinted in 1832 and 1873). Byron also helped in the compilation of the English Armenian dictionary, which was published by H. Avgerian with the assistance of John Brand in 1821. In the preface to the dictionary it was written: "After the publication in our establishment at Venice of

Armenian Dictionaries for the French and Italian languages, there still remained the arduous task of completing a similar work in English and Armenian. We were aware of the importance of such a Dictionary to the interests of our nation... But as our College at San Lazzaro has in its literary enterprises always needed the assistance of benefactors, so in this important undertaking it required aid and encouragement from without. Such aid and encouragement it has found in the kindness of some English gentlemen. Among these we are proud to name, Lord Byron, the most distinguished of the English poets even in the present splendid age of English poetry, who, after having studied Armenian among us, induced us to publish a short Armenian Grammar of the English tongue for the use of Armenians, and also assisted us in the composition of the English grammar of the Armenian tongue for the use of his own countrymen” [4, p.7].

In 1870 the Mekhitarists compiled Byron’s translations from Armenian in a collection entitled *Lord Byron’s Armenian Exercises and Poetry* (in Armenian and English) along with separate extracts from his letters and pieces from his poetry (reprinted in 1907). The collection of Byron’s translations from the Armenian published by the Mekhitarists included pieces from a History of Armenia by Movses Khorenatsi, a piece of Nerses of Lambron’s synodical discourse as well as two Epistles – the Epistle of the Corinthians to Paul and the Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, which were not to be found in the English Bible but were found in the Armenian Bible [5, p.21-61].

The above mentioned volume of Byron’s works published by the Mekhitarists also included his preface intended for the “Armenian - English grammar”. In the preface Byron wrote the following about the Armenian convent of St. Lazarus: “At this period I was much struck – in common, I believe, with every other traveler – with the society of the Convent of St. Lazarus, which appears to unite all the advantages of the monastic institution, without any of its vices. The neatness, the comfort, the gentleness, the unaffected devotion, the accomplishments, and the virtues of the brethren of the order, are well fitted to strike the man of the

world with the conviction that there is another and a better even in this life”. The allusion to these lines appears on the monastery’s exterior wall: “The visitor will be convinced that there are other and better things even in this life”.

Speaking about the monks of the Armenian monastery of St Lazarus Byron characterized them as “the priesthood of an oppressed and a noble nation”. On the political and social condition of the Armenian nation he wrote: “It would be difficult, perhaps, to find the annals of a nation less stained with crimes than those of the Armenians, whose virtues have been those of peace, and their vices those of compulsion. But whatever may have been their destiny – and it has been bitter – whatever it may be in the future their country must ever be one of the most interesting in the globe; and perhaps their language only requires to be more studied to become more attractive. If the Scriptures are rightly understood, it was in Armenia that Paradise was placed – Armenia, which has paid as dearly as the descendants of Adam for that fleeting participation of its soil in the happiness of him who was created from its dust. It was in Armenia that the flood first abated, and the dove alighted. But with the disappearance of Paradise itself may be dated almost the unhappiness of the country; for though long a powerful kingdom, it was scarcely ever an independent one, and the satraps of Persia and the pachas of Turkey have alike desolated the region where God created man in his own image” [2, p.157n; 5, p. 4-10].

As Christopher Walker argues, though the preface was intended for the Armenian grammar, “it was not used since Father Pasquale objected to its anti-Turkish tone. For us, it is hard to see why” [5, p. 33]. Peter Cochran gives the following explanation: “Flattering as it was to Armenia, and to Father Avgerian, whose assertion about Paradise it repeats, and whose history lessons it echoes, this post-Waterloo rhetoric went too far for the community, who needed to keep on the good side of both Turkish and Austrian authorities if they were to survive. If Napoleon had approved of them when he was in control of Venice, what might not the Austrians do to them by way of revenge, now that he was thousands of miles away in

the South Atlantic? The Whiggish gesture – easy for an English nobleman to make – was too dangerous for the monks” [6, p. 12]. However, the Mekhitarists published the English text of the preface with its Armenian translation in 1870 in the above mentioned collection of Byron’s works *Lord Byron’s Armenian Exercises and Poetry* [5, p. 4-10].

The contacts with the Armenian friars on the Island of St. Lazarus, the study of the Armenian language and the ancient Armenian texts and manuscripts left a great impact on Byron and that influence was reflected in his literary works, especially in *Manfred* [6, pp. 5-6]. The impact of the meetings with H. Avgerian on Byron’s views and thoughts can be seen in the following lines from his *Detached Thoughts* written in 1822: “... my master the Padre Pasquale Aucher ... assured me “that the terrestrial Paradise had been certainly in Armenia” – I went seeking it – God knows where – did I find it? – Umph! – Now & then – for a minute or two” [3, p. 13; 8, p. 34].

In 1823, before leaving Italy for Greece, he for the last time visited his Armenian friends at the Armenian Monastery of St. Lazarus, including H. Avgerian and S. Somalian, and the poet’s farewell with them was very touching [7, p.396]. Led by his romantic love for liberty Byron left for Greece to struggle for the national liberation of the Greek people. He died in Greece, on April 19, 1824, at the age of 36.

“What was Byron’s role in the destiny of the Armenian people?”, – asks Christopher Walker in his book “Visions of Ararat”. What Byron did for the succeeding generations of Armenians, – he writes, – “was to open the door in Europe to the idea of ending serfdom in the east, especially for the non-Turkish peoples of the Ottoman empire, hitherto religious flocks and now becoming national communities. He gave a western articulation to the aspirations of the Greeks, and by extension to those of other Ottoman nationalities. He showed that they were real people with real aspirations” [8, p.35].

It would be difficult to name a European poet who had a closer

relationship with Armenian culture than Byron. His works were translated into Armenian in different times and different places. Child Harold's IV canto was translated into Armenian by Ghevond Alishan under the title "Italia" and published in Venice in 1860 (reprinted in 1889, 1891, 1901). In 1840-1850-ies Armenian translations of some Byron verses were published in Armenian periodicals in Calcutta by Mesrop Taghiadian. In 1857 the Armenian translation of the Prisoner of Chillon was published in Shamakhy (translator Movses Zohrapeants). More translations were done at the end of the XIX century – beginning of the XX century. The geography of these translations is very wide – from Calcutta to Moscow, from Tbilisi to Constantinople. Among Byron's Armenian translators was famous Armenian writer and poet Hovhannes Toumanian, as well as the author of Shakespeare's Armenian translations Hovhannes Masehian. They, as well as other Armenian poets, writers, translators and scientists provided substantial basis for the development of Byron Studies in Armenia.

Many Armenian poets were influenced by Byron's romantic, freedom-loving poetry. Among them was Hovhannes Toumanian who in 90- s even took English lessons with the aim of reading Byron and Shakespeare in original. This period of Toumanian's interest in Byron is called Byronic. He translated "The Prisoner of Chillon", and some other pieces of his works, including "Child Harold's Pilgrimage " and "Manfred". The separate edition of the Armenian translation of "The Prisoner of Chillon" published in Tiflis in 1896 opened with Hov. Toumanian's poem consisting of 10 lines and devoted to Byron. In it he showed that not Bonnivard's political struggle, but the history of his soul full of suffering was described in the poem and the character of the hero became the symbol of freedom and struggle against tyranny. In his ode *To Byron* Hov. Toumanian characterized Byron as "so great a genius" and "grand poet" and glorified him as a friend of peoples fighting for freedom. It is no wonder that in the inscription on the exterior wall of the Armenian monastery of St Lazarus Byron is called a "devoted friend of Armenia". And he will always remain as such in the memory of the

Armenian people.

Byron's attention to national languages and cultures was connected with his deep interest in the future destinies of the oppressed nations and their liberation. By his poetry and practical participation in the national liberation movements in Italy and Greece he paved the way for the self-determination of new nations and for Europe to become modern. As Roderick Beaton argues, the idea of a nation-state on European soil "was exactly what Byron had foreseen, and had pledged himself to do all he could to bring about while he was alive" [1, p.272].

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Byron and Toumanyan

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As it is known, no European poet of the 19th century exerted such a strong influence on his contemporaries as Byron. Inspired by the praise of freedom, pleasure of life, light-heartedness and love, in the 19th century Byronism as a mighty power attracted various poets from the East and the West. Consequently, Alexander Pushkin did justice when mentioning with respect to Byron's death: "... the genius left us ... the ruler of our thoughts. ... The world felt empty..." [12, pp. 13-14].

Nor could the Armenian poets resist the attraction and direct influence of the English poet. Obviously, since the first quarter of the 19th century, Byron had left his "trace" in the Armenian literature where he could boast his faithful "followers". Byronism penetrated into Armenian literature, spread and developed continuously, through years and decades, enriching, becoming deeper and involving new generations of Armenian poets whose poetry was more or less influenced by Byron's personality and creative work. Byron's diversified poetry, his freedom-loving ideas, and strife against dictatorship, as well his contact with the Armenian literary-social reality account for the reflection of Byronism in the Armenian literature. Byron's yearning for freedom, the romanticism of just struggle reflected in his poetry, as well as his optimism and humane ideas were kindred to the Armenian nation and echoed its freedom-loving views. In this respect, "Armenian" Byronism had its own contribution to the development of world Byronism. Ghevond Alishan, one of the first translators of the poet, the founder of Armenian contemporary lyric poetry, in his reverence for the poet called him the best poet of the century [2].

As the scope of the present paper does not let us address all the Armenian poets, our aim is to discuss the influence of Byron's lyrics on Toumanyan's work. Generally, Toumanyan's interest was tremendous in the European, especially English poetry and in the 1890s he felt inspired by the romanticism of Byron's poetry. The research draws mostly on primary sources such as published memoirs, letters and collections of poetry. The present paper addresses Byron's poetry's direct influence on Toumanyan's work, draws parallels between the works by Byron and Toumanyan, explores Toumanyan's historical-philological studies about Byron's work and Toumanyan's translations of Byron's poetry.

At the end of the nineteenth century, to address Byron's poetry as well as to dedicate a poem to Byron was neither an accidental phenomenon nor a result of momentary fascination for eminent Armenian poet Hovhannes Toumanyan. In his ode, the Armenian poet glorifies his English peer, who was a friend of freedom-loving peoples and who fought and fell for the freedom of Greece:

*With so great a genius, you grand poet,
Reconciled the chains, restraining freedom,
With the free man
And sweetened the sorrow of captivity. [17, v. 1, p. 153]*

With no fear to provoke the wrath of the English aristocracy, Byron declared to the entire world that England was a prison and ridiculed the English legislation with the whole power of his ire and bitter irony. In his reference to this, Toumanyan wrote:

*Thus you made prison of your homeland
And the whole world a spacious prison... [17, v. 1, p. 153]*

In general, the period between 1894 and 1898 is considered to be “Byronic” in Toumanyan’s literary activities not only for the reasons of personal interest in the poet or the general influence of his phenomenon. Toumanyan himself makes a reference to it in his letter to Armenian historian and writer Leo, dated October 27, 1902: “I was unconscious of the influence of the poets, which I hadn’t realized until now. ... I read and took liking to Byron, Goethe, Shakespeare. I believe these poets influenced my writings but those which are unpublished, even incomplete ...” [17, v. 9, pp. 344-345].

The freedom-loving spirit of the English poet echoed with Toumanyan’s thoughts and mood of the period and was reflected in a number of his works. The spirit of the English poet, a fighter for freedom, was dear to Toumanyan for a very special reason. The Armenian people were again suffering oppression. Just as, earlier, Byron had been inspired by “an oppressed and a noble nation”, one “whose virtues have been those of peace” [10, p. 337] and empathized with the “bitter” destiny of Armenia and its “desolation” and “oppression”, so Toumanyan found the same sentiments of revulsion in the face of injustice, tyranny and genocide. In the 1890s, the massacres had already taken place in Western Armenia and the persecution of the cultural élite and supporters of the national liberation movement had begun in the Caucasus. It is natural that in those years Byron’s “world grief” was congenial to the singer of the “Armenian Sorrow”. Toumanyan was unable to help his people, but in his quest to ease the pain of his fellow-countrymen he found the answer in Byron’s proud image of a freedom warrior and a member of Italian Carbonari and Greek rebel forces, as well as in his poetry of freedom. Over these years of quests and unfeasible aspirations, Toumanyan wrote *Israel* (1890), *Christ in the Desert* (1892), *The Refugee Song* (1896), *From Psalms of Sorrow* (1898), *I am a Wanderer, Sister* (1902), *In the Armenian Mountains* (1902), *The Armenian Sorrow* (1903), *The Chosen One* (1907), and *In Captivity* (1916), all of which reflect a shared grief, even despair, at the decline of human idealism and the violent attacks on human liberty.

The parallels drawn between the works by Byron and Toumanyan demonstrate the affinities and similarities in both poets' works (such as *By the Rivers of Babylon We Sat Down and Wept*, *My Soul is Dark* by Byron and *In Captivity*, *To the Singer* by Toumanyan, etc.).

When comparing Byron's poem *My soul is dark* from *Hebrew Melodies* with Toumanyan's poem *To the Singer*, it can be noticed that the singers' characters have much in common. Let us consider two segments from the works of two poets.

*My soul is dark – Oh! Quickly string
The harp I yet can brook to hear;
And let thy gentle fingers fling
Its melting murmurs o'er mine ear,
If in this heart a hope be dear,
That sound shall charm it forth again:
If in these eyes there lurk a tear,
Twill flow, and cease to burn my brain.*
[3, p. 464] (Byron)

*Come and sing the song of your own
That monotonous moan,
The song of pain and sorrow
My heart is ploughed with furrows
Come along
Sing that sad song
And with its sweet sound
My tears will turn round.*
[17, v. 1, p. 71] (Toumanyan)

Byron's *By the Rivers of Babylon We Sat Down and Wept* (1813) from the same *Hebrew Melodies* and Toumanyan's *In Captivity* appear to share more similarities. Toumanyan's poem was first published under the subtitle *Resemblance* [6, p. 507] in 1916 hundred years after Byron's poem. In the initial part of the poem, one can come across quite similar lines:

*We sat down and wept by the waters
Of Babel, and thought of the day
When our foe, in the hue of his
Zion slaughters,
Made Salem's high places his prey;
And Ye, oh her desolate daughters!
Were scattered all weeping away.
While sadly we gazed on the river*

*By the rivers of Babylon they sat down
Weeping over memories of their Jerusalem and
With harps on the trees, above their heads,
Over their past glory and songs they wept.
"Take the harp, sing the songs of your Zion"
Told the captors the orphans of Israel...*
[17, v. 1, p.285] (Toumanyan)

*Which rolled on in freedom below,
They demanded the song...*
[3, 467] (Byron)

The similarity of these lines might have been caused by the choice of the same theme. Both poems have been inspired by 137th psalm in the Bible. It is by no coincidence that S. Tarontsi, Byron's translator, entitled the Armenian version of the poem *In Captivity* [4, p. 56], as Toumanyan did. Psalm 137th also inspired Avetik Issahakian, the great Armenian poet, writer and public figure, to write his poem *Israeli in Babylon* [8, p. 8-9] and great Armenian novelist Raffi, whose poem *Israel in Babylon* [13, p. 9] was written in 1856. The afore-mentioned psalm reflects the ill fate of the nation banished from its motherland. The Jews are mourning their captivity. It is natural that the theme close to the yearnings of Jewish people inspired the Armenian poets as well. However, I tend to think that the reference to that psalm first of all is connected with Byron's influence on Armenian poets. It is worth mentioning that Byron was more faithful to the source than Toumanyan. In Byron's poem the Jews don't take the harps and sing. They remember their "Salem" and promise solemnly that

*...ne'er shall its soft tones be blended
With the voice of the spoiler by me! [3, p. 467]*

In Toumanyan's poem, though, the captives sing. In their song, they swear allegiance to their fatherland and call for revenge. After that song the captors are astounded to find that it is impossible to kill the spirit of the captives. The poem reflects Toumanyan's emotional state. Having witnessed the Armenian Genocide organized by "young Turks" in 1915, Toumanyan, even after the Armenian massacres, did not lose his belief in the future of Armenians, as echoed in the following lines:

*...They were wondering,
If Israel was still alive in the world
Wasn't she killed in the battlefield? [17, v. 1, p. 285]*

In his literary critical works *Our Poets of the Earlier Period* [17, v. VIII, pp. 26-85], Toumanyan also addressed Byron and his works. In this study, Toumanyan addressed the peculiarities of Armenian well-known poets' works in the nineteenth century demonstrating profound knowledge of world literature. Toumanyan was sure that "Byron is a great poet of England, though in *Hebrew Melodies* he glorified Zion and Jerusalem" [ibid, p. 69], and added it is so because he sang and glorified their mother tongue style and spirit. Toumanyan believed that "the environment and life give the poet's soul vivid colours, sounds, forms and reshape his inspiration, nurture and define his talent and become a peculiarity of his talent" [ibid, p. 66]. From this perspective, Toumanyan in his study analyzes arrogance, lewd, immorality and lasciviousness which dominated England at the beginning of the 19th century and concludes that it was the "spirit-killing system" that naturally "gave birth to the deep lamentation and wonderful sorrow, which is called Byron" [ibid, p. 68]. Toumanyan believed it was natural for the thirty-year-old poet "loathed, became saturated and fatigued" from lascivious and Bacchanal parties, leaving his empty sinful life, false lovers and sycophant- friends" ran away from his country never to return [ibid]. At the same time, Toumanyan was sure that Byron wouldn't be Byron, if he had lived far from England, spent his childhood for example in Russia, because "Though disappointed in Europe, he belonged to England..." [ibid, p. 69].

Toumanyan translated *The Prisoner of Chillon*, some passages from *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and one scene from *Manfred*. Toumanyan was a demanding translator and thought that a good translation is equivalent to individual work. Toumanyan did not know English but in the first half of the 1890s he had a great desire to read Byron's and Shakespeare's works in the original, as well as to translate some parts from them. For that reason, he began to study English. G. Asatur, Armenian philologist, educator and translator, in his memories in 1935 mentions that so great was the inspiration of the Armenian poet that according to the reminiscences of his contemporaries, he even took English classes taught by Mourtad, the English vice-council in Tiflis to

be able to translate *The Prisoner of Chillon* from the original [1, p. 352]. Unfortunately, for some reasons he did not succeed in his endeavours and for his work had to use V. A. Zhukovsky's Russian translation of *The Prisoner of Chillon*, which was considered one of the best. Young Toumanyan was fascinated by the main character, the image of the soldier for independence of Switzerland, the image of Francois Bonnivard with his freedom loving and anti-despotic spirit. It is quite natural that in the first edition of the poem's translation, Toumanyan inserted his poem dedicated to Byron, about which I have already mentioned. Toumanyan translated *The Prisoner of Chillon* in 1893. Later he made some corrections and it was first published in a separate book in 1896 [5]. Armenian playwright and novelist Alexander Shirvanzadeh expressed a good opinion in his review published in the weekly "Taraz" ("Costume"), noting that "the translation stands out due to its by the fluency and light verses" [14, p. 257]. Toumanyan addressed the translation of *The Prisoner of Chillon* again in 1903, when compiling a new collection of his *Poems* [18]. He was not sure whether to include the translation into the collection or not. In this respect, he turned to Mekhitar Der-Andreassian, engineer-chemist, who was his close friend and was fluent in English language and literature, asking him to compare his translation with the original and to make some corrections. In a letter addressed to Toumanyan, dated on 9 May, 1903, M. Der-Andreassian gave a detailed evaluation of his translation, stating "Frankly speaking it is just amazing, how you can manage not knowing English to give us such a wonderful translation, almost word for word... so word for word close to the original, that even short and long lines, even the rhymes in many places are from the same words" [11, p. 1]. At the same time M. Der-Andreassian made a few comments on the translation and the original and made some specific suggestions to address some inaccuracies. He also advised Toumanyan to include the translation of "The Prisoner of Chillon" into the newly published collection. "You do not have any right to deprive the public of enjoying the translation of this masterpiece" [11, p. 10]. Thus, during the revision of the second edition of the poem *The Prisoner of Chillon* by Byron, Toumanyan besides his

translation of the poem published in 1896 and V. Zkukovsky's Russian translation, also had at his disposal the word for word translation by M. Der-Andreassian, as well as his suggestions and remarks on one of the copies of the book published in 1896. Comparing Toumanyan's first (1896) and second (1903) translations of *The Prisoner of Chillon*, a conclusion can be drawn that Toumanyan had acknowledged M. Der-Andreassian's remarks and made numerous corrections and also made some revisions. Following M. Der-Andreassian's advice, Toumanyan included his translation in his new collection [18, pp. 255-269].

Toumanyan also translated two pieces from Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage's* first canto, the farewell song of Childe Harold after 13th stanza and an extract dedicated to Innes after 84th stanza. It is important to mention that those pieces comprise distinguishing features, ideas of freedom, love and struggle, the soul of self-consciousness and dignity, motives and causes of world grief and disillusionment, those ideas were very close to Toumanyan's heart in 1890s, which inspired him to translate those pieces. The translation was entitled *Childe Harold's Song* (the original does not have that title) and *To Innes*. The style and metrical structure of those pieces were retained in the translation. Toumanyan translated *Childe Harold's Song* in 1893, using word for word and Russian translations. The Armenian translation of that song was first published in 1894 in the literary review "Horizon" [7, pp. 83-86]. *To Innes* was translated in the middle of 1890s, again using word for word and Russian (P. Kozlov, D. Mikhalovsky) translations. Toumanyan again reverted to this translation and made quite a new version which was published in the newspaper "Vtak" ("Stream") [20, p. 2]. Later, in 1910, he twice referred to his translation, made some corrections and changes, but that translation was not published in the poet's lifetime. The first academic edition of Toumanyan's works (in six volumes, 1940-1959) included the published version of the translation, with handwritten corrections, as well as separate lines and words from other versions [16, pp. 204-205]. Later, academician Jrbashyan reprinted in the main section the version published in "Vtak" [17, v. IV, pp. 129-130], "as it was the

only one of the surviving versions that the translator had favoured and had submitted for publication in a complete form”, while the other versions which “obviously were incomplete“ [ibid, p. 597], were included into the same volume under the heading “Versions and Materials” [ibid, pp. 492-497].

In mid 1890s, Toumanyan parallel to the translation of the poem *The Prisoner of Chillon* and some excerpts from *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* attempted to translate Byron's drama *Manfred* which fascinated him. He, however, could not complete it. The poet felt devastated by the dire situation in Armenia with the Armenian nation suffering in poverty and being on the edge of extinction. It is quite natural that Toumanyan was fascinated by the strong and freedom-loving spirit of Byron's hero, his thoughts and ideas on life and death, his unyielding desire to fight injustice. At the same time, the excessively romantic nature of the drama might have caused Toumanyan not to complete the translation and even not to revert to the translated excerpts. Toumanyan translated only 120 lines from the beginning of the drama, leaving it incomplete in a draft and without further corrections. The translation of the excerpt from *Manfred* was first published in 1940 in the first academic edition of Toumanyan's works [16, pp. 276-281].

Finally, Nvard Toumanyan, the poets' daughter, mentions his “love for Byron and Beranger” and remembers him “buying the works of his favourite poets both in Russian and foreign languages” [19, pp. 67-68]. Toumanyan would always speak highly of Byron's work and the poet's attitude to Armenians and the Armenian culture. Thus, for instance, on 13 July in 1919, during his speech delivered in Yurinyan Orphanage in Tiflis, Toumanyan said that “the greatest misfortune of our nation was that it had adopted all the vices of the semi-civilized nations it had been conquered by and should get rid of them”. At the same time he highlighted “the creativity and integrity” of the Armenian nation and quoted Byron's reference to Armenians, people, “whose virtues have been those of peace, and their vices those of compulsion” [17, v. VII, pp. 554-555].

I would like to conclude by saying that Toumanyanyan both in his personal life and work always remained committed to his own country and nation by describing its pain, joy and sorrow in his work. Here is what he believed:

*So also, love and joy, pass through,
As do beauty, treasures and thrones,
Death is for us, and we are for death:
It is man's deeds alone that live on. [15, p. 42]*

Obviously, both Byron and Toumanyanyan created such a great literary heritage that will survive forever. “A great poet belongs to no country; his works are public property, and his Memoirs the inheritance of the public” [9, p. XXI]. One should, indeed, realize the fact that the works by both poets belong to the world literature and have become world property.

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Dramatic Decastichs, or How Byron Halted Time to Make Space in His Venetian Plays

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“Poetry is generally much slower than prose and, among poems, those of Pope are particularly slow. They must be read slowly or often their finest qualities of meaning and workmanship will never be noticed at all. Given the proper attention, the snippets expand and cohere.” [14, pp.54-55]. Byron not only admired and defended Pope against prevailing opinion, in many ways he followed Pope’s poetical practices. In this paper, I want to explore a Byron snippet, namely, verse groups of ten lines that he inserted into his dramas to halt the flow of the action. Why did he do this? Do these passages form a hidden pattern of the sort that is typical of Byron’s work? What is their connection with time, space, and Pope? Do they have a name? In this paper, I hope to find answers to these questions.

1

The visible past-present-future pattern in Byron’s plays is of protagonists imprisoned by a past that reaches into the present as a political system and expectation. Sardanapalus is expected to be like his warlike ancestors; Faliero is expected to conform to state law. To escape from this prison of the past into a utopia that lies in the future, they must break with the past, but they prefer to fiddle with inherited ideologies without giving up their position and power, so they fail to create a different future and are eliminated. This is as simple and clean as Greek tragedy. Byron said his object was “to dramatize like the Greeks” [10, pp. 8,152]. But as in Greek tragedy, the simplicity is an illusion.

Faliero's attitude to the past is a good example of such illusory simplicity. He lives within two kinds of past, a public past of the Venetian political structure which decrees that Venice is to be governed by a council of Ten patricians, not the doge, and his personal past as the military commander of the Zara victory which he sets above the political structure, wanting to be sole in-charge in Venice as he was at Zara. This is clear. His five soliloquies are not. He says, for instance, that he wants to 'free Venice' but since he must know that Venice is governed the Ten, why is he annoyed when the patricians want to curb his authority? (I ii 315; see also Peter Cochran's footnote 77) [2, p. 36].

As Byron mired Faliero in confusion, he also asserted order and clarity through six ten-line passages. In four of these, Bertuccio clearly and forcefully tells Faliero the reasons for the conspiracy, why Faliero should join it, and how Bertuccio has risked his life by coming to meet him. At one point, when Faliero's vacillation about joining the conspiracy exasperates Bertuccio into sharp brevity, he ticks off his former commanding officer in a ten line passage: 'if you are not in second childhood, / Call back your nerves to your own purpose' (III ii 474-75) [2, p. 80].

Bertuccio's five pithy ten-line iambic pentametre segments balance Faliero's five rambling soliloquies without disrupting either the dramatic or the rhythmic order. Why, then, do they stand out?

2

These ten-line passages are like complete stanzas, and since there is usually a decorum that governs the language, subject, and occasion of poetic forms, I thought the decorum pertaining to ten-line stanzas might provide a clue about why Byron used them in his plays. Unfortunately, handbooks of English poetry either describe one- to nine-line stanzas and then jump to the sonnet, or they mention the as yet unnamed ten-line stanza which Keats invented for his odes. None of my sources mentioned Byron, even though his ten-line passages are distinct entities deserving a definition and name. I have called them decastichs, a name I settled on

after meandering research during which I learnt that *stichic* is ‘a simple sequence of lines.’, p. 33]. A set of ten such lines is called a decastich; a decastich is ‘any whole poem of ten lines [without] reference to meter or rhyme pattern’ [13]. For convenience, I call the decastichs in Byron’s plays ‘dramatic decastichs.’

Byron’s dramatic decastichs are a little like stanzas. In Italian, a stanza is a ‘room or stopping place;’ if a poem is a house, stanzas are rooms [8, p. 33]. Like rooms, Byron’s decastichs are spaces within, yet apart from, the main building of dramatic dialogue and action. His decastichs are also somewhat like verse paragraphs in long blank verse poems that make space for a special utterance, such as the argument [8, p. 36]. Byron’s decastichs are not always compact units. They may be uttered by more than one person or separated by lines that are not part of the decastich. But they always create a separate space within the play. This creation of a separate space seems to stand against that insistence on moving in time, trying to shape time, and being shaped by time, which characterises these plays. So what is the purpose of the space opened up by these dramatic decastichs?

As far as I can tell, its purpose is invariably to clarify an idea or situation. *The Two Foscari*, for instance, a streamlined *Marino Faliero* without its rhetorical expansiveness, has a greater variety of decastichs, all focussing on a freer personal and political state [5, p. 116-117]. Byron dramatizes secrecy in this play as a room seen from the outside and talked about by those who may not enter it. He then counters this architectural solidity with the poetic form of the elusive now-you-see-it-now-you-don’t decastich. E.g., in Act II, furious with her father-in-law’s ‘deference due even to the lightest word / That falls from those who rule in Venice,’ Marina unleashes a devastating decastich about the other and worse world of Venice (II i 298-299):

Keep

*Those maxims for your mass of scared mechanics,
 ... and your other slaves,
 To whom your midnight carryings off and drownings,
 Your dungeons next the palace roofs, or under
 The water's level; your mysterious meetings,
 And unknown dooms, and sudden executions,
 Your 'Bridge of Sighs,' your strangling chamber, and
 Your torturing instruments, have made ye seem
 The beings of another and worse world! (II i 209-310).*

I think this is an ideal decastring, a standard for identifying the features of Byron's dramatic decastrings. It clarifies confusion as well as the main dramatic conflict; it interrupts the flow of dramatic time, yet is thematically linked to the play; is a patch of 'pure poetry,' seemingly addressed to a larger, unspecified audience; in a more elevated register than the prevailing conversational style of the play, it is the perspective from which we are to interpret the play. In general, Byron's dramatic decastrings are like 'sunny trifles' postscripts which Drummond Bone said were characteristic of Byron: he would off-handedly cast the most important part of a letter into a postscript – or couplet or decastring – which stands apart from but is not separate from the main work. Like the *ottava rima* couplet, the decastring summarizes and explicates from a definite point of view.

Byron acknowledged his precedents. He said that he stood on the shoulders of giants, but where did he learn to interrupt dramatic time to create space for another utterance? One possibility is the operatic aria which holds up the dramatic action. But an aria can be a long, detachable, stand-alone piece, like the Drinking Song in Verdi's *La Traviata*, whereas Byron's decastrings do not make much sense without their dramatic context. Another possibility is the songs in Shakespeare's plays, many of which were meant to entertain without offering special insight

into the play (unless you are an academic desperately looking for significance). A third possibility is Edmund Kean's acting which Byron admired. Kean's innovation on the stage was an everyday, conversational style of utterance, 'plain prose' that influenced Byron's drama [7, pp. 97-98, 100]. Kean would vary this with moments of 'intermittent intensity' or silent stage business that halted dramatic time [7, p. 193-194]. It is possible that Byron converted Kean's methods into declamatory decastichs to pause the dramatic action and make us wait as Kean made his audience wait.

Byron's decastichs do not stand out from the surrounding dialogue either visually or by rhythm and rhyme but they are complete units that make space within the drama for a slightly different kind of utterance. Not necessarily addressed to anyone in the play, they are thematically linked to it, sometimes countering the surrounding chaos with unambiguous formulations, sometimes illuminating the main conflict for the audience as a chorus in Greek drama does, except that the Greek chorus does not (usually) take sides in a dramatic conflict whereas Byron's decastichs lean towards a point of view. Of course, any speaker in a play is likely to have a point of view, but Byron's decastichs are often the lens through which we are to see the entire play, as when Marina and Doge Foscari talk about patriotism. (This clarifying function need not always be in decastichs, e.g. when Angiolina where "provides us with a clear ethical focus on the action" in Act 5 of *Marino Faliero* [5, p. 76]).

Another possibility could be the *ottava rima* couplet in *Don Juan*. Used with 'neatness and precision' to make 'a forcible impact,' it introduces a fresh rhyme, separating it 'slightly from the rest of the stanza' [5. c.111, 98]. Yet another possibility is Byron's formal prose, which interrupts or intrudes into an already existing debate, as do his 'own notes to his poetry,' which 'often extend, counter or digress from the poetical text ... acquiring thereby a didactic, illustrative, polemical or anecdotal independence of their own' [12, p. 187, 2]. Byron composed his comic epic and dramas at about the same time which may account for the similarity of the *Don Juan* couplets and the dramatic decastichs.

I believe, however, that the *Don Juan* couplets and the decaستichs manifest a sense of design in Byron by which he set sharp clarity against apparent chaos. Byron's aesthetic inclination to step aside from his narrative to make space for a different utterance began at least as early as 1811-1812 when he prepared *Childe Harold* for publication and continued right up to the 1820s when he wrote the dramas and *Don Juan*. It was exhilarating to discover that this new way of approaching the plays was a configuration found across his work, always performing the same clarifying and summarizing function. The problem is that the examples I have cited from Byron's work are *like* his dramatic decaستichs but are not decaستichs, and all of them are from after he became famous. But how if at all did he use decaستichs in his early poems?

When Byron left England in 1816, he abandoned his early poetic styles, or so I thought, but it is not true. *Childe Harold*, tales, letters, *Werner*, and a fondness for eight-line stanzas all crossed the seas with him. So – to my happy surprise – did decaستichs. Byron used them in four of his very earliest poems published in *Hours of Idleness* and *Occasional Pieces* (1807-1824). He also inserted three decaستichs in 'Waltz' (1812), summarizing the poem in the third one, the poem's final stanza, in a way that looks ahead to the dramatic decaستichs and the *ottava rima* couplets.

The real revelation was the five decaستichs in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* and thirteen in *Hints from Horace*, his two satires written before he became famous. In both poems, the decaستichs strengthen satiric points in clear, strong, direct language. Although *Hints from Horace* was published posthumously, Byron began writing it in 1811 and – this is worth noting -- he asked Murray to typeset it in 1820-21 when he was working on *Marino Faliero*. In the decaستichs of *Hints from Horace*, he urges authors to avoid absurdities of fantastic styles, hone precision, and suit language to a dramatic character's personality, adding that Pope is a good model. These became his life-long principles in writing. To put it another way, Byron used decaستichs early in his poetic career to make a space within a work where he could discover and articulate precepts for his own aesthetic practice.

Whatever else decastichs may do, they are little spaces that hold up time, and where we may think about issues in the dramas and other poems as well as the less obvious but equally interesting questions of formal design.

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Spain, 1808 and 1823: One Space and Two Times in Byron (and many others)

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One year after the Spanish War of Independence broke out in 1808, Byron was visiting the Iberian Peninsula. Less than ten years after it ended in 1814, Spain was once again invaded. For Byron (and many others) this was his (and their) second *time* on the same *space*. But now the Napoleonic era had ended, and Europe was dominated by the Quintuple Alliance powers. In light of the evidence provided by two projects on European poetry related to Spain, this paper will assess the degree to which Byron's response to the same *space* was similar or different the first and the second *time*, and to what extent this similarity or difference was shared by the authors who, in 1808 and again in 1823, responded to the Spanish events.

The first *time* was the Peninsular War, a conflict between the French empire and the allied powers of Spain, Britain and Portugal for control of the Iberian Peninsula. The Peninsular War overlaps with what in Spain we call the Guerra de la Independencia, which began with the Dos de Mayo uprising (2 May 1808) in Madrid, and came to a complete end with the Treaty of Paris (30 May 1814). British poets had been responding to the peninsular conflict for nearly six years, and would carry on doing so in subsequent ones. In fact such widespread literary projection came not only from Britain but also from Portugal, the German-speaking territories of Central Europe and the French opponents to Napoleon, both the underground in France and the expatriate in Britain.

We know many details about that response thanks to the findings of Project OLE'11, which boasts a webpage with an ongoing digital library

of poems on the war written in English, French, German and Portuguese between 1808 and 1814 [14], plus a series of four lengthy bilingual anthologies published between 2013 and 2015. Each includes a selection of Peninsular War poems which the project team drew from our own digital corpus, transcribed in the original language, translated into Spanish and enriched with substantial introductory studies, notes and bibliography. The first to be launched was the English anthology [9], followed by the German [5], the French [10] and, last but not least, the Portuguese [13].

In parallel with the events of a war in which Britain played a major role, a veritable host of British writers put down in verse their impressions of this tragic conflict —authors ranking from established ones like Wordsworth, Walter Scott or Southey to numerous lesser-known, or just anonymous readers who sent their compositions to the newspapers. Byron's main contribution was Canto One of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, which he wrote in 1809, after having spent several weeks in the Peninsula, and published with some changes in 1812. It was a subversive response to Croker's *Battles of Talavera* (some of whose lines he consciously parodies), agreed with the Whig opposition's non-intervention policy and was basically an anti-war poem that denounced the absurdity of all conflicts. In this sense it was revolutionary, an uncomfortable dissonance at variance with an already large corpus of Peninsular War poetry characterized by sharing and fostering the establishment position. His attitude was exceptional, but not unique. It was also in 1812 that Anna Laetitia Barbauld published *Eighteen Hundred and Eleven*, another demolishing blow to the establishment in the name of an anti-war feeling shared with *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* [6, p. 194].

The second *time* in the same *space* that deserved major literary response from Byron (and many others) was the Liberal Triennium (1820-1823), which had very important international consequences. It started with the uprising by Rafael del Riego that put an end to Ferdinand VII's initial six-year absolutist period, and concluded with an interventionist initiative

sanctioned by the Quintuple Alliance at the Congress of Verona: the shipping to Spain of a French army, the One Hundred Thousand Sons of Saint Louis, which reinstated Ferdinand VII as absolute ruler. In this period, during which the Cádiz Constitution was newly enforced, Spain became again the focus of international attention—and the object of literary response, including poetry.

So a new project was in order, now focusing on the later *time* just mentioned. Launched in 2016, Project POETRY'15 it sets as its aim, again through text searching, editing, translating and analysing, the recovery of a substantial number of poems which were written abroad, in foreign languages, and used to express international opinion concerning this other exceptional *time* in Spanish history. English, German, Italian and Portuguese authors again took sides and produced partisan poems, acting as mediators between the events and a wide European readership which they (generally) sought to win over to the cause of the Spanish liberals—a cause soon set as an example which will provoke similar revolutionary episodes in Portugal, Naples, the Piedmont, Greece and Russia, plus a wide repercussion in the German Confederation and the United Kingdom. The project boasts a webpage, now under construction, and we envisage to have published five bilingual anthologies plus an essay collection by 2020 [15]. The Italian anthology is a novelty in this project, and the French one, naturally enough, will include poems that, for the most part, are *favourable* to intervention. This is, in a nutshell, what we've found so far: 250 poems in English, 76 in Italian, 71 in French, 48 in Portuguese and 31 in German. Total, 476 poems. And the following refers specifically to the English section: 53 poems written or/and published in 1820, 20 in 1821, 39 in 1822 and 138 in 1823. When I mentioned this project at the Newstead Abbey Byron conference in April 2017, the figure I gave for English pieces was 187. Now in Armenia, only two months later, it has gone up to 250, and we expect to find more poems. They were all written or published between 1820 and 1823, and display a wide variety of topics, authors and formats, ranging

from short pieces in the daily press and literary magazines to mid-length ones published as part of collections and long ones as single volumes.

Approaches to ‘Spanish matter’ in the poems are also quite varied, and include, firstly, ‘cultural’ poems that, following an already long-standing tradition, deal with Spain in the Middle Ages: Don Rodrigo and the end of the Visigothic Kingdom, Islamic Al-Andalus, King Pelayo and the Reconquest, traditional Castilian and Moorish ballads, etc. Important creative works belong here, like *The Siege of Valencia*, by Felicia Hemans, published in 1823, as well as some of the most iconic collections of Spanish poetry in English translation, such as Lockhart’s *Ancient Spanish Ballads*, published the same year.

Secondly, we find occasional pieces dealing with and commenting on the latest Spanish events – beginnings of the Constitutional regime, the 1822 home rebellions, King Ferdinand and his plotting, the French 1823 invasion, and Riego’s execution among others. Dozens of poems written by anonymous authors and published in the daily press belong in this category.

And thirdly, we have political, often satirical poems discussing the situation of contemporary Spain from a wider European perspective – the Holy Alliance, the Congress of Verona, British international politics, and revolutions in Portugal, Italy and Greece. Shelley’s three odes in favour of the Spanish liberals, and Tom Moore’s biting *Fables of the Holy Alliance* belong here. A forthcoming essay collection edited by Bernard Beatty and Alicia Laspra Rodríguez includes contributions on many such topics [1].

Attitudes are unanimously in favour of liberal Spain in the second and third categories. Also in the first, further promoted by this renewed interest in Spain, and often including materials to be read as sub-texts in support of the Spanish liberal cause.

Where is Byron in all this? – you may be wondering. Well, he is in all three categories.

Byron contributed in the first category with *A Very Mournful Ballad on the Siege and Conquest of Alhama*, his translation of a Spanish traditional romance published in 1818 with *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto IV [2]. Notice incidentally that the title is in Spanish, "Romance muy doloroso del sitio y toma de Alhama, el qual dezia en Aravigo assi." You might think that the poem's publication year falls short of the second *time* I have delimited for my analysis, but this is not entirely so. John Murray gave the poem pride of place by changing its title into a more 'commercial' one ("A Spanish Romance") and including it in the cover page of Volume Eight of Byron's complete works, published in 1820, the initial year of the Liberal Triennium. Modern critics have seen this poem, on a moaning but cruel Moorish king that kills the messenger who brought him the bad news that Alhama had been lost to the Christians (and then has to meet the rebellion of his own people) as a sub-text, an allegorical transposition of Spain under the despotic rule of Ferdinand [16]. There is no reason to disagree with this interpretation, applicable to many other poems in the group.

As for the second category, Byron contributed a piece of political poetry celebrating the beginning of the constitutional regime, and another lamenting its impending doom: *The Vision of Judgment* and *The Age of Bronze*, respectively. The first, composed in 1821, was his sardonic response to Southey's poem of the same title, an apotheosis of George III that the poet laureate wrote on occasion of the king's decease on 29 January 1820. This was four weeks after Riego had risen in Spain against his own absolute king; or, as the narrative voice in *The Vision* contends, "In the first year of freedom's second dawn". Among those aggravated by the British king, who "although no tyrant shielded tyrants", are the shades of "the Spaniard, Dutch, and Dane", all of them willing to bring evidence against George III, so that his soul rots away in hell. The lawyer in this trial is the archangel Michael, and the prosecutor is of course Byron's surrogate, Satan, who meets the former "with more hauteur, as might an old Castilian poor noble / meet a mushroom-rich civilian". The complete heading of the poem is actually *The Vision of Judgment, by Quevedo*

redivivus and, quite naturally, its preface refers the reader "to the Visions of myself, the said Quevedo, in Spanish or translated", an all-out impersonation not often found in Byron [4, p. 311]. The brilliant Spanish satirist, who had written his own *Vision of the Last Judgment* ("El sueño del juicio final") back in 1605, had been translated into English and was not at all unknown in Byron's England, as a 1822 notice in *European Magazine* shows [11, p. 53]. A dismayed John Murray would not publish Quevedo Redivivus piece, so it was first printed, adequately enough, in the initial number of *The Liberal. Verse and Prose from the South*. By the way, this cost Leigh Hunt an indictment for libel and a heavy fine, the same as similar gibes had cost the real Quevedo various arrests and confinements in his time and place [7].

Byron's angry response to the crisis that led to the end of the Triennium was *The Age of Bronze*. The poem is 780 lines long, and I contend that a good 140 lines deal with Spain and the Spanish world – not bad for a poem that teems with allusion to characters, nations and events of all kinds, both past and present. Byron, who wrote it in the first half of December, 1822, is so alert, and his piece so close to the events it mentions and condemns that, when it comes to the invasion of Spain by the One Hundred Thousand Sons of Saint Louis, he uses prolepsis; that is, the narrative voice *anticipates* the French invasion, the 'home invaders' of the poem, assuming that it has already happened [8, pp. 123-26]. I'd like to point out that Byron is genial in this, but not exceptional. Now we know that scores of articles, and dozens of poems also published in newspapers and magazines, or independently, show the same close attention to Spain, and the same fatalistic attitude. Ever since the Congress of Verona had met in October, 1822 and given France a free hand to intervene in Spain, everybody knew that the outrageous invasion was only a matter of time. *The Morning Chronicle* of 31 March 1823 includes on the same page 3 a letter to the editor entitled "Spanish Loan", by A.P. Pebrer; the satirical poem "The King of Spain and the Cortes" by "D."; the unsigned essay "Spanish Romances", complete with the translation of a poem on "Juan", a shepherd, and the announcement of the

publication "to-morrow" (that is, on 1 April 1823) of "The Age of Bronze, by Lord Byron". The invasion would take place exactly one week later.

As for the third category, a variety of lines and stanzas from the *Don Juan* cantos written and published during the Liberal Triennium can be said to belong here and, as I contend, read as another facet in Byron's response to and support of the Spanish constitutional cause. I am referring to lines and stanzas from nine different cantos.

Canto VI was written in early 1822 and published in July, 1823. Reference is made here to the Spanish origin of 'Juanna' (Juan, disguised as a woman) and the 'Georgian ignorance' (a probable play on words) of those who, like Katinka, think that Spain is an island [3, ll. 345-52].

Cantos IX, X and XI were finished or altogether written in 1822 and published in August, 1823. In stanzas 1 to 9 of Canto IX Wellington (or 'Vilainton' as a mischievous Byron writes) is severely criticised for having helped reinstate the tyrannical Bourbons in Spain and France and consolidate the concert of Europe; the result being that, now, it is only "the Spanish fly and Attic bee" (read, the Spanish liberals and the Greek independentists) that keep on fighting for liberty. In Canto X Juan writes to his family from Moscow, and they eventually answer that Madrid and Moscow are more or less the same thing. Far from innocent, this is a malicious reference to the true fact that King Ferdinand had been secretly plotting with Tsar Alexander since the very beginning of the constitutional period, in the hopes that a Russian army would come to the rescue and reinstate him as absolute king – which nearly happened, by the way. In the same innocent-looking tone, and with identical malice on the part of the narrator, in Canto XI the London bluestockings, 'that tender tribe', ask Juan which language is 'softest, Russian or Castilian' [3, ll. 1-72; 233-40; 393-400].

Cantos XII, XIII and XIV were finished between December 1822 and March 1823, and published in December of the latter. In a way which is strongly remindful of similar allusions in *The Age of Bronze*, Canto XII

praises "the shirtless patriots of Spain" and rubbishes the bankers and politicians that ruin and bully them. Canto XIII comes back to the irony about Russia, this time in the words of Juan's tutor, Henry, who in contrast praises his tutee's Spanish qualities. Further down in the canto a particularly caustic stanza presents the Spaniard Juan, who is back in England, as none other than "the envoy of a secret Russian mission". Canto XIV retrieves references to *Don Quixote* in the preceding canto before claiming that reading Cervantes's book in the original is "a pleasure before which all others vanish" [3, ll. 32-40; 169-84; 415-16; 777-79].

Finally, Cantos XV and XVI were written between March and May, 1823 and published in March, 1824. The first of them includes an acidic reference, complete with sexual pun, to the 'conference or congress' of Verona (the beginning of the end for the constitutional regime in Spain) and, in the context of the elaborate dinner offered to Juan, reference is made twice of different dishes prepared *a l'Espagnole* (notice the French) while in fact "the simple olives" are the "favourite plat" of the narrator, as he contends, "in Spain, and in Athens", thus echoing the earlier reference to "the Spanish fly, and Attic bee" [3, ll. 481; 522; 589; 577-80].

I promised to assess the degree to which Byron's response to the same *space* was similar or different the first and the second *time*, and to what extent this similarity or difference was shared by the authors who responded en masse to the Spanish events. Well, here it is. Evidence suggests that the response to the same space was *similar* both times, in Byron as well as in the vast majority of these authors. In both cases they wrote in favour of what they thought was at stake in Spain –freedom. But in both cases they failed. Contemporaries recognized this. An issue of *The Examiner*, published when the constitutional regime was collapsing, includes the news story "Meeting in Aid of the Spaniards". Immediately after comes a review of *The Island*, which reads: "The passage that follows is highly characteristic of the condensed satire of Lord Byron. Two lines in particular, which we have marked, felicitously comprehend the whole system of the Holy Allies, and of the Bourbon politics in

Spain, in a single couplet" [12, p. 394]. The lines, biting and disheartened, are these:

*Who hath not seen Dissimulation's reign,
The prayers of Abel linked to the deeds of Cain?*

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Mazeppa's Ride in Space and Time. A Romantic Dilemma Between Picture and Music

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Byron's *Mazeppa* is a poem where space and time are closely interwoven. In 1817 [1], with direct echoes of Napoleon's disastrous Russian campaign in 1812 (Section I, lines 8-14) [1], Byron tells the story of Mazeppa who is requested by King Charles of Sweden, after the crushing defeat of the Swedes and their allies in Poltava against the Russians in 1709, to explain how he became such an indefatigable horse-rider. So, Mazeppa tells the story of his youth, at the court of the king of Poland some fifty years before, intermingled with the episode of his own revenge years after the core of the tale, which narrates his many-mile-long ride, tied to the back of a wild horse, which carried him from Poland to Ukraine. The whole poem plays with the different strata of time, and the wide array of geographical trajectories. Be it because of this vertiginous interaction between space and time or because of the variety of the scenes depicted, *Mazeppa*, since its publication, has been one of the most fertile sources of artistic inspiration for painters and musicians. – On the basis of Byron's work, I intend to explore some of the contrasting characteristics of time and space in the artistic exploitation of a narrative poem.

Reading a poem before an audience is similar to performing a music piece. It has a beginning, goes through episodes, and comes to an end. The whole reading is inscribed in a definite period of time whose length, rhythm and intensity variations – tension and release – depend on the performer, though the performance starts with the same words, continues with the same twists and turns, and ends with the same sequence of sentences.

You can read the first lines of Byron's *Mazeppa* in many ways: solemn, slow and accentuated like a funeral march, or dramatic and breathless, with a hint of the wild ride to come:

*'Twas after dread Pultowa's day
When fortune left the royal Swede...*

Similarly, the closing lines can be loaded with more or less emotion, more or less sense of humour:

*And if ye marvel Charles forgot
To thank his tale, he wonder'd not,—
The king had been an hour asleep.*

The variations in the reading tempo will affect the total length of the performance or, at the very least, the duration of the different episodes and therefore their relative importance in the complete reading. The performer plays with time and imposes his tempo on the listeners.

This characteristic of reading aloud is shared with the performance of a written music score, which has an introductive bar, a development, and a conclusion: the interpreter's freedom is circumscribed by the composer's indications on the score; she or he can play more or less rapidly, can vary the tempo or can keep it unchanged in each of the sections, can accentuate the contrast between the sections or not. If you listen to any piano piece interpreted by different pianists, you will be struck by such differences.

Gazing at a picture is quite another artistic experience. First of all, when the picture is derived from a narrative poem, you will see a snapshot, one selected scene of the poem, and not the whole story as it was told by the poet. The graphic artist selects an episode, a line or a few lines of the

poem, and turns it into a picture, with some details which come from the poem and others which derive from his own knowledge of the poem's historical and geographical context to fill up and to organize the space in his painting, lithograph or drawing.

At first glance, you, the spectator, get an idea of the whole work, but each detail of the scene can then attract and retain your attention to a different extent and in a different order. – Let's consider Horace Vernet's celebrated work (1826) which illustrates what is probably the most famous scene in Byron's poem: the wolves' savage troop in pursuit of the horse and its human burden. In section XII, the lines from where the painting is drawn from read thus:

*We rustled through the leaves like wind,
Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind.
By night I heard them on the track,
Their troop came hard upon our back...*

You catch the whole tragic feeling of the horse hunted by the wolves. You can look at the expression of the steed, of the young page, close to exhaustion, to the fierce wolves, to the plain left behind, the dark wood in which the wild ride takes a new sombre, tragic colour. The painter only uses space to make speed visible, while speed is actually space travelled in time. To do so, he has to force you, the spectator, to move your eyes to follow the ride and experience the feeling of speed.

If it is the most famous representation of such a highpoint scene of *Mazeppa*, Vernet's painting is not the only one in the Romantic age. Some twenty years later, Napoléon Thomas, a half-forgotten member of the Petit Cénacle and a friend of Célestin Nanteuil's, depicted the same scene. The main scene of the lithograph illustrates the same lines in section XII as Vernet's painting. But the artist has added some other scenes of the poem: the Count Palatine's likely punishment of his wife

(from section VIII: “Theresa’s doom I never knew”), the gossips which urged the Count to take revenge on Mazeppa (in section VIII), the servants who tied the young page to the horse – section IX), and even, during the ride, the crossing of the stream (section XIV) which becomes, in the artist’s representation, a mere rivulet which the steed crosses with an easy jump! All these scenes are actually extracted from the poem but you can look at them on the lithograph in a different order from Byron’s poem. The space in the picture gives you the chance to recompose your own timeline of the tale.

To a certain extent, it is similar to flipping through the poem printed in a book. A poem in print can be read in many ways, with you, the reader, being completely free to pick up the poem at any point and to leave it where you want. We have all experienced that our eye can be caught at a certain point, where we transform ourselves from lazy “window-shopper” to passionate reader.

*“Bring forth the horse!” – the horse was brought.
In truth, he was a noble steed... [Section IX, opening lines]*

And you – you, the reader who has to admire the horse together with the story-teller who is also the victim of the Count Palatine’s cruelty – you start reading at the very beginning of the wild ride. You are caught in the breathtaking effort of the horse to escape from his imposed rider.

Each reader has his favourite lines. Each painter, each lithographer, each graphic artist is attracted by one or several specific scenes, and takes one or several “snapshots” of the poem. Their illustrations are like pictures taken by photographers during an event: the subject is moving and they immortalize specific moments of the scene.

Théodore Géricault was fascinated by the “repelling shore” after the crossing of the cold stream (section XVI); Louis Boulanger and Alexandre Colin [2] dedicated their efforts to paint Mazeppa being bound

on the horse (section IX). Daniel Fohr drew the horse galloping away after crossing the stream (section XVI); Célestin Nanteuil the wild ride in an endless plain (section XI); and Delacroix, the death of Mazeppa's horse (section XVII).

All in all, most sections of the poem have caught the attention of graphic artists in the thirty years following the poem's publication, and nearly all the sections between section VII (the lovers' love) and XVIII (Mazeppa rescued by the Ukrainian girl) were turned into pictures. If you organised them in chronological order, along the timeline of the poem, you could tell the story in pictures.

Some artists were also inspired by more than one scene. In addition to his celebrated painting of the wolves in pursuit of the horse, Horace Vernet illustrated the episode of the horse's death among the wild horses troop, equally impressive. Eugène Charpentier painted Mazeppa and Theresa (section VII), and Mazeppa's rescue (section XVIII). – However, two images are not enough to tell the whole story.

Napoléon Thomas illustrated Mazeppa's story in four lithographs: respectively for sections VII (Theresa and Mazeppa's mutual love), section IX (the lovers surprised), X (Mazeppa's revenge, strikingly told by anticipation, at the very beginning of the hero's ordeal), and XII (the wolves in pursuit of the steed – as already commented). The publisher of the lithographs has adopted a more "rational" order for the series: "1, 2, 4 and 3", with Mazeppa's vengeance as a conclusion, in contradiction with the poet's own dramatic chronology. The publisher's logic to organise a series of images is different from that of the poet.

If we carry matters to extreme, we can end up illustrating each line of the poem. Long after the Romantic age, this is what will be done in graphic novels, such as this story of Mazeppa proposed by the "Journal de Tintin" in November 1964 [3].

By nature, and like any book, a graphic novel (or "strip cartoon") requires time to be read, especially if the reader wishes to enjoy all the details of the pictures. A strip cartoon does not only juxtapose a series of small

images (or “pieces of space”), but it organises these “halts” in different locations which have to be looked at along a timeline whose appreciation is left to the reader. Reading a strip cartoon could be compared to visiting a painter’s gallery, dedicated to one specific story.

Geographically, we travel to several different places, from Casimir’s court in Poland, to the infinite steppe in Ukraine, across the dark forest between Poland and Ukraine, the marketplace of Baturin, Poltava’s battlefield and the Turkish border.

If the images were numerous enough and if they followed one another like the pictures of a movie, one could even think of a cartoon, I mean, an “animated cartoon”. (Isn’t it strange that the word “cartoon” is used in English for series of images both in book form and in movie form, with such a dissimilar relationship to time?) – Since the beginning of the 20th century, Mazeppa’s story has also been told in movies. Examining them is beyond the goal of this short essay.

After this swift exploration of the different spaces of the poem, let’s examine some of its illustrations in relation to time.

Music runs along time. Composers set sounds along rhythmic patterns and melodic lines, which are both consubstantial to time itself: rhythm has been defined as “the timing of sounds and silences that occur over time”; it is made of the even or uneven division of a time unit (bar, beat, or a shorter time unit) by notes of similar or dissimilar durations. A melody is “a linear succession of musical tones that the listener perceives as a single entity”; it is made of a sequence of notes of same or different pitches, organised as a whole, during a certain number of time units (bars). Rhythm and melody are the “horizontal” part of music writing, which cannot exist without time. Harmony only can be created by simultaneous notes as well as by consecutive notes: it is therefore the only “spatial” feature of music written for a single instrument; it is often referred to as “vertical writing”.

When a composer “tells a story” without the resource of a text, he has to select the scenes to be “told”, and to determine the order in which they

must be presented. Carl Loewe (1796-1869) is likely to be the first composer who turned Byron's poem into music. His piano work, published in 1832 with the subtitle of "Tondichtung" or "musical poem", "narrates" Byron's poem in a highly convincing way: the wild ride is interspersed with episodes which all contribute to add in diversity, emotions, tension and release. Musically, it is a well-structured piece, marked "allegro feroce", which follows a simple tonal scheme, from a sombre B minor to a radiant B major, and with a tempo which accompanies the horse's efforts until he dies. The last 40 bars, played at the same tempo as the ride but written in long-value notes create a feeling of incredible calm after the restless ride. Time is suspended. Music is motionless. After giving the feeling of speed, Loewe's music gives that of stillness, resulting in space only!

The score title-page is adorned with a lithograph after Vernet's painting of Mazeppa with the wolves, and the score itself is followed by a short indication "for those who do not know Lord Byron's poem". Mazeppa, we are told, bound on a Ukrainian wild horse is brought across plains and forests until the end of the day (the first pages are actually a wild ride whose ferocity is evoked by the clash of measure between left and right hand), the hero is then plunged into a broad stream which the horse swims across (we can distinctly hear the steed swimming, bottom of p.5 and top of p.6), to be then chased by a troop of wolves, which the horse manages to keep at bay (the right hand follows the left one by half a beat, pp.7-8), to Mazeppa's great relief (hence the modulation from B minor to B major on p.8); the tempo of the ride slows down while the horse's strength fades; it recovers when the "noble steed" recognizes his native land, but he dies from exhaustion; still bound on the horse, Mazeppa is threatened again and finally escapes the danger of the menacing raven, which gives the composer yet another opportunity to modulate back to B minor for a few bars (to depict Mazeppa's anxiety) before leading the piece to a peaceful end, in a luminous B major.

At first hearing, the work appears as a very faithful music translation of Byron's poem. But then, when you get familiar with it, you notice that

the crossing of the river precedes the encounter with the wolves. There is no doubt that the composer consciously took the decision to reorganize the tale in a more “musical” way: the crossing of the stream provided him with a first necessary moment of relative release, which was better placed, musically speaking, where it is than where it “should have been” to strictly follow the poem.

In the following years, several composers wrote piano pieces entitled after Byron’s *Mazeppa* or Victor Hugo’s homonymous poem derived from Byron’s, or inspired by the spectacular theatre plays built on Mazeppa’s story for the sake of showing beautiful horses and expert riders. Such music pieces are not “narrative” pieces any longer, as Loewe’s “musical poem” was; they concentrate on the most impressive aspect of the story: the horse ride, of course! – Franz Liszt wrote the first sketches of his own *Mazeppa* as early as 1834, but the complete work was not printed before 1840. Its best known version is the celebrated 4th “étude d’exécution transcendante”, whose first edition was published in Leipzig in 1852 only. This piano piece – explicitly tied to Hugo’s poem by its dedication – is not properly “narrative”, in any case, less so than the corresponding symphonic poem, whose initial chord mimics the whiplash with which the wild horse is sent off for the wild ride. In the piano piece, none of this; it is the pianist himself, a poor Mazeppa of the keyboard, who has to jump over frightening obstacles, run at full speed between terrible pitfalls, in the midst of a forest of notes, scattered with tremendous difficulties. It would not make sense to try and identify specific episodes in the score, which as a whole gives the feeling of a fierce ride; the coda only, in D major after the cavalcade mainly in D minor, is clearly a musical translation of Hugo’s conclusion:

“Il tombe enfin!... et se relève R`oi!” – «He falls down finally!... – and stands up again as a King !»

In Liszt's *Mazeppa*, the keyboard space used by the pianist during the time of the execution transforms the performer into a hero.

For several other composers of *Mazeppa* scores, there was a “fashionable” element in their choice of such a subject. The “galop” or “galoppade” was a very rapid dance which got more and more popular in the balls in Europe during the 19th century. Who else better than *Mazeppa* could have been honoured with such a dance? Alexis Kustow wrote “*Mazeppa, grand galop cosaque*” in 1840; Alfred Quidant, “*Mazeppa, étude-galop*” in 1847; Georges Sawanoff, another “*Mazeppa, galop pour piano*” in 1851. Wojciech Sowiński and Georges Mathias wrote “overtures” for *Mazeppa* (respectively in 1855 and 1875), with a large place given to the triplets of the ride. All these pieces are about speed, that is to say a lot of space, many notes on a keyboard, in a short period of time.

Earlier on, we saw that increasing the number of illustrations could lead to create animated cartoons or movies, which is a way of transforming a succession of pieces of space into a continuum of time. If now we started from music to illustrate it, wouldn't we transform time into space, or – to be more accurate – wouldn't we insert the feel of space into the line of time? This is what opera does: it gives a stage, with its breadth and depth, to a narration in music.

Several operas were based on *Mazeppa*'s story during the 19th century: Fabio Campana's opera created in 1850, Carlo Pedrotti's “melodramma tragico” in 4 acts (1861), Charles Pourny's opera buffa (1872), Tchaikovsky's opera in 3 acts (1884), and Clémence de Grandval's grand opera in 5 acts (1892). Tchaikovsky's work only has been kept in the repertoire. Its libretto doesn't deal at all with the ride: it takes place when *Mazeppa* is the hetman of Ukraine and relates his tumultuous relationship with the Russian czar until the battle of Poltava. Therefore, it does not interact with Byron's poem at all – or should not. But right from the start, Tchaikovsky introduced an echo of the poem: in the overture, we can distinctly hear a ride which cannot be but the wild ride. Such was Byron's

cultural importance sixty years after his death that any evocation of the hero he had much contributed to bring to international fame would trigger a reminder of his poem.

Combining time and space is often detrimental to one of the dimensions, the visual or the musical one; it can lead towards movies or cartoons if the visual dimension is given priority or towards the opera if the latter is given preeminence.

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Byronic Influences on Hagop Melik Hagopian's Poetry

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Considered by many Armenian scholars to be the most prominent Armenian novelist, Hagop Melik Hagopian, whose pen name was 'Raffi', was crucial to the development of the Armenian novel by introducing the genre. It was while he was a student at a Russian-run school in Tiflis, Georgia, that Raffi was exposed to the recent translations of such European writers. Here he studied and memorized whole passages from Homer's *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* as well as Virgil's *The Aeneid*. As a young writer, Raffi would have certainly been under the spell of European Romantic writers such as: Byron, Scott, Turgenev and Gogol, especially at a time when their works were being translated by the Armenian monks of Isola San Lazzaro degli Armeni, Venice. Armenian Romanticism contained all of the elements of the European movement: the cult of nature and woman, love was a major theme, as was individuation and the expression of sorrow, the religious subjects, patriotism, and melancholy. The sadness that pervaded in Armenian Romantic poetry can trace its roots back to British and French Romanticism.

On November 13, 1816, Lord Byron visited Monastero Mekhitarista Isola San Lazzaro degli Armeni, where he began his three-month study of Armenian, and it is believed that copies of manuscripts of Byron's poetry still exist. Raffi's early poetry was certainly influenced by Byron.

Raffi's short poem, "The Parrot's Song" contains two quatrains with alternating iambic tetrameter and trimeter in an A-B-A-B rhyme scheme, also known as the ballad stanza. I believe that it is possible that Byron's "So, No More We'll Go a Roving" influenced Raffi since in both poems

is the theme of lost love or the inability to love because of extraneous circumstances. The speaker of "The Poet's Song" is a parrot who feels imprisoned in his cage: "Since as a prisoner here I live, / In gilded misery" (ll. 7-8).

The parrot takes note of his lady's treatment, as well as the delicate features of her hand:

*With nuts and sweets and dainty fare,
My lady feeds me oft.
She decks my cage with tender care
And hands so white and soft.*

*But not a moment's joy can give
This pampering care to me,
Since as a prisoner, here I live
In gilded memory (ll. 1-8).*

With his animal instinct detecting food, the parrot becomes aware of sweet, delicate, perhaps lavishly prepared food. He is no ordinary parrot, because he deduces that his owner takes great care of that hands that are white and soft and provide for his care. Any other animal, it seems, would not be cognizant of the color and texture of the owner's delicate hands. It does not matter how much the parrot enjoys the attention of the lady; the fact remains that he feels that he is a prisoner in his own home and that overpowers any feelings of joy that the parrot might have.

Byron's "So, No More We'll Go a Roving" was written on February 27, 1817, while Byron was living in Venice. It is plausible that he translated the poem into Armenian as part of his exercises for Father Avkerian, his Armenian tutor. In the poem, readers find the same quatrain stanza structure, with alternating iambic tetrameter and trimeter, in an A-B-A-B rhyme scheme that is evident in "The Parrot's Song". Also, Byron's verse

includes an added closing quatrain as well as the theme of love lost.

“So, No More We’ll Go a Roving” can stand on two stanzas and, therefore, does not need the third stanza, which seems repetitious. The first stanza introduces the poem:

*So, we'll go no more a roving
So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving,
And the moon be still as bright (1-4).*

Here, the speaker still loves, just as the moon shines bright. However, there is the belief that he and his beloved will not go roving in the middle of the night. The speaker points out that even though the moon still rises in the night, the love will grow no more. It is unclear whose love has worn thin, and the speaker does not give his readers any clues to the answer, because as the second stanza elucidates:

*For the sword outwears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And love itself have rest (5-8).*

The heart no longer can be consumed with love and, there, it must pause to catch its breath. This should show that the lovers’ passion was enhanced by infatuation because the relationship moved so quickly.

Like the parrot in Raffi’s poem, the speaker in “So, No More We’ll Go a Roving” seems to regret the fact that the love got out of control. There seems to be the sense of disappointment in one’s self in the voice of the speaker. The parrot is remorseful that he has feelings for his lady, who, coincidentally, keeps him imprisoned. Byron’s speaker’s lover, on the

other hand, eases into the breakup, unlike the parrot, who still speaks highly of the lady through six of the eight lines. Byron's ease of the breakup does not catch readers off-guard as Raffi catches his readers off-guard. Readers of the poem are shocked at the end of the poem, when the parrot describes his gilded misery, because it appears that the parrot remains in the love with his lady.

Raffi's poem "Ballad" echoes the Romantic motif of a maiden who is saved from the prison of a wretched castle and the harem of the prince by a lowly minstrel. The minstrel symbolizes the hopeless romantic troubadour of the past, who wrote verse for those they loved. It is sometimes the love of one that saves us from the tormented love(s) of the past. If the poet has been hurt by a former love, almost to the point of self-destruction, the love of another can save him from the impending calamity.

Again, this can be seen in the alternating A-B-A-B rhyme scheme of the fourteen-stanza "Ballad" where the alternating tetrameter lines rhyme. As he walks through the countryside:

*A minstrel passed--as it befell
A singer, singing sweetest strains;
He broke the witch's evil spell,
And loosed the gentle maiden's chains (13-16).*

The evil spell that the minstrel breaks is the maiden's lack of a love. Here, the maiden hears the song of the minstrel, who enchants her and woos her. And as she follows her love, she finds that he lived within a hut "And sang alone beneath the trees" (l. 34), where he lives happily. The lover "healed the wounds by sorrow wrought; / Like captive from a prison fled, / Her cares and woes she soon forgot" (42-44). Unfortunately, the prince is looking for girls "To satisfy his heart's desire" (47) to fill his harem; in the process kills the minstrel, abducts the maiden and takes her

to the harem.

The minstrel is hero-like and saves the maiden from the wretchedness of the not being able to love. It is the love of the minstrel that makes the maiden forget her past:

*He wiped the tears by sorrow shed,
And healed the wounds by sorrow wrought;
Like captive from a prison fled,
Her cares and woes she soon forgot (41-44).*

The minstrel does everything that a gracious and wonderful lover is supposed to do; he tenderly wipes the pain from her face, heals her afflictions and frees her from the prison of not being able to love. He restores her faith in men. However, as in “The Parrot’s Song”, there is the repetitive imagery of the cages individual in “Ballad”.

*His women, guarded day and night,
Caged in with iron bars he keeps;
But LOVE, more strong than despot's might,
Breaks through that cage, those bars o'erleaps (53-56).*

The significant difference is that in Love, he will be able to break from the women that are imprisoned in the prince’s harem. Raffi holds onto the idea that Love conquers all, which is contrary to and denotes a separation from Byron.

In Byron’s “They say that Hope is happiness”, he articulates the cynicism of a jilted lover. “They say that Hope is happiness” was completed in 1814, and it is possible that Byron translated it into Armenian while lodging on San Lazzaro Island. In this ballad-like three-stanza poem, with alternating A-B-A-B rhymed quatrains, Byron’s speaker turns in the

second stanza by stating that it is hope, symbolized as happiness, “Hath melted into memory” (8). He continues the downward spiral into despondency by stating that hope is a “delusion” (9) because “The future cheats us from afar (10) and shatters hope. The lover is, then, left with a feeling of hopelessness, which one could imagine as leading towards a depression which ultimately could lead one to self-annihilation.

Next, we come to Raffi’s “The Lake of Van” which contains the coupleted iambic pentameter rhyme scheme of A-A-B-B that runs for seventeen stanzas. In the opening lines, the speaker depicts painful thoughts and memories because “Nature might be dead” (2). Nature’s death predicts the condition of Armenia, which the speaker laments, “Now is Armenia choked with thorn and tare: / Thou who hast seen her fortunes wax and wane” (22-23). The speaker seems to be saying that he is tired of the ebbing and flowing between Armenian’s once good fortune and the befallen.

In a disturbingly prophetic passage, there:

*Comes there a day, comes there a season that
Shall hail a flag on topmost Ararat,
Calling Armenians, wheresoe’er they roam,
To seek once more their loved and beauteous home? (33-36)*

When the flag is planted on Mount Ararat, Armenians will know that it is safe to return to their homeland. Armenia has always been a peaceful nation, and this passivity proved to be a major weakness, as invading ottomans and Kurds took full advantage of their neighbors. Mount Ararat, for the most part, has lain within the boundaries of Armenia. However, following the Genocide in 1915, the Turks stripped away land from the western Armenians including Ararat, which has been the national symbol and an icon for liberty that Armenians see as their own, and that help identify themselves.

In the ninth and tenth stanzas, the speaker calls out to God and the Armenian Muses for help to emancipate Armenia:

*... O heavenly Ruler, raise
Armenia's spirit,
...
A lovely maid that bore a lantern and
A lyre of shining ivory in her hand.
...
was she of the form and hue
Of the Armenian Muses! (37-8, 44-45, 48-49)*

It is this shift back to Nature that allows the poet to see the Muse, bringing good news in the form of a renewed hope for a Golden Age for Armenia and Armenian literature, which will usher in “The reign of God, Whose will is free and just: / A Golden Age again shall gild the dust!” (53-54). The metaphoric darkness of domination and subservience that Armenia is in the midst of is only temporary. Even though there is this constant ebbing and flowing between good and evil and light and dark, the Muses reassure the speaker that past misfortunes of the Armenian nation will be vindicated and reversed.

Raffi changes Byron’s tone of decline and fall, and gives the despondent Armenians hope. By having the Armenian muses bring the lantern, light is brought and gives hope to the coming of a Golden Age of Armenian prosperity, which will undoubtedly bring the ravished nation into opulence and wealthy once again. On the one hand, the patriotic tone of “The Lake of Van” rallies Armenians together and unifies them as a nation under Ottoman oppression and, on the other, it allows for the dispossessed to once again have hope of a brighter, freer future.

Raffi’s early poetic works clearly demonstrate the very possible influences of Byronic romanticism. Once the seeds of Byronic

Romanticism were planted in Raffi's head, it seems that he must have searched for more Romantic literature, so that he could continue to educate himself in the various styles of writing, thus furthering his own creativity. This fascination with British Romantic literature could have grown and eventually lead Raffi to Scott's *Ivanhoe*, which would have a lasting and profound impact on the budding novelist.

“ . . . such scope for Scenery”: Theatrical Time and Space in Byron’s Historical Tragedies

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Between April 1820 and July 1821, while living in Italy, Byron wrote three historical tragedies founded on French, Italian, and English sources: *Marino Faliero*, *Sardanapalus*, and *The Two Foscari*. In correspondence with John Murray and in Prefaces to the published plays, he insisted they were not intended for the stage.

However, consideration of textual evidence indicates that Byron composed these tragedies with performance in mind, by combining important aspects of ancient and contemporary theatre, as related to stage time and space. From classical and neo-classical plays, he adopted the Unities of Time, Place, and Action, for, as he declared in the Preface to *Sardanapalus*, “with any distinct departure from them, there may be poetry, but can be no drama” [3, p. 550]. His particular manipulation of historical chronologies and events conformed them to theatrical time, the one day allowed by the Unity of Time. In ordering locations in his plays, related to the single setting for the Unity of Place, he took into account methods of swift scene changes in use at London’s principal playhouses, Drury Lane and Covent Garden.

According to the chronicles, in 1355, Doge Marino Faliero, infuriated by a patrician’s token punishment for libeling the Dogressa, conspired with oppressed plebeians to overthrow and murder his own ruling class. To honor the Unity of Time in *Marino Faliero*, Byron compressed into twenty-four hours incidents that had played out over two weeks. He stated in the play’s Preface that he was “induced . . . to represent the conspiracy [as] already formed and the Doge acceding to it” [3, p. 499].

Time markers in the dialogue set the pace and track the progress of the conspiracy. In Act I, scene ii, Faliero agrees to meet Israel Bertuccio, its leader, “at the hour of midnight” at some remove from the Ducal Palace; he will then be conducted to the “band of brethren,” who wait only for “an hour to strike” and “covet” the Doge as an “ally” (lines 521, 575). In Act II, scene ii, Bertuccio urges one of the rebels to be “patient but till midnight,” promising to introduce a “stranger” who could assure their success, and suggests the group might “strike their blow” against tyranny at sunrise (548-53). In Act III, scene i, Faliero keeps his rendezvous with Bertuccio, as a church bell strikes midnight. In scene ii, Faliero tells the plebeians gathered in a house that the signal to march will be “The great bell of St. Mark’s, which may not be / Struck without special order of the Doge” (366-68). He reasons that the patricians, summoned by that rare sound, will dutifully “flock[]” to the Council, where their enemies “will reap them with the sword for sickle”—at daybreak (381-85, 645-49).

In Act IV, scene i, as “the dawn / . . . hasten[s] into heaven” (343-44), the conflicted, compassionate conspirator Bertram dooms the plot by obliquely revealing it to his patrician “patron” and “protector,” Lioni, who will investigate further. In scene ii, Faliero, anxiously charts the changing sky: “. . . Will the morn never put to rest / These stars which twinkle yet o’er all the heavens?” (421-22), then, “Methinks the day breaks” (457), and “Thou day! / That slowly walk’st upon the waters! march—march on” (487-88). Without warning, one of the night watch and guards enter the Doge’s apartment and arrest him for “high treason” (549). Faliero argues legalities with the officer, declaring in an aside, “I must gain time” (570). At lines 574 and 577, Faliero exults, “Lo! It sounds— . . . / Swell on, thou lusty peel!” and he rashly reveals to his captors that that ringing is their death knell. The watch immediately dispatches guards to the bell tower. The tolling continues through twenty-one lines of dialogue (574 stage direction-595), but, when it ceases abruptly, Faliero realizes “All’s silent, and all’s lost!” (595-99). Punishment is swift. The confederates are tortured and executed (V.i). Faliero’s daylight beheading follows in scenes iii and iv, scarcely a day

after he leagued with the desperate plebeians.

Sardanapalus similarly dramatizes the final hours of a ruler, the quasi-historical last King of Assyria, an indolent pacifist who, defeated in war, chooses death by self-immolation. In May 1821, Byron wrote John Murray that, in this historical tragedy, “the *Unities* are all *strictly* observed. – . . . The time – a *Summer’s night* about nine hours – or less, though It begins before Sunset – and ends after Sunrise” [1, p. 128]. He added, in a note preceding Act I, that he “suppose[d] the rebellion” against Sardanapalus “to explode and succeed in one day by a sudden conspiracy, instead of the long war of the history” [3, p. 550].

Another timeline, spanning the solar events in Byron’s letter, tracks the fortunes of the significantly accelerated revolt, the play’s unifying action. In Act I, scene ii (145-47), the King learns of wide-spread discontent with his rule. At the start of Act II (1-36), Beleses, a soothsayer, reads a prediction of the fall of the Assyrian Empire in the red glare of the setting sun. In the ensuing twilight, the “sudden conspiracy” of Beleses and Arbaces takes shape (40ff). The rebel troops battle the King’s forces, off- and on-stage in Act III (68ff, 268-83). Even before the second encounter, the royals’ cause is deemed “Lost almost past recovery” (227). At the beginning of Act V (1-38), and in a calmer key, Myrrha, an Ionian slave and the king’s “favorite,” lyrically heralds the sunrise promised by Byron, while the rebellion audibly rages on beyond the palace walls (59-60). The King soon “*despondently*” acknowledges that the battle is truly lost (133), and he orders the construction of a pyre “[f]or a great sacrifice” (275-82). Shortly thereafter, Arbaces is proclaimed king (288). Some two hundred lines later, Sardanapalus “*mounts the pile,*” Myrrha “*fires*” it, then, according to the stage directions, “*springs forward to throw herself into the flames,*” as “*the Curtain falls*” (497-99). The majority of the tragedy has been successfully, if incredibly, confined to the nine hours or so Byron promised.

In July 1821, John Murray received Byron’s assurance that *The Two Foscari* was “rigidly historical” [1, p. 152]. During the last dozen years

of his thirty-four-year reign, the elderly fifteenth-century Doge Francesco Foscari repeatedly put political duty above family, as he presided over the multiple trials, tortures, and exiles of his son, Jacopo, for crimes against the State, until the young man died in banishment in Crete.

To approximate the Unity of Time here, Byron opened his play during Jacopo's last sessions on the rack, which occur off-stage. The play lacks prominent time references, but no more than forty-eight hours likely elapse, and possibly considerably fewer. The deaths of the two Foscari – historically months and miles apart – now occur in Venice within 470 lines of one another. Jacopo succumbs while departing for Crete, in Act IV (183-93). In Act V, as “The great bell of St. Mark’s tolls” the election of the new Doge, the grieving father, deposed from office, “*drops down and dies*” (307 stage direction).

As Byron honored the Unity of Time in his fashion, he evidenced similar flexibility in his interpretation of the Unity of Place.

In *Marino Faliero*, he shifted certain “consultations” from their true settings in the Doge’s Palace to such locales as the exterior of a church (III.i), a private house (III.ii), a patrician’s palazzo (IV.i), and the Piazzetta of St. Mark’s (V.iv). Completely faithful, for once, to the Unity, he confines *Sardanapalus* to a single Palace “Hall” or chamber. *The Two Foscari* unfolds in a hall in the Ducal Palace (in Acts I, II, and IV), in a prison cell (in Act III), and in the Doge’s private apartment (in Act V) – separate spaces but a single complex, which literally and metaphorically imprisons both Foscari.

For the reader, characters and actions move effortlessly from place to place on the page. At the end of the first scene in *Marino Faliero*, an official hastens from an antechamber with a message for the Doge; the second scene finds Faliero in his quarters awaiting that document. Such a swift transition for the reader’s eye, and others like it, prompted A. N. Vardac to observe, without elaboration, that Byron’s plays are cinematic in construction [5, pp. xxii, 234]. In the lap dissolve, one image on the screen blends into another. Methods for changing scenery on the English

stage produced a similar effect, as Byron could have witnessed, being both a patron of the theatre from his youth and, in 1815-16, a member of the Subcommittee of Management at Drury Lane.

The rapid shift of locations Byron included in his dramas could be accomplished with shutters (also known as “scenes” or “flats”). These pairs of framed scenery formed a single painted background when they came together in the middle of the stage. The shutters moved in grooves attached to the floor and to structures above the stage at some half-dozen positions beyond and parallel to the proscenium arch. Depending on the grooves used, the acting area in front of the setting, as well as the hidden space behind it, could vary greatly in depth. To change a setting, “scene shifters” pulled the halves of the joined shutters to either side of the stage in view of the audience, revealing a second pair, depicting another locale, already in place in other grooves. They also pushed shutters on to conceal the previous setting. Narrow wing pieces, in other grooves, hid the shutters’ outer edges. In a variation on the grooves, flats were fastened to supports projecting through long slits in the floor and connected to carriages running on rails beneath the stage. A system of ropes, barrels, and shafts allowed one set of flats to roll off the stage as another came on. In theatrical parlance, the “scenes” “opened” and “closed,” and their movements were so indicated in a play’s stage directions. Covent Garden was equipped with grooves, Drury Lane with carriages, which, at some time prior to the 1822-23 season, were replaced by grooves [6, pp.59-65, 94-97; 2, pp. 166-88; and 4, pp. 141-42].

In addition to such routine scene changes in *Marino Faliero* as an anteroom into a Ducal chamber and a church exterior into a domestic interior, that tragedy offers the opportunity for two striking uses of shutters. In Act V, scene iii, as the executioner raises his sword above Faliero, who kneels, head on block, on the Giants’ Staircase, Byron’s stage directions specify that “*the scene closes*” on this chilling execution tableau (800). The inward movement of the shutters prepares for the flats’ dramatic role in the final scene.

To create the next setting, the shutters just closed – preferably in grooves just beyond the proscenium arch – would represent “*the grated gates of the Ducal Palace, which are shut,*” as stipulated in the text (801). In terms of time, scene iv actually begins during scene iii and features citizens excluded, like the reader or theatre audience, from the execution. One man views it through the grate and describes it, including incidents already staged in scene iii. This crowd scene could be played on the deep apron or forestage, in front of the arch; actors would access it through the doors built into each side of the proscenium. When the stage direction reads, “*The gates are opened; the populace rush in*” toward the Staircase (828), the flats would be drawn back, imaginatively suggesting the opening of the barriers. A voice then cries out, “The gory head rolls down the Giants’ Steps!” and “*The Curtain falls*” (829) [4, 142].

Byron dresses the single space in *Sardanapalus* by situating actions in common playing areas and in distinct parts of the room – Beleses at the portal in Act II and Myrrha at the window in Act V. He occasionally fills the chamber with spectacle, such as the first entrance of the King, “*effeminately dressed, . . . attended by a Train of Women and young slaves*” (I.ii.48 stage direction); a lavish royal banquet (III.i.1-68); and the on-stage combats in Act III.

Sardanapalus also requires an architecturally complex and practicable set piece – the imposing funeral pyre. In this single-setting drama, no shutters can close to conceal its construction. Instead, at the King’s command, the stage direction reads that “*Soldiers enter, and form a pile about the throne, etc.,*” which he encourages them to raise “Higher . . . / . . . And thicker yet” (V.i.356-58). Byron thus turns routine scenery building, normally handled by carpenters before the performance, into exciting stage business capable of eliciting reader and audience curiosity and apprehension about the specific “sacrificial” purpose of the pyre.

The use of shutters in *The Two Foscari*, as in *Marino Faliero*, could fluidly suggest characters’ movements between settings. In the closing speeches of Act II, in a Palace hall, the Doge and his daughter-in-law,

Marina, determine to visit the imprisoned Jacopo. He is discovered, in the next scene (III.i), in his gloomy cell, which Marina enters at line 37, and the Doge at line 340.

In these tragedies, Byron's "object" was the dramatization, in imitation of the Greeks, of "striking passages of history" [1, p. 152]. But his greater, progressive, purpose was nothing less than the reform of the English stage. He had lamented in *English Bards, and Scotch Reviewers* (560-631) and in his "Address" for the opening of the new Drury Lane Theatre in 1812 that the once proud home of Shakespeare and Congreve had increasingly become the domain of child actors, melodrama, Italian opera, and ballet.

His return to the classical and neo-classical theatrical form, "opposite," he claimed "to the English drama" [1, p. 218], would do much to rehabilitate the stage. He "intentional[ly]" developed a "Simplicity of plot" [1, p. 218], dependent on the limits of the Unities, and accommodated current means of swift scene changes, an essential consideration for production. As he scorned "the *taste* of the day – for extravagant 'coups de theatre [sic]'" [1, p. 156], he hid Faliero's beheading and left unstaged Sardanapalus' conflagration. He likewise avoided in his dialogue "the rant of the present day" [1, p. 218].

The most effective way to disseminate these corrective practices was not as "mental theatre" created in a reader's imagination [1, p. 187], but in performance before large audiences. By observing the Unities, especially of Time and Space, and by tailoring his historical tragedies to the theatrical machinery of his day, Byron undercut his claim, in the Preface to *Marino Faliero*, that he could not write a "stage-worthy" play [3, p. 499], ensuring, instead, that his dramas possessed easily followed stories and "such scope for Scenery" ("Dear Doctor," 10) [3, p. 231] for production at Drury Lane and Covent Garden.

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Borderland World: Time and Space in the Polish Byronic Narrative Poems

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Before moving on to the proper topic of my contribution, I'd like to mention an Armenian reference in one of the most important and mysterious poems of Polish Romanticism, namely *The Spirit King* (*Król-Duch*), an epic poem by the Polish Romantic poet Juliusz Słowacki, who was very strongly influenced by Byron in his youth. I have spoken many times about Słowacki at Byron conferences, as he is one of the two most important Polish Romantic poets, next to Adam Mickiewicz. *The Spirit King* is a mystical poem recounting the story of the Spirit as it traverses human history and is incarnated as different great rulers and heroes. The poem's opening words, uttered in the Caucasus, are: "I, Er the Armenian", which is a reference to Plato (Er, the son of Armenius) but also to the culture of Armenia as the oldest source culture for the subsequent history of European spirituality. Słowacki believed he had Armenian ancestors and was very proud of this kinship with the Armenian people.

We should add that historically the Armenian community in Poland was very strong and highly respected. The historical Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was a multicultural country, with many nations and many religions living together: Poles, Jews, Armenians, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Karaims (Crimean Karaites) and many other national and religious communities. Many who were forced to leave their countries found refuge in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

While the connection between this brief introduction and the topic of my paper may seem tenuous, in fact the Byronic "poetic novels" of the Polish Romantics were very closely linked to the memory of that historical

multicultural Polish state, a state that lost its independence at the end of the 18th century. Writing their “tales” (or “narrative poems”) under Byron’s influence, the Polish Romantics used the reality of the historical Commonwealth to express Byron’s visions of history and of human nature, a vision of the world akin to that offered by Byron.

My talk presents the spatial and temporal structure of one of the most important genres of Polish Romanticism, the “poetic novel” (or “narrative poem”), which was written under the influence of Byron’s Romantic tales, especially *The Giaour* and *The Corsair*. This genre played a fundamental role in the development of Romanticism in Poland. Works considered poetic novels (Byronic “tales”) were written by the most outstanding Polish Romantic poets, including Adam Mickiewicz, Juliusz Słowacki, Antoni Młczyński, Seweryn Goszczyński, as well as other less well-known Romantics. History and the Romantic individualist hero were the two primary elements of these narrative poems. The Polish Romantic poets created a world similar to that of Byron’s tales in which history was a clash of different cultural formations, and the poetic vision incorporated universal questions about evil. How did the Polish Romantics interpret these two Byronic categories – history and the hero – in their narrative poems? Into what reality did Polish Romantic poets transpose Byron’s questions? What space and what vision of time did they choose for expressing problems similar to those Byron raised in *The Giaour* and *The Corsair*?

The events described in their works happen in various places and in different historical periods. Yet, while some of them imitate Byron in their choice of Oriental settings, the most frequent backdrops were the eastern borderlands of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, for instance in Ukraine or Lithuania, as well as on the Polish-German border.

Time in those poems is definite in a historical sense, yet it also becomes a metaphor for the contemporary world and may convey universal attributes. Despite many differences, there is one feature that links the time and space of these Polish texts: the borderland cartography. The

events in all Polish Byronic poems take place in the cultural, religious and national borderland, where various cultural formations not only coexist but also clash.

The Byronic theme of enslaved Greece as the endangered cradle of European culture clashing with the culture of the Orient is most clearly apparent in Juliusz Słowacki's "poetic novel" *Lambro*, where the backdrop for the events being portrayed is Greece. While there is a historical basis for the events, the depiction of Greece is extremely literary and Byronic. It is an intertextual Greece, built from literary, and particularly Byronic themes; one could call it a metaliterary Greece in which qualities familiar from Byron's Greek tales are enhanced: melancholy, degradation, despair, confusion, and even decadence (similar to that of the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries). It is also a Greece in bondage and therefore Orientalised, something that also paradoxically made it fascinating to the Romantics. It would also have been clear to any Polish reader of the time that Greece was a metaphor for Poland in bondage.

However, the Polish Romantics most often set their Byronic tales in the space and time of the old Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, highlighting the borderland aspect understood in different ways: as being between Europe and the Orient, the West and Byzantium, the North and South, Christianity and paganism, Christianity and Islam. Thus, Polish Byronic novels were set in different borderland areas: in a spatial, temporal and – I might add – axiological sense, because these were precisely the areas that provided opportunities to depict clashes of values and the individual's embroilment in tragic conflicts. For example, Mickiewicz, who was born in Lithuania, set his *Konrad Wallenrod* in the medieval North: in pagan Lithuania and in Prussia, threatened by the Teutonic Order. It is in this axiologically unobvious world that Mickiewicz placed his Byronic hero who engaged in Machiavellian subterfuge and evil for the greater ultimate good: the regaining of independence for the national community. The mask of evil was impossible to discard, however, and the poem ends with the destruction of the hero as a person.

Ukraine turned out to be the area with the greatest “Byronic” potential for Polish Romanticism; Ukraine formed the eastern border of the former Commonwealth and charmed the Romantics as a picturesque land, mysterious and marked by melancholy. A set of ideas relating to Ukraine developed in Polish Romanticism; one might call it the theme of the Romantic imagination, the archetype of the Polish imagination, or the poetic myth of Polish Romanticism [1, p. 36], which has a very strong presence in Polish awareness and imagination to this day.

What was it about Ukraine that fascinated the Polish Romantics? Was it the memories of Polish chivalry associated with this land, Ukrainian folk tales, the free spirit of the Cossacks, the wild and luscious nature, and especially the vast steppes, which became a metaphor for freedom and endlessness? Ukraine in Polish Byronic tales is wild, mysterious, and melancholy. However, in some works by Polish Byronic writers it is also rife with cruel social conflicts and the unpredictable forces of evil.

The most important Polish Byronic poem set in Ukraine is Antoni Młczyński's *Maria*. We consider this text to be one of the greatest masterpieces of Polish poetry; it is a work that grew out of a deep engagement with Byron's works, while at the same time remaining distinct and unique. Published in 1825, *Maria* was the only work written by Antoni Młczyński (1793-1826). The author was an extremely interesting man, and his biography – full of mysteries – itself achieved a kind of mythical status, not unlike Byron's biography. Młczyński was sometimes perceived as a Polish Byron: both as a Childe Harold and as a soldier fighting for freedom [1, p.30]. In his lectures at the Collège de France, Adam Mickiewicz described Młczyński as follows:

A soldier of the national forces from the time of the empire, after Napoleon's defeat he travelled abroad for a long time, and died in Warsaw. Like Lord Byron, he sought adventure in foreign countries, in Switzerland and Italy; in his wanderer's life he read foreign authors; he was especially [...] moved by the poetry of Byron. [2, p. 381, transl. J. Dutkiewicz].

Malczewski was born in Ukraine into an impoverished aristocratic family in 1793. His youth was often compared to Byron's, particularly in terms of the inclination of both writers to challenge social conventions. Very popular in the salons of Warsaw, he was involved in numerous love affairs and adventures, though his biography also includes true romantic love. He was shot in the foot in a duel to defend his lover's honour (a Byronic touch!). A Napoleonic soldier, he broke his leg when horse-riding and this prevented him from taking part in the Moscow Campaign. After 1817 he travelled around Europe, also similar to Byron, visiting various places including Chamounix and Geneva, and climbing Mont Blanc on 4th August 1818 – the eighth climber and the first Pole to conquer the mountain. He wrote about this expedition to Professor Marc-August Pictet from Geneva. Malczewski allegedly encountered Byron in Venice; he returned home in 1821, underwent a spiritual transformation, became an ascetic and withdrew from the world. He died young in extreme poverty in 1826, leaving just this one extraordinary, ambiguous Byronic poem.

The meeting with Byron in Venice could have taken place at the turn of November and December 1818 or at the beginning of 1819. There is a legend according to which it was Malczewski who told Byron about Mazepa. Incidentally, Juliusz Słowacki, whom we mentioned earlier and who was a great admirer of Malczewski's poem, wrote a magnificent tragedy about Mazepa.

Polish scholars have found numerous similarities between *Maria* and works by Byron: *The Corsair*, *The Giaour*, *The Bride of Abydos*, and there are also similarities to *Beppo*, *Parisina*, *Manfred*, and *Lara*. I would like to reiterate, however, that these are not derivative, simple relations. *Maria* is a unique masterpiece, although Polish comparative scholars have found it to contain many references to specific expressions, images and themes from Byron's works. For present purposes, I am most interested in how Malczewski creates a vision of Ukraine as a spatial and temporal equivalent of the world of Byron's tales. What in Malczewski's Ukraine has the features of the Byronic world? What is Malczewski's

Ukraine like as he builds it Byronically?

There are many detailed references to Byron's poetry in *Maria*, and Polish scholars have produced a vast catalogue of these similarities. For example, there is the image of a rushing horseman – in this case, it is the image of a Cossack riding hard across the fields of Ukraine, his purpose unknown. There are also images of a Polish knight rushing by on horseback; then there is the image of fruit of the Dead Sea.

The poem's plot is most likely set in the 17th century, although one can find many historical anachronisms suggesting that these events are a mask for later actual events, and that they express the awareness of someone from the first half of the 19th century. The plot is based on real events: the romantic love and marriage of the son of a great nobleman from the borderlands to a modest gentlewoman who dies in unexplained circumstances, killed by "Venetian masks" which visit her home in a carnival procession just as her husband is fighting the Tatars in defence of his country. The story ends with a promise that the young husband will take revenge, suspecting that the murder was inspired by his father. This brief summary trivialises the richness of the poem's meanings, its mystery and depth into which Malczewski fitted the whole wealth of Byron's world and its heroes: strong and extreme passions, love and revenge, innocence and evil, scepticism towards religion and devout faith, active endeavour and extreme despair, memory and oblivion...

Malczewski's Ukraine – like the space of all Polish Byronic "poetic novels" – is a poetic borderland. The heroes of this world live between the the East and West in different senses: between Western Europe and the influence of Byzantium (there are numerous Orthodox churches), but also between Europe and the Orient – in the poem, Polish hussars fight against Tatars. We also have the world of Madame de Staël's cultural geography here: stretched between the gentle sky of Italy and the sombre steppe, which is depicted in accordance with certain ideas about the North. Ukraine may also be the North here in a psychological sense: are we to interpret it as a landscape expressing the state of mind of the hero?

Or the narrator? In fact it's even hard to say who the narrator is in this mysterious story. The desolation of the steppe expresses a state in which humankind has fallen existentially silent.

Malczewski's imagery is extremely poignant: empty Ukrainian fields where steppe winds have blown everything around into no more than a sign. Into the vanitas image of the world's transience, the inevitable passing and annihilation of everything that exists, Malczewski weaves an image of the disappearance and loss of traces of the national past. Will the seed germinate, hidden in the fertile ashes, buried deep down, next to the bones of ancient knights in unmarked graves? The imagination of the author of *Maria* revolves around the theme of desolation, loss and passing, and the poet gives us, his readers, little hope for the survival of memory and the continuity of the world. In this case the world is, by its essence, transient and marked by loss.

In *Maria*, we see a vanitas image of the transience of the world and its appearances. I cannot remember any work by Mickiewicz in which the poet succumbed to the kind of terror that Malczewski expresses in *Maria* towards the world's transitoriness. In Malczewski's poem, the infinite space of the steppe stands for the space of human existence. *Maria* is dominated by the image of extensive, monotonous flatlands, the steppe not limited in any way and a horizon that cannot be crossed. This is an image of both endlessness and imprisonment. It is a world from which there is no escape. It signifies freedom and bondage at the same time, but also a place where you cannot settle permanently. It is a symbol of humankind in exile in a deep existential sense. This feeling is accompanied by the theme of the silence of the world, God and man, although – similarly to Byron – the theme of conversing with nature also arises. It is a world marked by lushness, but also erosion.

To conclude, we can say that it is often the borderlands between Western Europe and Byzantium, more broadly between the West and East, or Europe and the non-European East. It is also the borderland between the North and South as well as that between Christianity and the pagan world

or between Christianity and Islam. The Polish Byronic poems, which bears traces of the local colours of the borderland as well as Romantic Orientalism, uses the multicultural borderland as a backdrop for questioning the condition of contemporary humankind, and specifically the identity of European culture.

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Byron in Wellington: From Rejection to Esteem¹

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The Duke of Wellington used different spaces during his lifetime to share his views on Lord Byron. Those spaces were mainly limited to private conversations with intimate friends and scarce, quite restricted notes sent to close acquaintances. In terms of time, their lifespan was uneven, with Wellington enjoying a very long life and Byron dying quite young. This paper is intended to trace Wellington's views on Byron in light of the memoirs and diaries written by a choice of Sir Arthur's close friends and relatives. It also takes into account part of the Duke's private correspondence. The publication year of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, 1812, and the year of Wellington's latest recorded reference to the poet, 1837, mark the time boundaries for the spaces provided by the chosen sources.

It would be difficult to find two characters so different from each other, in most senses, and so incompatible as Wellington and Byron. What they had in common was perhaps that each of them reached the top position of their respective fields. In terms of place, Wellington was born in Ireland, where he lived during an important part of his childhood. He spent most of his long, adult life in England, where he died. In contrast, Byron was born in England and grew up in Scotland and England, but he died in Greece, after spending the last 8 years of his life away from his homeland. Wellington chose to live in England. Byron's choice was not to live in England. He did not feel at home there, while Wellington did.

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The asymmetry, curiously enough, also obtains in terms of time; that is, the different length of their lives: Byron died when he was only 36, while Wellington celebrated his 83rd birthday, so he lived 47 years longer than the poet. Despite the general assumption that evolution towards conservative standpoints seems to be inherent in human nature, Wellington did not evolve in his political concerns. He was always a convinced conservative. Byron, I turn, did not count on enough time to evolve and remained a convinced Whig, a revolutionary, an *enfant terrible* in many ways until his death.

Back to spaces, both Byron and Wellington were extremely prolific writers. Their respective texts are the spaces where we would expect to find their legacy, their views on life. Byron's references to Wellington, and his brothers are found quite early in his literary work. Some of them were suppressed before publication for different reasons during the poet's lifetime but they are all well known nowadays. Naturally, Byron also made reference to Wellington in his private correspondence and in his conversations [3].

In the case of Wellington, his main written legacy are his private correspondence and his papers; that is, his dispatches, apart from his speeches in Parliament. He was not keen on literature in general. He did read – and enjoy – history books, biographies and historical novels. But he did not like poetry at all. Wellington's writing style is plain and straightforward. It is also learned – as shown in the quotations he often adds to his comments – and far from romantic, focusing on factual detail and avoiding formal artistry. The list of readings he recommended his eldest son, in a beautiful letter addressed to him [12] contains no reference to literary works and includes almost exclusively history books, which he classified as follows:

- General History
- Ancient History
- The History of England

- History of Ireland
- History of Scotland
- England after the Restoration
- History of France
- Civil Wars
- Histories of the British Possessions
- Geography
- Law
- Political Economy
- Foreign Languages: Spanish, Portuguese and German

Wellington's papers, dispatches included, often transpire his personal ideas about life in general, as well as different political and social issues. But his readers should not expect to find in his writings profuse evidence of his personal views on Byron, or on any other individuals. There seems to be no direct, written evidence for example, of the Duke's response, to Byron's criticism of the battles of Talavera and La Albuera in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* [3]. Byron did not content himself with criticising Sir Arthur and his family. He also attacked the General's friends and admirers, as he did when he harshly mocked, and even ridiculed John Wilson Croker's lengthy poem *The Battles of Talavera* [5]. Likewise, there seems to be no written evidence of Wellington's response to Byron's later attacks on him in *The Age of Bronze* [4] and in *Don Juan* [2], [7].

An interesting source for the study of Wellington's opinions on Byron is his closest friends' diaries, journals and papers. Rory Muir's recent and monumental biography of the Duke is an important source for them [8], [9]. In a few cases, Wellington's friends record what they consider the Duke's words and comments. The reliability of these sources has to be reasonably questioned. But those people's close acquaintance with Sir Arthur allows for some degree of acceptable faithfulness. In some cases,

different witnesses confirm those comments. They were mostly women, quite learned and interesting women, who were his friends not necessarily his lovers. Women he felt respect for, and who he actually valued as his confidants, women who felt free to oppose his views while admiring him and truly valuing his friendship.

One of Wellington's closest friends was Mrs Harriet Arbuthnot, whose diaries are full of references to Sir Arthur. Mrs. Arbuthnot was a quite learned and a very discreet, tactful person. The contents of her diaries were a surprise in this sense, even to her husband, because nobody could imagine her being so skilful at observing without missing a single detail. This is what makes her information quite reliable. She records several conversations with Byron's old friend Bankes, who often tells her about the poet's 'abominable' vices while admitting that he cannot help liking him. On July 13, 1824 she recorded a description of Byron's funeral procession, which had passed their windows the day before. She criticised what she called "the Opposition" for trying to make a grand funeral for, in her words,

"... A man who perverted his splendid talents to the worst of all possible purposes, whose writings are so profligate that they are not fit to be read, & who was good for nothing in every relation of life. ..."

The final mention to Byron in Harriet's diary, written on 18 November 1824, cannot be more contemptuous:

"I have always thanked God I never knew Lord Byron & that once, when he desired it, I refused to be introduced to him. I have no respect for genius & talent misapplied" [1].

Another close friend of Wellington's was Frances, Lady Shelley, whose

diary contains copies of Wellington's letters to her. Volume II of this diary includes one of the few private letters written by Wellington, in which Byron is directly mentioned. It is dated 12 November 1824, about five months after the poet's death. The text below is an extract:

... Have you read Captain Medwin? Calantha is in a nice way. They tell me that that which displeases her most is that Medwin should have said that Lord Byron was not in love with her! She says that she can prove he was so, and will publish his letters!! Hobhouse has informed her that if she publishes a line, he will publish all her's which he has got!! What a delightful society these people of genius make!! God bless you, my dearest lady.

"Believe me, ever yours most affectionately,

"WELLINGTON" [6].

Wellington's effort to produce a most expressive text is quite skilful in the use of the written devices available in English to produce a most emphatic text: an initial rhetorical question, double exclamation marks on three occasions, and italics to convey emphasis. Both correspondents called Lady Caroline Lamb 'Calantha' after the autobiographical character of her novel, *Glenarvon*. This is quite unusual in Wellington's texts. But his expressive needs are not just satisfied by means of formal signs; there is also the irony conveyed in the personal comment she adds. This is not surprising, given that the Duke had taken pains trying to reconcile Lady Caroline with her husband after her affair with Byron and was very concerned about her. This explains the unusual tone he uses in this extract.

I will now briefly refer to another of Wellington's good lady friends, Frances Mary (known as Fanny) Gascoyne-Cecil, whose diaries were published by Carola Oman in 1968. According to this new witness, speaking of poets more than nine years after Byron's death, on 26 October 1833, the Duke once said:

“I hate the whole race. I have the worst opinion of them. There is no believing a word they say – your professional poets, I mean – there never existed a more worthless set than Byron and his friends for example”.

Also, according to the same source, a few years later, on 8 June 1837, speaking of the king’s illness and of Sir Henry Hallford, the king’s doctor, Wellington insisted:

“I do believe there is not a more unfeeling race of people upon earth than physicians and surgeons – except poets. Nothing like poets! They describe feelings beautifully, but I’ll be hanged if they ever had the sensation of one of them. Look at LB – he was the chief of them – and a more hard-hearted unfeeling wretch never existed” [10].

A final document illustrates what most Wellington’s biographers say about his ability to give his opponents credit, judging them, when necessary, in an unbiased way. And the particular person involved this time is Byron himself. The document is the draft of a letter to Croker written by the Duke during a journey in February 1826. After describing the situation in Greece very negatively, without excluding irony, Wellington expresses strong criticism against Colonel Stanhope’s introduction of what the Duke identifies with ‘licentious press’. He goes on to legitimise his opinions by acknowledging that “even Lord Byron” disagreed with that:

“... in addition to all the other blessings attending the contest in Greece, Colonel Stanhope had the merit of introducing there a licentious press against the establishment of which not only the government, but the head of each of the factions, and to do him justice even Lord Byron, remonstrated as calculated to aggravate their dissensions and all the evils which already existed in the country”.

Then Wellington criticises the inactivity of the British military officers and, again, resorts to Byron in support of his point, though somehow ironically:

Byron indeed intended to take the field and risk his person. He was tired of the reputation of an author, and longed for that of a great commander. But Colonel Stanhope does not appear even to have thought of such a doing.

Wellington then acknowledges Byron's intended financial contribution to the cause, which his unexpected death had prevented:

"... It was reported that the corps of artillery was to be formed, that the means of payment for six months were found, that is to say 100 pounds from Lieutenant Colonel Stanhope, the remainder from the German commander and from the pocket of Lord Byron, who was besides expected to take into his pay 2,000 Suliots".

Wellington ended up this note by recommending his friend Croker the reading of William Parry's *The Last Days of Lord Byron* [11], a book that Wellington himself had carefully read:

Since writing this letter I have read Mr. Parry's book which well deserves your attention. He knew Colonel Stanhope well"[13].

The main conclusion I was able to draw from the information revised is that even those who disliked, or despised Byron did not even try to deny his genius as a writer. The texts here presented were all written by people who disliked the poet, Wellington included. And it is perhaps this what

explains Byron's universal success. What makes artists universal is the quality of their work, not the life they led.

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“The Prisoner of Chillon” and Its Interpretation in Translation

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On the 22nd of June, 1816 Byron and Shelley embarked in their small open sailboat for a tour of Geneva Lake. On the 26th of June they approached the medieval castle of Chillon. The poets were impressed by the story of François Bonivard, a sixteen-century patriot from Geneva who had conspired against the French Duke of Savoy and had been confined for six years in the lower dungeon of the castle, where political prisoners and heretics had been chained to the columns. Shelley was sunk in the depth of melancholy at this monument of tyranny. Byron left his signature on the pillar next to Bonivard's. Eventually Shelley got ill but Byron's emotions were transformed into poetical lines of one of his most popular pieces – “The Prisoner of Chillon”.

Since the publication of “The Prisoner of Chillon” in December of the same year it almost became a sort of ritual to go and meditate before the stone floor worn by the feet of the unfortunate prisoner, whose trials after Byron were celebrated by Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas, George Sand, Nikolai Gogol, Gustave Flaubert, Mark Twain, Alphonse Daudet and many others. In 1821 Vasily Zhukovsky, a talented Russian poet and translator, visited the castle and dungeons and was deeply inspired to translate the poem. He accomplished the translation of the poem in September, 1821 and published it in April, 1822. Since then his version has become very popular in Russia and successfully resonates for the last two centuries.

In summer of 2016 the delegates of the International Byron Conference held in Paris, those who continued their travels to Switzerland to commemorate the bicentenary of Byron's stay in that country, kindly added their names to the list of pilgrims who had visited Chateau Chillon

to pay tribute to Byron and Bonnivard. Inspiration encouraged me to leave the following inscription in the visitor's book at Chillon: "Soon I'll come back with my Georgian version of "The Prisoner of Chillon".

The same summer, when I returned to Georgia and found myself in the country house, I set up for six nights and accomplished the full poetical translation of the poem. I published my Georgian version of "The Prisoner of Chillon" in June of 2017 [6, pp. 10-11].

There is a universally acknowledged attitude that if you are willing to understand a text, you need to translate it. On the other hand, any translated version is the most reliable source of text interpretation, though when thoroughly analyzed not all of them win.

As noted above Vasily Zhukovsky's translation of "The Prisoner of Chillon" resonates until today. It has been enclosed in all academic and popular Russian publications of Byron, that means that all the readers of the Russian Empire, and later of the Soviet Union, accepted the poem according to Zhukovsky's version.

Georgian experience of acquaintance with "The Prisoner of Chillon" started in Byron's life-time. Sources confirm that Zhukovsky's translation reached Georgian men of letters as early as in 1823 [2, p. 409]. Since Georgia's involvement into the Russian Empire in 1783 until the collapse of the Soviet Union, Georgian readers had access to foreign literature and namely to Byron mostly through the Russian language. French was also taught in Georgia but English wasn't spoken then at all. In spite of this the first Georgian version of "The Prisoner of Chillon", though in fragments, was published anonymously as early as in 1868 in "Tsiskari", the leading literary journal of Georgia. A century later, in 1970 a talented Georgian translator, Tamar Eristavi published a full poetical version of "The Prisoner of Chillon". Investigation shows, that she followed the source text, but her version mostly fell under the impact of Zhukovsky's interpretation.

But was Zhukovsky faithful to Byron when rendering the poem into Russian? And what do I mean by a faithful translation?

Modern text linguistics offers a new approach towards text analyses through splitting the content of a poetic text into the following strata [4, 3]: 1) Factual information that comprises data on facts, phenomena and processes of the present world or an imaginary reality. 2) Conceptual information that implies the author's individual estimation and the relation between its phenomena as based on factual data. 3) Subtextual information that it is not always present in academic texts or in fiction, but it is a permanent concomitant of poetic texts. To be more precise, it is the poetic text that is endowed with subtextual information as a hidden stratum. The latter is drawn from factual information, but due to the capability of lingual signs to form associative and connotative meanings. Subtextual information is developed as if in contrast to conceptual information that actually creates a counterpoint, though finally it adds to the concept of a poetical piece and creates its whole informative capacity.

According to the poem Bonnivard had five brothers. Three of them were killed but two were imprisoned together with him in the dungeon of the Castle of Chillon. The three brothers were chained to different stone pillars and couldn't reach each other. Delacroix's painting, that is in the Louvre Museum, depicts the scene in a prison cell with the contorted body of the captive and the body of his dying brother – just a few feet away, but forever beyond his reach. Both of Bonnivard's brothers died but Bonnivard himself survived. "The Prisoner of Chillon" is offered by Byron as a monologue of a man confined in the dungeon for many years without any hope of gaining freedom, and eventually, without any wish or desire to be free. It is a tragic story of tortures and sufferings of a man who revolted against oppression and injustice, but was severely punished. Therefore this tragicalness of the story actually creates the concept of the poem.

But **tragicalness** of the poem is never expressed only through sufferings, tortures and punishment. Byron succeeds to show Bonnivard's habituation to imprisonment, the way of getting used to his extremely unhappy situation, the eventual loss of desire and ambition to set himself free, that is a greater tragedy than any torture and sufferings. Therefore,

the tragic line of the poem is at least twofold and the conceptual information sparkles with its facets.

When, unexpectedly for Bonnivard, men came to set him free, the unhappy prisoner shared the following thoughts with us:

*It was at length the same to me,
Fetter'd or fetterless to be,
I learn'd to love despair.
And thus when they appear'd at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage—and all my own!
And half I felt as they were come
To tear me from a second home: (Chapter XIV)*

Habituation, as the second stream of tragicalness, is offered by Byron not only in a dramatic way, but through humour as well. In the final XIV chapter of the poem Byron actually mocks and ridicules his beloved and appreciated character:

*With spiders I had friendship made,
And watch'd them in their sullen trade,
Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
And why should I feel less than they?
We were all inmates of one place,
And I, the monarch of each race,
Had power to kill—yet, strange to tell!
In quiet we had learn'd to dwell;
My very chains and I grew friends, (Chapter XIV)*

Byron achieves the utmost of dramatic approach, but touched with humour, when he presents the following episode: Bonnivard, at seeing the death of his brother, broke the chains in the tantrum of anger. Later, when walking in the cell to and from, he climbed the wall of the dungeon and reached the barred window to view the world outside. In contrast to the absence of desire to be united with the world he apparently enjoyed the view, but found himself troubled to see an eagle in the sky flying towards him. Bonnivard tried to avoid his glance and climbed down back as far as he never wanted the eagle to see him imprisoned:

*The eagle rode the rising blast,
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seem'd to fly;
And then new tears came in my eye,
And I felt troubled—and would fain
I had not left my recent chain; (Chapter XIII)*

In favour of Zhukovsky we are pleased to confirm that the translator truly depicted the episode. As for Tamar Eristavi's version, this episode is absent in her Georgian translation.

Beyond the twofold tragicalness of the poem, as a contrast to it, there emerges Bonnivard's love of life as **subtextual information** of the poem. Subtextual information, as it has been noted above, is a hidden stratum, though it is always marked by lingual signs.

We should note that the first steps of this Byronic optimism and love of life are shown through Bonnivard's belief and faith when he witnesses the death of his dearest brother but survives:

*I know not why
I could not die,
I had no earthly hope but faith,*

And that forbade a selfish death. (Chapter VIII)

The lines devoted to faith are misinterpreted and distorted both by Zhukovsky and Eristavi. The first Georgian translation in fragments did not comprise this chapter at all. According to Zhukovsky's version the final lines read as follows:

*Не знаю – вера ль то была,
Иль хладность к жизни жизнь спасла?*

Word for word this means: I don't know whether it was faith, or indifference to life that saved my life.

According to Eristavi we read the following: ან მომისჯა სიცოცხლე რწმენამ, / ან სიკვდილს ჩემთვის აღარ სცაღია. Word for word this means: Either faith has condemned me to life or death has no time left for me. This not only contradicts to Christian understanding of faith but distorts the conceptual meaning of the lines.

Bonnivard, once a free thinking man, had been accustomed to the dungeon and due to spiritual depression never hoped to gain freedom:

*In quiet we had learn'd to dwell;
My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are: (Chapter XIV)*

But when he finds himself totally free out of the dungeon he produces the following words that are preceded by a dash to mark a pause in the poet's thoughts:

—even I

Regain 'd my freedom with a sigh. (Chapter XIV)

Here the leading semantic marker is the word “even”. Bonnivard, **even he**, who had been accustomed to prison, gave a sigh, when found himself free. Was it a sigh of grief or relief? The context of the poem with its hidden subtext of love of life and faith leads to the conclusion that Bonnivard gave a sigh of relief that adds to the whole content of the poem and produces the final concept of a triumph of freedom and faith.

The life story of the historic Bonnivard matches the optimistic closing of the poem. Bonnivard lived a long life, became the member of the City Council, married on four occasions, and wrote History of Geneva from the very first days of its foundation.

As we may observe, the Russian translator did not duly realize the meaning of the final lines and interpreted it as if Bonnivard, when set free, missed the prison and gave a sigh of grief:

Когда за дверь своей тюрьмы

На волю я перешагнул –

Я о тюрьме своей вздохнул.

The same interpretation is shared by T. Eristavi, the Georgian translator:

და ოხვრით შევხვდი ციხიდან გასვლას,

თავისუფალი დღის დაბრუნებას.

Word for word the Georgian lines could be presented this way: with a sigh of grief I welcomed my release from prison and the return of freedom.

Presumably it was Zhukovsky's misinterpretation of the final lines that led the greatest poet of Russia, Alexandr Pushkin, when expressing his high appraisal for Zhukovsky's translated version, to say that Bonnivard, as a character, showed the signs of insanity². Pushkin didn't know English and read Byron either in French or in Russian. Zhukovsky's translated version was published as early as in 1822. The existing estimation permits to say that Pushkin read the poem in Russian.

As Paulo Rônai points out in his "School of Translators", the aim of all art is something impossible when the painter reproduces the irreproducible, the poet expresses the inexpressible and the translator strives to translate untranslatable [1, p. 200]. Regretfully the subtle subtext of the poem remained untranslatable with Russian and Georgian translators.

Shortly before the publication of the poem, Byron obtained information on the historic Bonnivard that differed in some aspects from Byron's story: e. g. the real Bonnivard had only two brothers and they were not imprisoned together with him. Though Byron felt indebted to that great patriot and the historic truth he never changed the plot of the poem, but simply added a "Sonnet to Chillon". The sonnet, that preceded the poem, praised a freethinking man and his final victory over tyranny and despotism, thus creating together with the whole text of the poem a hymn to Liberty, Freedom and Faith. The first Russian translation of the poem by Vasily Zhukovsky never comprised translation of the "Sonnet to Chillon". Later the sonnet was translated by G. Shengeli and all Russian publications of Byron's works include it together with Zhukovsky's text of the poem.

² "Должно быть Байроном, чтоб выразить с столь страшной истиной первые признаки сумасшествия, а Жуковским, чтоб это перевыразить". See: письмо Н. И. Гнедичу, 27 сентября 1822 г. Из Кишинева в Петербург [5, с. 36].

"One should be Byron to express with terrible truth the first signs of insanity, and Zhukovski, to render it" (from a letter to N. I. Gnedich, 27 September, 1822, from Kishinev to Petersburg) [5, p. 36].

The above explicated interpretation of the subtext of the poem was duly realised in my translated version. I hope the reader of the present article will kindly forgive my humour if I close with the following: for the first time in the history of Russian and Georgian receptions of “The Prisoner of Chillon”, that spans almost two centuries, Bonnivard, as Lord Byron’s character, gave a sigh of relief instead of a false sigh of grief. As for Bonnivard’s faith, it has been also restored and rendered in my translated version.

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Space and Subject in “The Prisoner of Chillon”: A Path to the Emergence, Transformation, and Empowerment of the Self

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Lord Byron’s “The Prisoner of Chillon” is a poem that explores the indivisible relationship between space and subjectivity, where each contributes to the production and the reproduction of the other. The subject, according to Henri Lefebvre, “[...] produces itself in space [...] and] also produces that space” [5, p. 170]. The subject is then affected by the spatial environment where the self is built through the interaction of the subjects with the objects existing in that lived space. This inextricable relationship between space and subjects is best described by Elizabeth Grosz, who points out that “[s]pace can never be perceived as an empty receptacle, independent of the subject [...] and its relation to the various objects positioned in it” [3, p. 92]. In other words, not only subjects are constructed by the space they inhabit but also their ideologies and perceptions, which are shaped by both the objects existing in the space they occupy and the specific movements and actions performed in it. However, even if subjects are mostly defined by the space they inhabit, they do have the potential to create their own space independent of the already established one. By so doing, the subjects surmount the system of domination exerted on them in that specific space by making use of it. In his poem, Byron shows that even though Bonnivard’s space is a means of control and power in the spatial-subjective system, the inmate is able to overcome the system of domination through the processes of emergence.

In his analysis of space, and following the system principle of Albert Einstein, who believes that “[...] once two systems have interacted they must from that point on be considered a single system” [2, p. 83], Lefebvre paves the way for a systemic understanding of subjects and

space. The theorist perceives these two interrelated systems, one affecting the other, as one complex system called a spatial-subjective system that “[...] creat[es] complex structures with emergent behaviors better suited to an environment” [8, p.25]. Lefebvre believes that such systems are subject to change in the way they self-reassess and challenge the conventional socio-cultural systems and the normative perception of things. Accordingly, the transformation in the spatial-subjective structure is due to the mechanism of emergence, which is generated in consequence of the actions and interactions of subjects with their surroundings. In so doing, the subject becomes adept at defying, changing, and re-writing the system. Hence, for change to occur in the spatial-subjective system, there “[...] needs to exist an emergent space that allows the production of the subject (or subjects) capable of the variable practice necessary for change [such as...] instability/unpredictability recursivity, an emphasis on movement of the component parts of the space [...] [and]an emphasis on lived and perceived space” [8, p. 26].

Contemporary theories about space acknowledge the substantial role of literature in the production and reproduction of space as well as the alteration of subjects in space. In *The Poetics of Space*, Gaston Bachelard asserts the remarkable metamorphoses of space within literary texts. He affirms that “[s]pace that has been seized upon by the imagination cannot remain indifferent space subject to the measures and estimates of the surveyor. It has been lived in, not in its positivity, but with all the partiality of the imagination” [1, p. xxxvi]. “The lived in space through literature” that Bachelard hints at brings to mind Lefebvre’s notion of lived space, which is an amalgamation of the perceived space and the conceived space, the real and the imagined. Lived space, according to Lefebvre, is the space of “a few writers and philosophers,” the “space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects” [5, p. 39]. Literature then displays the interaction between space and subjects resulting in the construction of lived space or, in Edward Soja’s terminology, the “Third

space”, which itself is a significant component of emergent space. Hence, this third space involves the possibility of the production of emergence and consequently prompts a change in the spatial-subjective system.

The lived space that Byron constructs in his poem is portrayed through the symbolic representation of the prisoner’s interaction with the objects in space – in this case, the bird. Byron highlights the effects of such representation through the obvious shift of the prisoner’s perception of the world around him, which gradually results in a change of the prisoner’s subjectivity. He writes: “A lovely bird, with azure wings [...] Had brought me back to feel and think [...] My brother’s soul come down to me” [6, 268, 278, 288]. Portrayed as unique and different, the *perceived* bird in the prisoner’s space has been converted into a human being, almost similar to his dead brother. In consequence of this mode of thought and imagination, the prisoner has constructed a lived space, wherein the perceived (the bird) and the conceived (the bird as his brother) amalgamate. The produced lived or third space results in the formation of a new situation, which is evidently conveyed when the inmate says: “[a] kind of change came in my fate / My keepers grew compassionate; / I know not what had made them so” [6, 300-302]. By accentuating the inexplicable reason behind his keepers’ actions after encountering the bird, Byron overtly displays the effect of the lived space in the sudden alteration of the prisoner’s perspective. Following his interaction with the bird, Bonnivard admits that the bird has brought him back to feel and think and, according to Jean Hall, “links [the prisoner] to life” [4, p. 143]. Such affirmation, therefore, hints at the birth of a new self that comes as a result of a certain element’s presence in space; that is, the bird. Consequently, the lived space created by the inmate becomes an impetus to the formation or reformation of the prisoner’s subjectivity so as to become a subject who knows.

Significantly, the spatial-subjective system in the poem is in a constant state of becoming, shifting from passivity to activity, from death to life; this produces an emergent space that results in the reconstruction of the prisoner’s subjectivity. Movement is “the field of the emergence, while

positionings are what emerge” [7, a. p. 8]. Bonnivard’s movement and inner transformation are manifested when the inmate starts to feel he is living in void “[a]nd fixedness—without a place” [6, 244]. The spatial mobility is also exposed through Bonnivard’s imaginary association of the dungeon with the Island; the prisoner affirms that the Island “seem’d no more, / Scarce broader than my dungeon floor” [6, 344-345]. This shift in the prisoner’s perception engenders a parallel adaptation in the space he occupies. The subversion of Bonnivard’s spatial observation of his dungeon is discernible in his reflection when the men come to set him free; he declares: “[i]t was at length the same to me” [6, 372]. Bonnivard’s words draw attention to the fact that the distinctions between the restricted prison and the free world outside are meaningless. Hence, by changing the dungeon as a fixed space into a mobile space, the prisoner’s perception of himself begins to change into that of a free person.

Movement in the spatial-subjective system is also manifested through the transition between or the perpetual interchange of both binary oppositions. Accordingly, both the dungeon as space and the prisoner as subject become adrift, oscillating between the inside and the outside, freedom and imprisonment, life and death. The wall, for instance, is perceived through the dungeon’s window as the spatial element that emphasizes Bonnivard’s movement from the invisibility of the underground – emphasized by the lack of natural light – to the visibility of the outside world. Once a symbol of repression and a barrier to freedom, the prison wall becomes a path toward the outside world as it allows the inmate to feel and live the freedom of that world. Similarly, the prisoner’s mobility is highlighted by the description of nature’s stillness which, according to Hall, “emphasizes man’s mobility” [4, p. 144]. Bonnivard’s movement is that of alterity, a necessary element in the process of emergence. He is a subject who has never been defined by the passive side of the many binaries in the poem, no matter how much those in power have tried to keep him fixed to the position of subservience. Unlike his brother, who has chosen one side of the binary, Bonnivard

chooses to alternate between the two worlds and thus be different from the other oppressed inmates. He demonstrates that the distinctions drawn between binary oppositions are shaped and imposed by the dominant powers, rendering each dichotomy meaningless and subject to change.

Moreover, the movement of the prisoner in space has a remarkable impact on the prisoner's sense of self. Emergence in the spatial-subjective system occurs "through the actions of subjects as they reproduce the system" [8, p. 26]. The repetition of the words "step," "trod," "tread," and "footing" throughout the poem accentuates the importance of Bonnivard's movement in the dungeon and the places he steps on. When the prisoner rushes to see his brother, the former says: "I found him not, / I only stirr'd in this black spot" [6, 211-212]. Accordingly, the new spatial absence of the body has led to the prisoner's change of mind; the prisoner affirms: "I had no thought, no feeling—none—[...] / But vacancy absorbing space" [6, 235-243]. Overtly perceived and represented, the absence of his brother in space has shaken the prisoner's personal and mental space, creating a crisis point in the existing spatial-subjective system, which is "[...] an equilibrium-seeking system [...] [that] suddenly perceives a deterministic constraint, becomes 'sensitive' to it, and is catapulted into a highly unstable ... state enveloping a bifurcating future" [7, b. p. 95]. Consequently, the transformation that follows such a crisis is made evident every time the prisoner plunges into "silence, and a stirless breath / Which neither was of life nor death" [6, 247-248], while looking at the "empty chain above [his brother's space]" [6, 163]. The silence the prisoner experiences subverts his place and elevates him to a vast and boundless space; according to Bachelard, "[t]here is nothing like silence to suggest a sense of unlimited space" [1, p. 43]. Space then becomes a mental state which, in this case, modifies the prisoner's perception of his prison only to become one of unlimited space.

As a fundamental aspect in the mechanism of emergence, the movement produced by the subject in the spatial-subjective system has to be recursive to ensure proper execution. According to Brian Massumi, "[...]

our experience is the result of recursive processes producing emergence” [qtd. in 8, p. 33]. Hence, the repetitive movement of the prisoner in his cell from one space to another – “[a]long my cell from side to side, / And up and down – and then athwart” [6, 307-308] –uplifts him morally so that “new tears came in [his] eye” [6, 356]. Notably, when the prisoner descends, he declares that “[t]he darkness of my dim abode / Fell on me as a heavy load” [6, 360-361] and perceives the prison as “a new-dug grave” [6, 362]. At this point, the word “descend” has both a physical and psychological connotation; the prisoner’s repetitive spatial movement upwards and downwards engenders a change in the prisoner’s perception of his space and the elements inside that space, such as the spiders and the mice that become “all inmates of one place” [6, 385]. Consequently, the recursive movement in the spatial-subjective system produces a new emergent state leading to a change in the prisoner’s subjectivity.

As an emergent fluid space, the dungeon is potentially transformative – it is the space that defines the inmate and makes him what he becomes. Being an inherent characteristic of emergence, potentiality is “[...] a characteristic of the virtual, or states of emergence” [8, p. 35]. Bonnivard’s escape from the dominant powers that are unable to control him is spatially represented. Such depiction is established through the emphasis on the dungeon’s description as a new free space, one that is similar to his home but has a different size, the size of the Island, and is occupied by new friends, the spiders and the mice. The transformation of the subject is observable in the change in space. This is made clear when the inmate, despite the severe hardships caused by imprisonment, experiences freedom inside his prison cell and expresses his inability to leave what he calls “a second home” [6, 380]; namely, his only space of subjectivity. Space and its objects, therefore, have helped transform the prisoner into a free subject for his obvious benefit. Within this newly developed space, Bonnivard is capable of producing a new spatial-subjective system that engenders a novel relationship between the prisoner and his prison.

In conclusion, by first constructing an emergent space and then

displaying the indivisible relationship between the inmate's spatial positioning and his subjectivity, Byron empowers the subject. This is markedly expressed at the end of the poem when he combines subjective and spatial terms; Bonnivard declares: "Among the stones, I stood a stone / [...] My very chains and I grew friends" [6, 236, 391]. Consequently, the power of the space plays a significant role in the transformation of Bonnivard's subjectivity: the more the latter is associated with the dungeon, the more invincible he becomes. The prisoner and his prison undergo the different processes of emergence, which results in the construction of a new space – one that produces a new subject, who has the potential to emerge from the dungeon's space in the spatial-subjective system. Hence, the production of Bonnivard's new self and the reproduction of the new space endow the inmate with the power to challenge and withstand the oppressive system that inscribes his subjectivity and limits his freedom.

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Byron and Heidegger, *Poiesis* and Time

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There is, we could say, a particular poetic way of writing about time. When we talk about time, we say, “It is time to go to the doctor’s”, or “My great-grandmother was ahead of her time”, or “I will buy us apricots if I have time”. When Byron talks about time, he says, “How Vain are the pleasaunces on earth supplied, Swept into wrecks anon by Time’s ungentle tide!” or “But Time shall tear thy shadow from me last. All thou could’st have of mine, stern Death! thou hast” or “when Can man its shatter’d splendor renovate, Recall its virtues back, and vanquish Time and Fate?” [1, pp. 23, 96, 84].

This poetic way of writing about time feels strangely abstract. The time Byron describes has a capital T, and has agency, like a character. Yet it is not a human character, but a metonymic one, and so is hard to take seriously as anything more than “poeticizing”. While we use lower-case T “time” to arrange concrete events, capital-T “Time” performs some vaguely Greek function of making grandiose statements about fate and the human condition. Thus, at one and the same time we take *poetic* writing about “Time” more and less seriously: more seriously as worthy of our philosophical interest, less seriously as saying something concrete about our place in the world.

This seems a mistake on at least three levels. First, it assumes a gap between literature and the concrete that is both dangerous and wrong, particularly with a writer such as Byron. Second, it forgets that our everyday discussion of “time” also functions metonymically: when we say “My great-grandmother was ahead of her time” we mean something like “my great-grandmother had very surprising and radical ideas for the era she lived in”. It cannot be just the *metonymic* use of time itself that

makes something abstract. Third, and perhaps most importantly for our purposes, if we are to discard poetic uses of time as vacuous, we discard a large portion of Byron's oeuvre, for Byron discusses Time more than any other Romantic poet. If we were to count capital-T "Time" as a character in *Childe Harold*, for example, it would appear more times than Childe Harold himself.

The question, then, is what Byron is doing when he is writing poetically about "Time", and what it says about our everyday use of the word. Byron, like Heidegger a century later, realized that time has a full, heterogeneous existential character that goes unnoticed in our daily discussions, and like Heidegger he sought to uncover the hidden connotations of the word. In what follows, I will try to cipher the theory of time Byron is offering in his many uses of Time with a capital-T, and how it compliments the account of time that Heidegger, in his 1927 magnum opus *Being and Time*, would offer one-hundred years later.

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Let us start with perhaps the most famous passage on time in Byron, from Canto IV of *Childe Harold*. Byron, having abandoned completely the guise that it is Childe Harold speaking, is meditating on how he has suffered in his life as a poet and public figure.

*But I have lived, and have not lived in vain:
My mind may lose its force, my blood its fire,
And my frame 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 remembered tone of a mute lyre,
Shall on their softened spirits sink, and move
In hearts all rocky now the late remorse of love [I, p.137].*

This, if anything, is a poetic use of time. It is on the one hand deeply moving and on the other hand quite unclear what the passage means. The emotional force is clear: Byron is threatened by his own mortality, but finds something within himself that will live on and defy these fears. Yet the syntax that reveals this thought is completely enigmatic. What can it mean to tire Torture and Time, words that surely have no concrete referent, and are for some reason capitalized? How can words work in this way, signifying little in literal terms but emotionally conveying their meaning with deep clarity?

The answer must be that we have a great deal that we associate with time without realizing it, associations that Byron is stirring within us metonymically even while his syntax seems unclear. First and most obvious is the association of time with mortality: there is something within Byron which shall tire time, and breathe when he expires; there is something, presumably his poetry, within Byron which shall outlive his fears of death and his death itself, which time sweeps us towards. Time is a metonym for “brings us towards death”, and this association of time with fear of death is so deep and prevalent that it bubbles up to our mental surface whenever we capitalize “Time”. But there are more associations lying hidden here. “Torture and Time” clearly go together, as things that Byron must ‘tire’. That time is linked to suffering – torture – makes sense for a Byronic hero. In the present tense, Time is torture for one whose life is suffering; in the past tense, Time is that which tortures one whose life has been loaded with turmoil and guilt. Even the act of defeating torture and time, the verb ‘tire’, is temporal. Time is something we must tire, something we must exhaust and outlive. The very act of continuing on through time is a competition with the opposing party until it gives up its control and lies down.

This is a grim account of temporality. Our everyday discussion of time, as a word and as a phenomenon, suggests that time is neutral. “It is time to go to the doctor’s”, “let us meet at a set time”, “I will buy us apricots if I have time” – all seem neutral. Time sweeps us along towards death, but it also sweeps us along toward a great many other things, that could in

fact be quite nice: good whiskey, long swims, fresh fruit. And yet, according to Byron's metonyms, capital-T Time signifies mortality, suffering, and guilt: death, before death, and before before death are all enemies to be tired and outlived. These metonyms are not unique to Canto IV: almost universally, in *Childe Harold* and beyond, capital-T Time signifies mortality, suffering, and guilt. This could, of course, just be because Byron himself is uniquely preoccupied with death, and uniquely gloomy. We could imagine, perhaps, other poems to Time that are neutral or positive, poems that meditate on how long a life Time gives us, or how Time allows us to buy apricots. But this I think, is to misunderstand how capital-T Time works as a character. We can understand the argument of Canto IV without deciphering its syntax *because* our natural associations with time are in fact with mortality and guilt. There is a reason it is hard to think of poems that commemorate the niceness of Time. A poem on the greatness of Time or the neutrality of Time could exist – but it would have to add its associations explicitly to what is already in our head. The 'poetic' use of time – signifying little but emotionally conveying its meaning with deep clarity – only works if our everyday associations with time are not the neutral phenomena we think they are (seeing a clock strike 12, recognizing that we need to go buy apricots), but negative Byronic evocations of mortality and guilt.

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This account of time finds its apotheosis in the second half of Heidegger's magnum opus *Being and Time*. As for Byron, our normal understanding of time, what we could call clock-time, does not interest Heidegger at all. The idea that we have an infinite series of consecutive moments, each self-contained, with a past, present and future, is for Heidegger only a secondary concern. Instead, what is primary to Time, and primary to our actual lived experience of the world, are two phenomena: anxiety towards a future death, and guilt towards our past. These are not literal phenomena – Heidegger is not always talking about literal anxiety toward death and literal guilt at our past. Instead, they function metaphorically. On the one hand, we are constantly anticipating

the death of events well before they happen – constantly struck by the possibility that an experience, be it good or bad, will run out. On the other hand, we are struck by the strange guilt that we are a “groundless ground” for ourselves: we feel a deep responsibility for the world we exist in, or for having slept with our half-sisters, but also recognize that fundamentally we have been thrown into that world and are a groundless ground for it.

For Heidegger these phenomena, anxiety and guilt, characterize our everyday experience of time in a far more literal and profound way than our basic understanding of clock-time. When we utter a seemingly neutral phrase – “If I have time I will buy us apricots”, “my great-grandmother was ahead of her time” – what we are in fact evoking is something quite different. “If I have time I will buy us apricots” means something like “I want to buy us this tasty fruit but I am worried the store may close before I can” – Heideggerian anxiety. “My great-grandmother was ahead of her time” means something like “my great-grandmother had surprising and radical ideas which were overshadowed by the prejudices of the era she lived in” – Heideggerian guilt. Poetry, Heidegger thinks, enables us to enact the lived experience of time in a way normal language does not, because our everyday descriptions of clock-time are in fact characterized by anxiety and guilt. In essence, Heidegger is calling for a capital-T Time, the metonymic time of mortality and guilt, that can reveal the hidden inner workings of lowercase-T time: calling for precisely the poetic description of Time that Byron puts forth in his work, from *Childe Harold* onward.

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Thus, Heidegger theorizes what Byron performs. For his ideal of a proper characterization of time, Heidegger turned to Hölderlin, whom he would advance in the second half of his career as the model for philosophical and poetical writing, helping turn Hölderlin into a national hero. But had Heidegger studied Byron, he would have found a far more exemplary model. The Byronic Hero is, quintessentially, structured on Heideggerian

Time, impelled towards death and haunted by guilt. And this is not some abstract claim confined to literary discussions of Byron's poetry, but a claim about how Heidegger's theory of Time functions in Byron's life, and in our own: works like *Childe Harold* and *The Giaour* made Byron famous overnight because they are, beautifully and tragically, about Byron's own guilts and anxieties in a deep and thrilling way. Byron's strange poetic way of writing about time was not an escape from concrete descriptions of time, just as his "poeticizing" was not an escape from reality but a reflection of it.

Heidegger and Byron are not special in recognizing that death and guilt are fundamental to time – everyone to a certain extent knows that, if Heidegger's theory and Byron's poetry are to work. They are special, and borderline mad, in asserting that it is *only* these two characteristics that define our relation to time: that our seemingly neutral or positive uses of time are a mirage, a sort of delicate shell that could at any moment be broken to reveal mortality and guilt. It is possible, of course, that Heidegger and Byron were just exceptionally gloomy figures, with exceptionally gloomy lives, and that their own theories of time are a reflection of this. But it is also possible that the tragic nature of their lives allowed them to hit upon a rather startling truth about the way we conceive of time: that when an object is good we see the object itself, when an object is bad we see the object's duration, and when an object is good or bad we see its potential demise and our guilt in not having properly brought it into this world. And it is only through writing about time poetically that this possibility comes out.

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