

LORD BYRON AND THE COSMOPOLITAN IMAGINATION, 1795-1824

By

Michael P. Steier

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English

Fall 2011

Copyright 2011 Michael P. Steier
All Rights Reserved

LORD BYRON AND THE COSMOPOLITAN IMAGINATION, 1795-1824

by

Michael P. Steier

Approved: _____
Iain Crawford, Ph.D.
Chairperson of the Department of English

Approved: _____
George H. Watson, Ph.D.
Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences

Approved: _____
Charles G. Riordan, Ph.D.
Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Education

I certify that I have read this dissertation and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Signed: _____
Charles E. Robinson, Ph.D.
Professor in charge of dissertation

I certify that I have read this dissertation and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Signed: _____
Carl M. Dawson, Ph.D.
Member of Dissertation Committee

I certify that I have read this dissertation and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Signed: _____
Peter W. Graham, Ph.D.
Member of Dissertation Committee

I certify that I have read this dissertation and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Signed: _____
Kevin Kerrane, Ph.D.
Member of Dissertation Committee

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to Professor Charles Robinson for his advice and support over the years. He read and commented on many different versions of this project, and it never would have reached completion without his guidance. I especially want to thank him for being such an inspiring teacher and scholar, and, of course, for introducing me to Lord Byron and the Romantics.

I extend my gratitude to my dissertation committee for supporting this project. Professor Carl Dawson has been a perennial source of advice and guidance. His seminars on nineteenth-century British literature helped expand my understanding of Romanticism, and they remain among the most memorable courses I had the pleasure of taking. Professor (and fellow “Hokie”) Peter Graham has had a significant impact on my research. His work on Byronic cosmopolitanism inspired much of the thinking that went into this project. I am also grateful to Professor Graham and the Byron Society of America for supporting my research at International Byron Society conferences in Ireland and Scotland. Professor Kevin Kerrane has been a long-time friend and mentor, whose professionalism and teaching I admire and hope to emulate. I am especially grateful to Professor Kerrane for agreeing to read and comment on this dissertation on short notice.

I give special thanks to Professor Donald Reiman and the Carl and Lily Phorzheimer Foundation for supporting my graduate study with two research

assistantships. The many important lessons in textual scholarship that Professor Reiman taught me have had a significant impact on my approach to literary research. I am grateful to Professor Reiman for his willingness to read and comment on early versions of this project.

The English Department at the University of Delaware deserves much of my gratitude for the various fellowships, travel grants, and research awards that allowed me to complete this project.

My family and colleagues have also had an important role to play in supporting the dissertation. Paul Yeoh, Michael Edson, Jeremy Trucker, Joe Turner, and Robert Clarke all stimulated my thinking and helped keep my sanity in check. I especially thank my mother, father, brother, and grandmother for supporting me year after year. I could not have finished this project without their love and support. Finally, I want to thank Kathleen Mallon for supporting me throughout the many stages of writing (and talking about writing) the dissertation. She made it all worthwhile, and I dedicate this to her.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	vii
Chapter	
1	INTRODUCTION: LORD BYRON AND THE COSMOPOLITAN IMAGINATION, 1795-1824.....1
2	TRANSGRESSING THE BORDERS: <i>ENGLISH BARDS AND SCOTCH REVIEWERS</i>27
3	TOWARDS AN INTERNATIONAL STANDARD: <i>HINTS FROM HORACE</i> IN 1811.....56
4	BECOMING A “CITIZEN OF THE WORLD”: <i>CHILDE HAROLD II AND THE CURSE OF MINERVA</i>80
5	BARDIC COSMOPOLITANISM: <i>CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE</i>112
6	CYNICAL COSMOPOLITANISM: <i>DON JUAN AND THE AGE OF BRONZE</i>148
Epilogue	NATIONAL POETS OF MANKIND: BYRON AND POPE.....177
REFERENCES.....	194

ABSTRACT

Following George Gordon, Lord Byron across Britain, Europe, and the Eastern Mediterranean, "Lord Byron and the Cosmopolitan Imagination, 1795-1824" traces Byron's cosmopolitanism to its foundations in Greek Cynical philosophy and to its founder, Diogenes, Byron's self-confessed mentor. The Cynics are commonly regarded as the first cosmopolitans; yet the cosmopolitanism they practiced is quite different from the cosmopolitanism we value today. Instead of stressing a need for social progress and global interconnectedness, the Cynics chose to live outside of society, challenging its conventions and declaring themselves to be citizens of the *cosmos*. I argue that Byron followed Cynical ideas closely and, as a Cynical cosmopolitan, rejected the theories of cultural unity and social progress that had become popular during the Enlightenment. My first two chapters, which focus on Byron and Anglo-Scottish relations, chart the development of Byron's internationalism in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* and *Hints from Horace*, two early neoclassical satires rarely studied as cosmopolitan texts. The next two chapters, which focus on Byron's travels in Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean, explore the limits of universal cosmopolitanism in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Byron's first poem explicitly to adopt a Cynical philosophy. My last chapter focuses on Byron's later years when he internalized the principles of Cynical philosophy in *Don Juan* and

The Age of Bronze. The conclusion brings the full scope of Byron's cosmopolitan into focus by examining the urbane rhetoric of the prose writings he prepared in defense of Alexander Pope in 1820 and 1821.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION: LORD BYRON AND THE COSMOPOLITAN

IMAGINATION, 1795-1824

In 1760, Oliver Goldsmith began publishing a series of fictitious letters in the *Public Ledger* that would later serve as the basis for his epistolary novel, *The Citizen of the World* (1762). The letters are written by a Chinese traveler named Lien Chi Altangi who doubles as Goldsmith's own philosophical mouthpiece for international relations.¹ In his second letter from London, the traveler reflects on the virtues of all the cosmopolitans who have come before him:

I honor all those great names who endeavored to unite the world by their travels; such men grow wiser as well as better the farther they departed from home, and seemed like rivers, whose streams are not only increased, but refined, as they travel from their source.²

Lord Byron, who has long been styled a "Cosmopolitan" and a "World Poet," would seem to fit Altangi's description of a "great" citizen.³ Byron traveled much of Europe

¹ *A Companion to British Literature*, 1:214.

² Goldsmith, *The Citizen of the World*, 1:24.

³ Beatty, 106.

and the Eastern Mediterranean, desired to visit North and South America, and familiarized himself with the social and political conditions of all the cultures he encountered. Among his many travels, Byron's second and final journey to Greece in 1823, when he joined other European philhellenes in supporting the Greek Revolution, has more than anything else established his reputation as a "*Cosmopolite*" who, in Samuel Johnson's sense of the word, had a "home in every place."⁴ Monuments honoring Byron and his commitment to the Greek cause can be found throughout Greece today, and yearly academic conferences across Europe and North America sponsored by The International Byron Society continue to reinforce his status as an international poet who, in the words of Altangi, has succeeded in "unit[ing] the world." Byron, however, would have mocked such a notion as idealistic and dismissed Altangi for his belief in a virtuous and unifying cosmopolitanism. In the eleventh canto of *Don Juan*, when Juan arrives friendless in London after traveling across Asia and the Eastern Mediterranean, Byron says as much, comparing the empty wisdom he has gained from his world travels to the empty wisdom Diogenes the Cynic found during his life's journey:

But London's so well lit, that if Diogenes
Could recommence to hunt his *honest man*,
And found him not amidst the various progenies

⁴ *Dictionary*, 143.

Of this enormous city's spreading spawn,
'Twere not for want of lamps to aid his dodging his
Yet undiscovered treasure. What *I* can,
I've done to find the same throughout life's journey,
But see the world is only one attorney. (11.28)⁵

In the following study, I argue that our twenty-first century idea of “cosmopolitanism” as a socially ennobling and culturally unifying ideal is not the same cosmopolitanism Byron endorsed in his life and his works.⁶ Rather, Byron's cosmopolitanism, as he tells us in the passage from *Don Juan*, is based upon the Cynical philosophy of Diogenes of Sinope. The Cynics are regarded as the first cosmopolitans, but the world view they promoted is quite the opposite of Goldsmith's benevolent internationalism. The ancient Cynics desired to live in a state of Nature, independent and free from all social custom, rejecting the *polis* in favor of the *cosmos*

⁵ All quotations from Byron's poetry are taken from Jerome J. McGann, ed., *Lord Byron: The Complete Poetical Works*, 7 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980-93). Hereafter all references to *Don Juan* will be parenthetically cited by canto and stanza number.

⁶ In thinking of “cosmopolitanism” in its modern sense, I follow the definition given by Harry Brighouse and Gillian Brock: “cosmopolitanism guides the individual outwards from obvious, local obligations, and prohibits those obligations from crowding our obligations to distant others. Contrary to a parochial morality of loyalty, cosmopolitanism highlights the obligations we have to those whom we do not know, and with whom we are not intimate, but whose lives touch ours sufficiently that what we do can affect them.” See the introduction to *The Political Philosophy of Cosmopolitanism*, 3.

and adapting to the rigors of a vagrant lifestyle. The earliest cosmopolitans were not civilized, cultured travelers like Altangi; rather they were self-styled misanthropes, who begged for food, unabashedly performed bodily functions in public, and routinely sneered and snarled at politicians and philosophers. By tracing Byron's cosmopolitanism to its foundations in Greek Cynical philosophy, I show that his world view is more complex, more probing, and far more Cynical than the cosmopolitanism we value today.

I

Cosmopolitanism has its origins in Greek rhetorical traditions and the ancient philosophy of the Cynics. Scholars trace its origins more specifically to Diogenes of Sinope, the fourth-century (BCE) Cynic who was possibly a pupil of the Greek rhetorician and Socratic protégé Anthistenes.⁷ The details we have of Diogenes' life are largely anecdotal. Diogenes Laertius' *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* (3rd century AD), a text Byron had familiarized himself with by 1811, is the standard text on the life and teachings of the founder of the Cynics. Laertius' *Lives*, however, does not provide a coherent image of Diogenes or his teachings.⁸ The Greek philosopher did

⁷ Moles, 417.

⁸ All references to Laertius' *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* (hereafter *Lives*) will be taken from R. D. Hicks' translation and cited parenthetically by book and page number. Byron seems to have read Laertius sometime during or before 1811; in one of his notes to *Hints from Horace* (1811), Byron alluded to the story that the *Mimes*

not leave any written doctrine because his methods of instruction were both oral and physical. Hence, as R. Bracht Brannum argues, out of the jumble of biographical fragments available to us in Laertius' biography "comes the sense that we are left with an improvised life not a coherent one," and that "Diogenes most brilliant invention was not a set of doctrines, let alone a method, but himself."⁹ A few examples from Diogenes' life will help to establish his philosophic principles as a corpus of improvised speech acts.

After being exiled for coining false currency in his home town of Sinope, Diogenes turned to a life of vagrancy (*Lives* 6.23); when asked by strangers "Where are you from?" he responded by describing himself as a "citizen of the world" (*Lives* 6.65). R. D. Hicks, Laertius' translator, speculates that the term "cosmopolitan" originated with Diogenes (*Lives* 6.64n). Yet, according to William Desmond, Diogenes' cosmopolitanism was not a systematic philosophy about international relations in any modern sense;¹⁰ rather, the Cynic's belief in a cosmopolitan existence was a continual process of "adaptation" or "improvisation" as circumstances

of Sophron was found under Plato's pillow when he died. Byron referred his readers to Diogenes Laertius' *Lives* as a source for the story. See *CPW* 1:436. Hereafter references to Byron's notes will be taken from *CPW* and footnoted by volume and page number.

⁹ Brannum, 87.

¹⁰ *Cynics*, 202.

confronted him with a series of differing problems.¹¹ Diogenes' method is apparent in his celebrated preference for sleeping in a pithos (a large wine jar that is often translated to mean a tub). When Diogenes came to Athens, we are told by Laertius, he tried to arrange for a house to live in, and only when those arrangements fell through did Diogenes come up with the idea of living in a pithos instead (*Lives* 6.25). As Brannum argues, "By devising this practical response to a particular contingency Diogenes [took] a large step toward becoming the kind of person who [could] adapt to almost anything, even to ways of life considered beneath the dignity of his species."¹²

In fact, because of his willingness to lower himself "beneath the dignity" of the human species, Diogenes and his followers were often referred to as being "dog-like" (the Greek "*kynikos*" from which we derive the word "cynic," is the adjectival form of the Greek noun for dog).¹³ It is this particularly negative characteristic of the Cynic, as David Mazella has argued, that persists today when we talk of being cynical or having a cynical attitude.¹⁴ The *OED* agrees, defining a "cynic" as one "who shows a disposition to disbelieve in the sincerity or goodness of human motives and

¹¹ Moles, 423.

¹² "Defacing the Currency," 90.

¹³ Cutler, 12.

¹⁴ Mazella, 15-16.

actions, and is wont to express this by sneers and sarcasms.” Yet this way of thinking misinterprets the core beliefs of Diogenes and the Cynics. As a public performer and a rhetorician, Diogenes attempted to persuade his audiences of the falsity of their ways even though his attempts could be shocking and unorthodox. As he saw it, to deny his methods as unorthodox would be to deny truths found in Nature.¹⁵ Diogenes’ unrelenting devotion to the freedom that came with being a citizen of the *cosmos*, however, tarnished his image and perverted his cosmopolitan message for later generations.

Despite having an influence on major philosophical schools such as Stoicism for enduring the rigors of a frugal and vagrant lifestyle, Diogenes and the Cynics were regarded with ambivalence during the period of the Roman Empire *because* their cosmopolitanism refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of the *polis*.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the antagonistic posture the Cynics maintained towards society and its leaders was often celebrated by later writers. The story of Diogenes’ meeting with Alexander the Great at Corinth as recounted by Plutarch, for example, is a legendary instance of the Cynic’s rejection of political authority. Byron owned Langhorne’s edition of Plutarch but probably encountered the story when he was still in school

¹⁵ Brannum, 103.

¹⁶ The Roman rejection of Cynical cosmopolitanism can be seen in the character of Aeneas in Virgil’s *Aenied*: Aeneas’ defining quality is *pietas*, his pious devotion to the *patria*; and his imperial mission is to establish the Roman *polis*.

studying classical rhetoric and history.¹⁷ As Plutarch relates, when Alexander approached Diogenes, the latter unabashedly scolded the conqueror for blocking the sunlight in which he was bathing. Alexander, impressed with the philosopher's demeanor, claimed that if he were not Alexander, he would choose to be Diogenes. The story was retold and enlarged by later writers, most notably by Lucian in his *Dialogues of the Dead* (2nd century AD). Byron never mentions reading Lucian in his poetry or his correspondence but most likely encountered a variation of Lucian's dialogue by Henry Fielding. Fielding drew upon Lucian's version, in which Diogenes stands as a philosopher-hero who convinces Alexander of the vanity of his ambitions as a world conqueror.¹⁸ In his *Dialogue between Alexander the Great and Diogenes the Cynic* (ca. 1741), however, Fielding was more ambivalent. In his version, Alexander replies to Diogenes' insolence with begrudging respect, telling the Cynic that he "speaks vainly of a power which no other man ever arrived at" before proceeding to boast of the glories that attended him in battle.¹⁹ He also calls Diogenes a "wretched Cynic" (52), alluding to the myth that Diogenes only wore a simple cloak upon his back and nothing else (*Lives* 6.25). When Alexander then suggests that

¹⁷ For the story of Diogenes and Alexander see John Langhorne, ed., *Plutarch's Lives*, 4:209. See also the "Sale Catalog" of Byron's library at: www.internationalbyronsociety.org/images/stories/pdf_files/sale_catalogues.pdf

¹⁸ *Lucian's Dialogues*, 120-23.

¹⁹ Fielding, *The Works*, 8:51. Hereafter all citations will be taken from this volume and cited parenthetically by page number.

“honor” lies in conquering other countries, Diogenes replies that his definition of honor would surely not be “ravaging countries, burning cities, plundering and massacring mankind” (53-54). Alexander, in turn, responds by saying that Cynics merely “bite” and “snarl” (54) but perform no great deeds. The dialogue continues in this manner with neither character clearly gaining the upper hand in the war of words.

But Fielding also saw a philanthropic side to Diogenes’ misanthropic exterior: “My snarling is the effect of my love; in order, by my invectives against vice, to frighten men from it, and drive them into the road of virtue” (54). Although Fielding, by the end of the dialogue, sides with neither the conqueror (who falsely imposes cosmopolitan unity by mercilessly destroying other nations) nor the sage (who does nothing but “snarl” at the “vices and follies” of political leaders), his recognition that Diogenes “snarls” but speaks out of “love” instead of misanthropic hate is a message that we also find reflected in Byron’s poetry despite its misanthropic qualities.²⁰ Furthermore, Diogenes’ claim that his invective is meant to “frighten men” to act underscores Fielding’s awareness of the rhetorical foundations of Cynical philosophy. These foundations would have appealed to Byron’s own interest in rhetoric and his sense of the dramatic.²¹ Moreover, we know Byron admired Fielding because he

²⁰ Paulson, 191.

²¹ Paul Elledge discusses Byron’s successes in oratorical debates during his years at Harrow School (*Lord Byron at Harrow School*, 53-54). Byron also remembered that during his school days his “qualities were much more oratorical and martial—than poetical.” See Leslie A. Marchand, ed., *Byron’s Letters and Journals*, 12 vols.

mentions reading him throughout his *Ravenna Journal* (4 January – 27 February 1821). There is thus a chance that he may have read Fielding's dialogue between Diogenes and Alexander sometime before or during the early months of 1821.²²

The figure of Diogenes appears in Byron's poetry in various manifestations and guises. Byron first mentions the Cynic by name in *Childe Harold* III (1816) as the "stern Diogenes" (3.41) who scolds Napoleon for his Alexander-like ambition to conquer the world. In *The Age of Bronze* (1823), Byron names Diogenes as an "alter-ego" who "hold[s] his lanthorn up to scan / The face of monarchs for an 'honest man'" (483-84).²³ The lines from the *The Age of Bronze* allude to the well-known story of Diogenes' life-long search for a virtuous man, which, as we have seen, Byron had used previously in the eleventh canto of *Don Juan* (*Lives* 6.43). Still later in *Don Juan* Byron proclaims most revealingly an explicit kinship with Diogenes, "Of whom half my philosophy the progeny is" (15.73). While McGann finds the figure of Diogenes appealing as Byron's "classical surrogate and alter-ego" in *The Age of*

(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973-82), 9:42-43. Hereafter all references to Byron's letters (*BLJ*) will be taken from this edition, or from Leslie A. Marchand, ed., *'What comes uppermost': Byron's Letters and Journals. Supplementary Volume*. vol. 13 (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1994), and cited parenthetically by volume and page number.

²² Byron referred to Fielding as the "*prose* Homer of human nature." See *BLJ* 8:11-12.

²³ All references to *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* will be abbreviated *Childe Harold* and cited parenthetically by canto and stanza number; all references to *The Age of Bronze* will be cited parenthetically by line number.

Bronze, no critic has taken McGann (or Byron) up on his suggestion, nor has there been any serious attempt to interpret Byron's cosmopolitanism from the perspective of Cynical philosophy.²⁴ Byron's Cynical cosmopolitanism, as I shall hereafter describe it, is a recurring feature of his life and work during his early years in England and during his later years in Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean.

II

During the eighteenth century, the cosmopolitanism of Diogenes and the Cynics was reinvented by European aristocrats, whose idea of world citizenship coincided with an interest in the Grand Tour, a required step in every young gentleman's education that allowed entry into polite society. These young aristocrats were expected to travel to famous European cities to increase their understanding of foreign cultures and classical civilizations. Joseph Addison's *Remarks on a Tour of Italy* (1705) is generally considered to be the earliest representation of the Grand Tourist's agenda.²⁵ As Jeremy Black explains, these tours were restricted by "fashion and convenience" to France and Italy.²⁶ Byron, however, had different ideas for his Grand Tour. In a letter to his Cambridge friend Edward Noel Long on 1 May 1807, he declared:

²⁴ See McGann's commentary in *CPW* 7:120.

²⁵ Thompson, 46.

²⁶ *Italy and the Grand Tour*, 9.

If the war is concluded when I *commence man*, I shall travel not over France & Italy the common *Turnpike* of coxcombs & *virtuosos*, but into Greece & Turkey in Europe, Russia & at which parts of our Globe, I have a singular propensity to investigate. (*BLJ* 13:4)

Unlike the “coxcombs” and “*virtuosos*,” the tourists and antiquarians who made the traditional Grand Tour, Byron expressed a desire to travel to what were relatively unknown regions (“Greece,” “Turkey,” and “Russia”) to nineteenth-century Britons. His desire to travel beyond established European boundaries, what he later refers to as Europe’s “Dark barriers” (1.46) in *Childe Harold I*, would have been considered unorthodox by the aristocratic standards of his own class at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

In the decades surrounding the French Revolution, cosmopolitanism became increasingly politicized as philosophers wrestled with questions of nationhood and national identity. The *OED* helps place cosmopolitanism in its eighteenth- and nineteenth-century contexts, defining a “Cosmopolitan” as one “Having the characteristics which arise from, or are suited to, a range over many different countries; free from national limitations or attachments.” And, as the *OED* further explains, during the Romantic period the term “cosmopolitan” was often contrasted with the word “patriot” and so could be construed as being “either reproachful or complimentary.” Esther Wohlgenut has discussed at length cosmopolitanism in its philosophical and political contexts during the Romantic period, illustrating the

contrasting views of Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant. In *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), Burke, according to Wohlgemut, presented “a unified model of the [British] nation that ultimately exclude[d] the cosmopolitan.”²⁷ Kant, however, is generally regarded as the first modern philosopher to develop a systematic approach to cosmopolitanism, an approach that remains a part of the debate over globalization today.²⁸

Kant’s “Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose” (1784) and “An Answer to the Question ‘What is Enlightenment?’” (1784) argued for universal citizenship regardless of nationality or creed. In both texts, as Wohlgemut explains, Kant “strives to reconcile the seemingly incompatible demands of political realism and moral idealism, the particular needs of the nation and the universal needs of all individuals.”²⁹ His struggle continued in his *Project for a Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Essay* (1795), which was published after the French Revolution and in the immediate wake of the Reign of Terror. As its title implies, Kant’s views had become decidedly more pacific in response to the contemporary events in France. In his essay, Kant shows that war and conflict among nations remain part of the

²⁷ *Romantic Cosmopolitanism*, 22.

²⁸ See the entry for “Cosmopolitanism” in *The Stanford History of Philosophy*.

²⁹ *Romantic Cosmopolitanism*, 13.

“natural” state of humankind, but he reasons that cosmopolitan unity and a “Perpetual Peace” among nations is inevitable:

The guarantee of this treaty is nothing less than the great and ingenious artist, nature (*natura daedala rerum*). Her mechanical march evidently announces the grand aim of producing among men, against their intention, harmony from the very bosom of their discords. Hence it is that we call it *destiny*, viewing it as a cause absolute in its effects, but unknown as to the laws of its operations.³⁰

Kant’s idealized vision for a “cosmo-political” state, as he described it, is grounded upon *a priori* logic and would have been rejected by Diogenes and the Cynics because it lacked a foundation in lived experience. The Cynics, as Brannum reminds us, “practiced action over theory, deeds over words.”³¹ Their most important philosophical target of ridicule, in fact, was Plato, whose theoretical idealism would later be adopted by Enlightenment thinkers such as Kant.

Byron similarly argued from practical experience and would have found Kant’s theories of cosmopolitan unity and perpetual peace without solid footing. His skepticism of Enlightenment philosophies in general is clearly articulated over the course of events in *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* (1812-1818). And the epigraph to *Childe Harold* I-II (1812), which is taken from Louise Charles Fougeret de

³⁰ Kant, 32.

³¹ “Defacing the Currency,” 83.

Monbron's *Le Cosmopolite, ou le Citoyen du Monde* (1753), is decidedly Cynical in orientation:

L'univers est une espèce de livre, don't on n'a lu que la première page quand on n'a vu que son pays. J'en ai feuilleté un assez grand nombre, que j'ai trouvé également mauvaises. Cet examen ne m'a point été infructueux. Je haïssais ma patrie. Toutes les impertinences des peuples divers, parmi lesquels j'ai vécu, m'ont réconcilié avec elle. Quand je n'aurais tiré d'autre bénéfice de mes voyages que celui-là, je n'en regretterais ni les frais ni les fatigues. [The universe is a kind of book, wherein he who has only seen his own country knows but the opening page. I had leafed through quite a large number, which I had found equally bad. This inspection has not been fruitless for me. I hated my country. All the offensiveness of the different peoples amongst whom I have dwelt, have reconciled me to her. If that were the only benefit which I had gathered from my travels, I should regret neither the joys nor the fatigues.]³²

Fogueret, who finds other countries "offensive" and sees no redeeming value in the world, sets the tone for *Childe Harold* I-II, its misanthropic narrator likewise finding little to celebrate in Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean locales he traverses. Nevertheless, Fogueret, as he explains, begrudgingly reconciled himself to his native country. Byron, though he was often tempted to return to England in the years following his exile in 1816, remained more committed to the vagrant life-style of a Cynical cosmopolitan.

³² See Peter Cochran's translation of Byron's epigraph in his edition of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage Canto 1 and 2*, 12.

Goldsmith's *The Citizen of the World* was Britain's response to Fogueret's *Cosmopolite*.³³ Goldsmith believed that a cosmopolitan "should be a man of a philosophical turn, one apt to deduce consequences of general utility from particular occurrences, neither swollen with pride, nor hardened by prejudice, neither wedded to one particular system, nor instructed in one particular science."³⁴ Byron saw through Goldsmith's persona in his fictitious novel and saw his narrative approach as analogous to his own approach in *Childe Harold*, alluding to it in his preface to the fourth canto.³⁵ Although *The Citizen of the World* has none of the misanthropy we find in *Childe Harold*, Byron's Cynical cosmopolitanism is not wholly antithetical to Goldsmith's larger "philosophical" purpose in his novel. In fact, as a satirist who believed "Ethical" poetry to be the "highest of all poetry," Byron was clearly "a man of a philosophical turn" who, in the manner of Diogenes, promoted moral instruction as a core value of his life and art.³⁶ As we shall see, the unorthodox and often contentious manner in which Byron went about instructing others was, in the tradition of Cynical philosophy, both a statement of belief (in the world's rottenness) and a

³³ *Romantic Cosmopolitanism*, 99.

³⁴ *The Miscellaneous Works*, 3:417.

³⁵ See *CPW* 2:122: "I had become weary of drawing a line which every one seemed determined not to perceive: like the Chinese in Goldsmith's 'Citizen of the World', whom nobody would believe to be a Chinese, it was in vain that I asserted, and imagined, that I had drawn, a distinction between the author and the pilgrim."

³⁶ See Byron's *Letter to John Murray Esq^r* in *Lord Byron: The Complete Miscellaneous Prose (CMP)*, 149.

rhetorical strategy to move his audience to act to correct the error of their ways.³⁷ Hence, by using the words of a French author to preface *Childe Harold* I-II, Byron wanted to shock his conservative readers, who were more readily accepting of the patriotic sentiments of a British writer such as Edmund Burke.³⁸ Throughout his career as a satirist, Byron would use sarcasm, irony, and wit—the weapons that were also employed by the Cynics—to “frighten” his audience into acknowledging that the idea of cosmopolitanism in the Enlightenment tradition of writers such as Goldsmith and philosophers such as Kant was, in fact, an untenable notion during the war-torn Napoleonic and post-Napoleonic periods.

III

Many studies on Byron in the twentieth century have shown his cosmopolitanism to be a viable subject of critical inquiry. Studies on Byron and Greece as well as Byron and Italy, of course, have been of perennial interest. Byron spent a large portion of his life in Italy (1816-1823) and died in 1824 defending Greece. His well-known Philhellenism has produced several works of interest, including early general studies such as Harold Spender’s *Byron and Greece* (1924)

³⁷ Cutler, 31: “For Diogenes, the only philosophy worth anything was that which could awaken people into action.”

³⁸ Byron’s publisher John Murray was the first of many readers to find that *Childe Harold* did “not harmonize with the general feeling” of the times. See Andrew Nicholson, ed., *The Letters of John Murray to Lord Byron (LJM)*, 3. Hereafter all references will be taken from this edition and cited parenthetically by page number.

and Elizabeth's Langford's *Byron's Greece* (1975), both of which precede William St. Clair's seminal take on Byron and the Greek Revolution: *That Greece Might Still Be Free* (1978). Similarly, Byron's participation in the Italian *Risorgimento* during his Italian years has been important as a critical subject. Peter Quennell's general *Byron in Italy* (1941) has been followed by Arnold Schmidt's *Byron and the Rhetoric of Italian Nationalism* (2010). More recent studies have shifted the focus from Greece and Italy to the British Isles. Jeffrey Vail's study of *The Literary Relationship of Lord Byron and Thomas Moore* (2001) places Byron within the context of nineteenth-century Anglo-Irish politics and poetics. And essay collections such as Angus Calder's *Byron and Scotland* (1989) and Alan Rawes and Gerard Carruthers' *English Romanticism and the Celtic World* (2003) give considerable attention to Byron and his Scottish roots as well as his literary relationships with Anglo-Celtic writers such as Walter Scott. Scott, in fact, has enjoyed something of a critical revival in Byron studies in recent years. Major studies such as Susan Oliver's *Byron, Scott, and the Poetics of Cultural Encounter* (2005) as well as Roderick Speer's *Byron and Scott* (2009) have mapped the literary relationships of the Romantic period's two most popular writers. Meanwhile, studies on Byron and the Orient have become more common ever since Nigel Leask's post-colonial reading of *British Romantic Writers and the East* appeared in 1992. Saree Makdisi's *Romantic Imperialism* (1998), for instance, devotes considerable attention to Byron's *Childe Harold* I-II and the *Turkish Tales*; and Peter Cochran's *Byron and Orientalism* (2006), a collection of critical

essays on Byron and the East, reveals that Byron's cosmopolitanism and his place within global culture continue to be worthy subjects of inquiry.

Specific studies on Byron's engagement with cosmopolitanism as a mode of discourse, however, are less prevalent. Peter Graham's book-length study, *Don Juan and Regency England* (1990), examines cosmopolitan motifs and literary analogues in *Don Juan*, which Byron began drafting in 1818 after he had already established himself as a world traveler and had settled in Italy. I will address *Don Juan* in a less comprehensive way, but what my approach shares with Graham is the idea that Byron's cosmopolitanism often involves both "mixture" and ambivalence. As Graham reminds us, during Byron's years in exile we often see him glancing backwards at England with an ambivalent nostalgia that enriches the cultural fabric of *Don Juan*. Graham, however, sees Byron's cosmopolitanism "strengthening [his] patriotic attachment" to England and argues that, even when Byron denounces the "cultural corruptions" of England by adding his own "cosmopolitan breadth of vision," he does so in a way that shows the beauties that are born out of the mixing of cultures.³⁹ My own argument that Byron's cosmopolitanism is fundamentally Cynical in nature is superficially at odds with Graham's thesis. Though I generally look at the darker side of Byron's cosmopolitanism, I agree with Graham that there is something instructive about Byron's focus on the clashing of cultures. From my perspective, however, Byron achieves his effect not by showing the "beauties" of cultural

³⁹ *Don Juan and Regency England*, 3-7.

integration but by showing the realities of cultural disintegration. Nevertheless, as an “Ethical” poet and a Cynical thinker, Byron always wants to persuade his audience to act to correct the errors of its ways. My study thus enlarges the scope of Graham’s project by placing Byron’s cosmopolitanism within a broader philosophical context of ancient Cynical philosophy and within a broader poetic context that includes many of Byron’s early works: *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, *Hints from Horace*, and especially *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*.

Susan Oliver’s *Byron, Scott, and the Poetics of Cultural Encounter* does not take cosmopolitanism as its primary subject of inquiry, but it is the most recent study to explore the complexities of Byron’s (and Scott’s) attitudes towards nation and nationhood. Scott’s interests, according to Oliver, lie on the borders between England and Scotland and on the borders of the Scottish Highlands. She argues that Scott’s early romance poetry seeks to legitimize Scotland’s political Union with England. Scott’s attempt, however, often involves a good deal of romanticizing as the Union was still regarded with ambivalence at the outset of the nineteenth century. Byron’s interests, as she shows, lie elsewhere, residing on the “margins” of European civilization in places like Greece, Turkey, and Albania; and his depictions of these cultures in *Childe Harold I-II* and *The Turkish Tales* seek to disrupt imperialistic and romanticized British notions about orientalism. While I share Oliver’s contention that Byron and Scott differed in their assessments of history and the progress of culture, I also show that Byron’s opinion of Scott as a writer is more complex and ambiguous

than generally acknowledged. A repeated target in Byron's early satires, for example, is Scott's antiquarianism, which began with his influential collection of Anglo-Scottish border ballads: *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802-3). Although Byron would later imitate Scott, collecting fragments of oral poetry for *Childe Harold* I-II during his first trip to the Eastern Mediterranean in 1809, Byron broadens the antiquarian's role by internationalizing his practice.

My study of Byron's cosmopolitanism begins on British shores with *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (1809), a Juvenalian satire aimed at cultural corruptions and collusions in England and Scotland. Byron prepared his first major satire in response to the *Edinburgh Review*'s scathing indictment of *Hours of Idleness* (1807), an early collection of poems. In *English Bards*, a text usually noted as being anti-Scottish in orientation and thus rarely studied for its cosmopolitanism, I show that Byron actually finds himself playing many different roles as he charts his relationship to the Anglo-Scottish literary establishment: the conservative, who decries the collapse of English literary standards in a critical milieu dominated by Scottish reviewers; the liberal, who finds the possibility for poetic reform in the figure of Walter Scott; and the Cynic, who heaps scorn and abuse on all things British before rejecting his native country altogether. *English Bards* went through five different editions between 1809 and 1811, affording Byron his earliest commercial success, but it also became an embarrassment and cause for regret after he became friends with many of those he attacked in the poem. Nevertheless, the poem remained one of

Byron's personal favorites, and he would return to its satirical style late in his career in *The Age of Bronze* (1823).

Byron's turn to the more urbane satire of Horace in *Hints from Horace* (1811) is the focus of my second chapter. Byron began *Hints* as a translation of Horace's *Ars Poetica* while living among a diverse group of Greeks, Turks, and Albanians at the base of the Acropolis in Athens in 1811. Yet, like *English Bards*, *Hints* takes Anglo-Scottish culture and literature as its primary satiric target. Byron's travels between 1809 and 1811 only served to reinforce his Cynical rejection of the British *polis* first expressed in *English Bards*. And although his Cynical posture is still apparent in *Hints*, it develops a new pedagogical aspect that seeks to "sneer" and "instruct" instead of simply to "sneer" and "snarl" in the manner of the former satire. The catalyst for the change was Horace, whose relaxed and conversational style Byron would adopt as his own in late major satires such as *Don Juan*. In *Hints*, however, I show that Byron specifically targets Scottish writers such as Francis Jeffrey and Walter Scott, chiding them for provincial literary pursuits that have unduly narrowed the imaginative scope of British readers. Byron, I argue, uses the classical authority of Horace and the medium of foreign translation to make a case for the reinstatement of an international standard of writing, reviewing, and reading within Britain.

In my third chapter, I follow Byron from the borders of England and Scotland to Greece in *Childe Harold II* and *The Curse of Minerva*. Byron, like most educated Europeans in the first decade of the nineteenth century, saw Greece as a country with

a rich cultural legacy buried beneath centuries of foreign rule. His burgeoning philhellenism, which called for a more serious appraisal of Greece in its nineteenth-century context, was at odds with many writers who continued to view Greece in romantic terms. After reminding readers of Lord Elgin's robbery of the Parthenon marbles in *Childe Harold II* and *The Curse of Minerva*, I show that Byron, in the same two poems, undermines the false cosmopolitanism of travel writers who clung nostalgically to Greece's classical past as the cradle of democracy. Byron's Cynical cosmopolitanism, in contrast, urged a more realistic understanding of Greece in its nineteenth-century context as a culture enslaved by tyrannical forces from both within and without. As Byron put it in a note to *Childe Harold II*, "instead of considering what [the Greeks] have been, and speculating on what they may be, let us look at them as they are."⁴⁰

In my fourth chapter, I build upon Oliver's argument that Byron constructed *Childe Harold I-II*, in part, as a response to Scott's early verse romances. I begin with Oliver's suggestion that Scott's early poems endorse a "conjectural" view of history that shows the necessity of social progression from lawlessness to civilization and ultimately to cosmopolitan unity governed by perpetual peace. After showing how this progression plays out in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805), I focus specifically on the bardic elements in the poem. In *The Lay*, Scott updates ancient bardic practices by civilizing the bard's role for a nineteenth-century audience of polite readers. In so

⁴⁰ CPW 2:202.

doing, he sanitizes the morally questionable details of the medieval histories of which he sings by omitting the gory details of battle; at the same time, he integrates several bardic songs into his narrative to reinforce a shared Anglo-British cultural identity. In contrast, I argue that in *Childe Harold* I-IV, Byron reverses Scott's approach, writing of bloody contemporary historical events in Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean from the unfiltered and uncensored perspective of a Cynical bard without any sense of national attachment. Over the course of four cantos, Byron rejects Scott's progressive view of history, describing the human condition as an endless cycle of war and tyranny. I end the chapter by showing that the songs of isolation that Byron weaves into the first three cantos of *Childe Harold* serve as deliberate counterarguments to Scott's songs of unification in *The Lay*.

My fifth and final chapter explores Byronic nostalgia in the "English cantos" of *Don Juan* (1822-23) and *The Age of Bronze* (1823) in the context of Byron's growing identification with the Cynical philosophy of Diogenes. The English cantos show Byron reflecting nostalgically upon his poetic career with "bitterness and regret" that belie the calm Horatian style of the poem.⁴¹ The anger that guided his earliest Juvenalian satire *English Bards* returns in the late cantos as Byron struggles to make sense of a series of personal losses: his long-time alter-ego and political hero Napoleon; his long-time publisher and friend John Murray; and his readership. The

⁴¹ See McGann's commentary in *CPW* 5:742.

Greek Revolution, which began in earnest in 1821, and the reactionary politics of the Congress of Verona in 1822 become the catalysts for Byron's adoption of Diogenes as his alter-ego in the *Age of Bronze*. In the last of his neoclassical satires, I argue that Byron relegates his Napoleonic posturing to the past and moves forward, explicitly embracing Diogenes as a philosopher-hero who not only "sneers," "snarls" and "instructs" humanity, but does so, in Cynical fashion, by *acting* on his beliefs. After many years of decrying the hopeless conditions of enslaved nations throughout Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean, Byron finally acted upon his beliefs to change those conditions, joining the Greeks in their struggle for independence in the summer of 1823.

My study of Byron's cosmopolitan imagination concludes with a discussion of Byron and Pope as cosmopolitan poets. By examining Byron's involvement in the controversy over the merits of Alexander Pope (the so-called Bowles/Pope Controversy), I show that in the three prose arguments Byron prepared for inclusion in the controversy, "Some Observations Upon An Article in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*" (1820), *Letter to John Murray Esq^{re}* (1821), and "Observations Upon Observations" (1821), Byron argues from the perspective of a world poet who seeks to expose and at the same time undermine the poetical and cultural insularity of Pope's British detractors. In the course of his argument, Byron specifically attacks the narrow nationalism of Francis Jeffrey and William Wordsworth, who sought to exclude Pope from the British canon on the basis of his association with the French

neoclassicists. Byron ultimately shows the arbitrary nature of assigning literary and cultural value to poets and poetry, positing Pope as a cosmopolitan author who, like Byron himself, transcends all geographic and literary boundaries.

Chapter 2

TRANSGRESSING THE BORDERS: *ENGLISH BARDS AND SCOTCH REVIEWERS*

When Byron added his name to the second edition of *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* in May 1809, he also appended a lengthy postscript justifying the purpose of his satire. At one point in the postscript, he associates his satire with transgression: “Since the publication of this thing, my name has not been concealed; I have been mostly in London, ready to answer for my transgressions.”¹ The word “transgression” here carries multiple meanings. In one sense, Byron realizes that *English Bards*, with its direct censure of many respected literary and political personages such as Francis Jeffrey and Lord Holland, has come to be seen as a social transgression. At the same time, “transgression” can denote physical movement, a stepping across an established boundary, and Byron’s attention to place, “mostly in London,” suggests that he also has this alternate meaning of the word in mind. In fact, elsewhere in the postscript he defends his imminent departure for Lisbon, a move that he fears might be misconstrued by his critics: “It may be said that I quit England because I have censured there ‘persons of honour and wit about town,’ but I am coming back again,

¹ CPW 1:263. Hereafter all references to *English Bards* will be cited parenthetically by line number.

and their vengeance will keep hot till my return. Those who know me can testify that my motives for leaving England are very different from fears, literary or personal; those who do not, may one day be convinced.”²

Although Byron mocks English and Scottish cultures in *English Bards*, his heightened anti-Scottish stance was an afterthought. Byron conceived the poem in 1807 as a satire on contemporary British writers under the abbreviated title *British Bards*, but began redrafting the poem after Henry Brougham’s scathing review of *Hours of Idleness* appeared in the pages of the *Edinburgh Review*.³ Discouraged, yet defiant, Byron added long sections on the Edinburgh critics and gave the poem its more familiar title: *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. The new title and direction for the poem represented a cultural as well as a personal renegotiation for Byron, who would use *English Bards* to question his Scottish roots rather than romanticize his memories of the Highland regions where in his youth he once “rove[d] a careless mountaineer.”⁴ While some critical attention has been given to Byron’s attitude toward his Scottish identity in the poem, most critics maintain that Byron either rejects his Scottish roots altogether and becomes “wholly English” or they simply

² CPW 1:263. Byron sailed to Lisbon with John Cam Hobhouse on 2 July 1809.

³ See the January 1808 issue of the *Edinburgh Review*. Byron wrote to Hobhouse on 27 February 1808 after reading Brougham’s review of *Hours of Idleness*: “As an author, I am cut to atoms by the E[dinburgh] Review, it is just out and has completely demolished my little fabric of fame” (BLJ 1:158-59).

⁴ See Byron’s Introduction to *Hours of Idleness* in CPW 1:33.

dismiss his satire as rash and immature, as Byron himself would later declare.⁵ Yet, as we shall see, Byron's sense of cultural as well as personal topography—his connections with both England and Scotland and English and Scottish literary traditions—in the poem are more complicated than have been previously acknowledged. Surprisingly, little has been said about *English Bards* as a cosmopolitan text or an important contribution to the development of Byron's cosmopolitan identity. The following chapter adds to our understanding of the range of Byronic texts we might classify as “cosmopolitan” and argues that the Cynical world view, which Byron will explicitly embrace in *Childe Harold* I-II, is already apparent in *English Bards*.

I

The shared political history of the English and the Scottish dates back to the time of King James the First, but the formal Union of the two countries began in 1707. At that time, some saw the merger as an assertion of English supremacy, while others, such as Daniel Defoe, saw the Union as a “happy Conjunction” because it worked to repel the threat of French-backed Jacobite plots to restore the house of

⁵ See Beatty on Byron's Englishness in “The force of ‘Celtic memories,’” 104. For Byron's regrets about *English Bards* see his letters to Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Leigh Hunt in *BLJ* 4:286, 4:318.

Stuart to power.⁶ Jacobite enthusiasm waned in the second half of the eighteenth century after the battle of Culloden in 1746. In the first years of the nineteenth century, England and Scotland were united militarily against threats of invasion from France under Napoleon; after the failure of the Peace of Amiens in the summer of 1803 when Napoleon marched unchecked into Switzerland, the threat of an invasion was an everyday reality.⁷ Nevertheless, Jacobite nostalgia remained strong in the northern parts of Scotland, and the post-Union situation was complicated, especially in light of Scotland's long history of internal fracturing along its Lowland and Highland borders. The "Celtic" Lowlanders traditionally were regarded as ethnically Teutonic and Saxon whereas the Highlanders were seen as uncivilized, savage, and indolent.⁸ Such views persisted into the early nineteenth century, and in *English Bards*, Byron not only employs Scottish stereotypes from an English perspective, but he also perpetuates stereotypes about the Scottish Lowlanders from a northern Scottish perspective.

One such perspective in *English Bards* appears in a note on the *Edinburgh Review*'s Henry Brougham. In the note, Byron reveals a great deal about his Scottish upbringing: "The name of this personage is pronounced Broom in the south, but the

⁶ Pittock, 57.

⁷ Colley, 286.

⁸ Pittock, 14.

truly northern and *musical* pronunciation is Brough-am, in two syllables.”⁹ Even if Byron had cast off his Scottish accent upon settling in England, he still seems to retain a connection, if only a romantic one, to the “musical” qualities of a “northern” Scottish dialect.¹⁰ In the second and subsequent editions of *English Bards*, in which Byron edited the note, he expressed regret over learning that Brougham was not a true northern Scot: “Mr. Brougham is not a Pict, as I supposed, but a Borderer, and his name is pronounced Broom, from Trent to Tay.—So be it.” Byron, who grew up in Aberdeen on the east coast of Scotland and was not a “true northern Scot” himself, nevertheless adopts a northerner’s bias against the “Borderer” Brougham, thus further revealing how much Byron romanticized his Scottish heritage. In amending the note, Byron also seems to be overly cautious about getting his knowledge of Scottish culture right. He would have been alert to the possibility of confusing his Scottish dialects, of course, after Brougham’s review of *Hours of Idleness* had ridiculed him for misusing the Gaelic word “Pibroch” for “bagpipe” in the poem “Lachin y Gair.”¹¹

In that same review, Brougham had exposed some of his own Scottish biases, focusing specifically on Byron’s aristocratic pretensions and his English identity:

⁹ CPW 1:409.

¹⁰ Beatty, 104.

¹¹ *Edinburgh Review* 11 (January 1808): 288.

so far from hearing, with any degree of surprise, that very poor verses were written by a youth from his leaving school to his leaving college, inclusive, we really believe this to be the most common of all occurrences; that it happens in the life of nine men in ten who are educated in England; and that the tenth man writes better verse than Lord Byron.¹²

Brougham's attack on Byron's rank and education, which went beyond a critical evaluation of the poems in *Hours of Idleness*, forced the poet to rethink his own cultural identity in *English Bards*. He first added a long section to his existing draft attacking Francis Jeffrey, the chief editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, whom Byron believed responsible for the review of *Hours of Idleness*, and he censured all of the Edinburgh critics, giving the poem its distinctly anti-Scottish bent. Byron would continue to add and rewrite material for the poem before suppressing a fifth edition in 1812, having by that time come to terms with many of those whom he had attacked, including Francis Jeffrey and Lord Holland. Nevertheless, in his preface to the poem, Byron maintained that he intended to at least "bruise one of the heads of the serpent" if not "crush the Hydra[-headed]" *Edinburgh Review* itself.¹³

Byron's overtly hostile attitude toward the *Edinburgh Review* and its supporters acquires even more potency in the later editions of *English Bards*. The first edition, which contains the fewest number of lines (696), ends with the stanza that begins at line 991 of the fifth edition:

¹² *Edinburgh Review* 11 (January 1808): 285.

¹³ *CPW* 1:229.

For me, who thus unasked have dared to tell
My country, what her sons should know too well,
Zeal for her honour bade me here engage
The host of idiots that infest her age. (991-94; italics mine)

In this final verse paragraph of the first edition, the statement “my country” stands out because it reveals Byron’s strong attachment to place, to Britain, and its cultural traditions even as he expresses its imminent fall and confines himself to “dread Cassandra’s fate, / With warning ever scoffed at, ’till too late” (1007-08). The enervated, yet patriotic, tone that concludes the first edition becomes something quite different in the second and all subsequent editions. Three new stanzas added in May 1809 reveal that the poet no longer laments Britain’s fall, but instead sarcastically dismisses its defeat: “Then, hapless Britain! be thy rulers blest, / The senate’s oracles, the peoples’s jest!” (1011-12). This highly charged verse that sets the tone for the new stanzas carries over to the final stanza of the later editions in which the speaker exclaims, “I too can hunt a Poetaster down; / And, armed in proof, the gauntlet cast at once / To Scotch marauder, and to Southern dunce” (1064-66). Geography and the rhetoric of war coalesce as the “Scotch marauder” threatens the unsuspecting “Southern dunce,” while the speaker with the conviction of Cynical cosmopolitan concludes that he fights for neither side and against both. Byron’s militant language

recaptures the rhetoric that dominates the poem's preface—the very rhetoric that would, in part, define *English Bards* as transgressive in the contemporary reviews.

The reviews of the first and second editions of *English Bards* indeed show an awareness of the martial tone in Byron's satire. An anonymous reviewer for the *Critical Review* saw potentially devastating consequences for Byron's satiric portrait of Francis Jeffrey:

We shall, perhaps, be accused of illiberality for noticing with praise, or even with complacency, the ensuing attack upon one who is generally considered as president of the northern board of criticism; but in justice to our author, we cannot pass over what is perhaps the most spirited portion of his satire, and that which affords the strongest evidence of those talents for which we have given him ample credit. We are perfectly silent as to the *justice* of the case, and only hope (for the honour of all parties concerned) that it will lead to no such *fatal* catastrophe.¹⁴

The lines condemning Jeffrey were so jarring to readers that even the *Eclectic Review*, a rival of the *Edinburgh Review*, reprinted the lines, commenting on what they perceived to be Byron's most serious transgression in the poem: "We confess there is sufficient provocation, if not in the critique, at least in the satire, to urge a 'man of honour' to defy his assailant to mortal combat, and perhaps to warrant a man of law to *declare* war in Westminster-Hall."¹⁵ By the end of this unfavorable review, the author, like the author of the *Critical*'s review, anticipated Byron's defeat: "The

¹⁴ *Critical Review* 17 (May 1809): 83.

¹⁵ *Eclectic Review* 5 (May 1809): 482.

utmost we can promise the noble lord is, that his wrath will be very entertaining to the public for several weeks to come; by the end of that period, the same public will perhaps be called upon to deplore his fall in the field of honour.”¹⁶ Several other reviewers of *English Bards*, if not openly supporting or criticizing Byron, were at least alarmed by the section on Jeffrey because the majority reprinted, if they reprinted any section of the poem at all, the lines attacking the Scottish editor.¹⁷

Another way of reading Byron’s attack on Jeffrey and the *Edinburgh Review* in *English Bards* is as a response to the perceived nationalistic impulses of the magazine. Founded in 1802 by a group of Scottish intellectuals, including Sydney Smith, Francis Jeffrey, and Henry Brougham, the review espoused Whig politics, Enlightenment ideals, and Augustan literary values. At the same time, the reviewers vacillated between promoting Scottish national interests and depicting Scottish culture in a more cosmopolitan light for a middle-class audience comprised of both Scottish and English readers. Jeffrey, as Fiona Stafford points out, remained in Scotland even after Brougham and others had moved to London, and his reviews often reveal a strong attachment to Scottish national interests.¹⁸ In contrast, Walter

¹⁶ *Eclectic Review* 5 (May 1809): 484.

¹⁷ The following reviews reprint the passage attacking Jeffrey: *Anti-Jacobin* 32 (March 1809): 302; *British Critic* 33 (April 1809): 410-11; *Critical Review* 17 (May 1809): 83-84; *Eclectic Review* 5 (May 1809): 482-83; *Cabinet* 1 (June 1809): 528.

¹⁸ “The *Edinburgh Review* and the Representation of Scotland,” 42-43. Despite Jeffrey’s strong attachment to Scotland as evidenced by his many reviews of Scottish

Scott, a regular contributor to the review until 1808, often chose to locate Scotland and its traditions within a broader historical spectrum that included Ireland as well as England, thus questioning what nation and nationhood meant and could mean for early-nineteenth-century readers.¹⁹ Scott, of course, had been an avowed Unionist before and after his tenure with the *Edinburgh Review*. Byron's critique of Scott, Jeffrey, and other Edinburgh critics in *English Bards*, however, reveals that he sees them driven only by narrow political or individual interests. Scott is one of many modern writers who "rack their brains for lucre" (178), while Jeffery writes as a "party tool" (449). Byron, moreover, sees Jeffrey's political influence dangerously crossing over literary as well as cultural boundaries:

O'er politics and poesy preside,
Boast of thy country, and Britannia's guide!
For long as Albion's heedless sons submit,
Or Scottish taste decides on English wit,
So long shall last thine unmolested reign. (500-04)

authors in the pages of the *Edinburgh Review*, Stafford also argues that Jeffrey's nationalism was driven by his enthusiasm for the United Kingdom and Britain's expanding empire.

¹⁹ Stafford, 45-47.

Here Jeffrey claims dual citizenship as the “Boast of [his] country,” Scotland, as well as “Britannia’s guide.” Nevertheless, by collectively labeling the Edinburgh critics “Northern Wolves” (429), “hell-hounds” (437), and “a coward brood” (430), Byron underscores the savage and uncivilized qualities that define them as part of a separate and inferior Scottish community. For Byron, these critics are intruders upon the “native field” of an English nation: “Why do the injured unresisting yield / The calm possession of their native field?” (434-35). Lines such as these reveal how conservative and seemingly anti-cosmopolitan Byron’s own thinking could be in his formative years.

Part of Byron’s cultural conservatism in *English Bards*, however, can be attributed to the circle of literary friends he had in 1809. Byron had found solidarity in a small circle of Cambridge friends, two of whom had their own reasons for harboring an anti-Edinburgh attitude. One of these men was Francis Hodgson, a poet and translator of minor reputation. Hodgson receives only two lines of praise from Byron in *English Bards* (“So lost to Phoebus that nor Hodgson’s verse / Can make thee better, or poor Hewson’s worse” [983-84]) but he factors prominently in Byron’s correspondence during and after his years at Cambridge.²⁰ Hodgson, like Byron, had been attacked in the pages of the *Edinburgh Review* early in his career. The magazine had unfavorably reviewed his translation of Juvenal in 1807, and in response

²⁰ See Marchand, “Childe Harold’s Monitor,” 285-311.

Hodgson prepared a satire on the Scottish periodical entitled *A Gentle Alternative Prepared for the Reviewers*, which was eventually published the same year as *English Bards*. But perhaps the most important role Hodgson played in Byron's formative years was in bringing him together with the conservative poet William Gifford, Byron's soon-to-be literary mentor and chief editor of the *Edinburgh Review*'s rival publication, the Tory *Quarterly Review*, which had issued its first installment in early 1809.

Gifford's influence on Byron in general and *English Bards* in particular has been well documented.²¹ When Byron wrote *English Bards* he had not yet met Gifford, but the poem, indebted to Gifford's two satires, *The Bæviad* (1791) and *The Mæviad* (1795), at times seems as if it were written as a direct address to the elder satirist in order to propel him into action once again: "“Why slumbers GIFFORD?” once was asked in vain: / Why slumbers GIFFORD? let us ask again” (819-20). After learning that Hodgson's father was a personal acquaintance of Gifford, Byron was eager to meet the author. In fact, Hodgson had also informed Byron of Gifford's personal opinion of *English Bards*: “I saw Gifford after you had left Town, and he

²¹ See, for example, Itsuyo Higashinaka, “Byron and William Gifford,” *Byron Journal* 30 (2002): 21-28; see also David R. Goldweber's “Byron and Gifford,” *Keats-Shelley Review* 12 (1998): 105-130; and J. D. Jump's “Lord Byron and William Gifford,” *John Rylands Library Bulletin* 57 (1975): 310-326.

expressed himself highly pleased with the Satire.”²² The long-standing literary relationship between Gifford and Byron in the years following the publication of *English Bards*, which Byron described in terms of a literary father and son dynamic, testifies to the fact that he welcomed such literary coaching in his private life.²³ Although Byron, a Whig, and Gifford, a Tory, were politically opposite, politics never prevented the flowering of this unique literary relationship.²⁴ Byron could indeed see beyond political boundaries when the situation called for it. As David Goldweber argues, Byron and Gifford, in their correspondence, “portray themselves not as fighting for their own reputations and not as having any personal stake in the issues at hand, but as disinterested members of a literary community, fighting on behalf of that community, committed to keeping its tastes and standards pure.”²⁵ In this fight to keep English “tastes and standards pure,” we can see how Byron’s conservative approach might run counter to any type of cosmopolitanism that would allow for the mingling of cultural tastes.

²² Qtd. from an unpublished Hodgson letter in Marchand, “Childe Harold’s Monitor,” 288.

²³ In a letter to Douglas Kinnaid dated 21 February 1824, Byron wrote: “I always considered Gifford as my *literary* father—and myself as his ‘*prodigal son*’” (*BLJ* 11:117).

²⁴ See Byron’s letter to Murray from 15 February 1817: “Mr G[ifford] & I are friends also and he has moreover been literarily so—through thick & thin—in despite of difference of years—morals—habits—& even *politics*” (*BLJ* 5:169).

²⁵ “Byron and Gifford,” 110.

The “tastes” Byron hoped to maintain were grounded in an appreciation of classical literature and Augustan aesthetic principles. In *English Bards*, however, Byron finds that Augustan principles and classical literary ideals have been ignored by contemporary British bards. Echoing the opening lines of Pope’s *Dunciad*, Byron laments the passing of a time “When Sense and Wit with Posey allied” (105), a time when “A polished nation’s praise aspired to claim, / And rais’d the people’s, as the poet’s fame. / . . . For Nature then an English audience felt” (111-16). English deference to Scottish tastes in the nineteenth century is a sign of literary and cultural decay. Indeed, Byron expresses astonishment at a desecrated English literary tradition overrun by one popular Scottish writer in particular: “While MILTON, DRYDEN, POPE, alike forgot, / Resign their hallow’d Bays to WALTER SCOTT” (187-88). By placing Scott’s name in the same couplet as Milton and Pope, Byron sarcastically dismisses the most popular writer of the Romantic period as a minor poet not worthy of inclusion in an exclusively English literary canon. Such a narrowly conceived world view ostensibly denies any chance for cultural integration or unification. Byron instead seems to be resisting a Kantian cosmopolitanism that seeks to break down existing cultural barriers between societies.

II

Byron’s argument with Scott, however, is not always so narrowly conceived as it appears to be on the surface of *English Bards*. This is especially the case in

Byron's criticism of Scottish author for pursuing literary projects that he felt were beneath him. Acknowledging Scott's reputation as an antiquarian and a collector of ancient Scottish literature and border songs, Byron exhorts Scott to commit his genius to better use: "And thou, too, SCOTT! resign to minstrels rude / The wilder Slogan of a Border feud" (911-12). There is the sense in Byron's rebuke that he believes Scott is too "civilized" to write stories about "rude" times and "rude" minstrels. Despite his rejection of Scott's subject matter, Byron's discussion of Scott's verse romances in *English Bards* shows how closely he had been reading his poetry. For example, Byron faults Scott for his slipshod handling of the tetrameter line in his poems, observing how his "Immeasurable measures move along" (149). In addition, he remarks upon Scott's inability to develop his characters with consistency in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*:

mysterious Dullness still the friend,
Admires the strain she cannot comprehend.
Thus Lays of Minstrels—may they be the last!—
While mountain spirits prate to river spirits,
That dames may listen to the sound at nights;
And goblin brats of Gilpin Horner's brood
Decoy young Border-nobles through the wood,
And skip at every step, Lord knows how high,

And frighten foolish babes, the Lord knows why
While high-born ladies, in their magic cell,
Forbidding Knights to read who cannot spell,
Dispatch a courier to a wizard's grave,
And fight with honest men to shield a knave. (154-64)

Underscoring Scott's depiction of unlearned characters ("Knights . . . who cannot spell") and "honest" characters who fight for the honor of morally dubious "knave[s]," Byron questions the moral and pedagogical value of Scott's *Lay*. He similarly questions the values being espoused in *Marmion* (1808): "The golden-crested haughty Marmion, / Now forging scrolls, now foremost in the fight, / Not quite a Felon, yet but half a Knight" (166-68). The conservative tenor of these attacks certainly seems ironic since Byron would eventually sketch characters with equally dubious moral qualities in his *Turkish Tales* (1813-16).

As a half-Scot by birth, however, Byron may have taken offense to the way he perceived the Scots were being depicted in popular literature. His criticism of the *The Lay* and *Marmion* in particular seems to suggest that Scott had undermined the integrity of the Scots at a time when many in London and England still viewed their northern counterparts as culturally inferior. Byron's critical assessment of Scott is based, in part, upon disappointment in the limited scope of Scott's choice of subject matter:

Say! will not Caledonia's annals yield
The glorious record of some nobler field,
Than the vile foray of a plundering clan,
Whose proudest deeds disgrace the name of man? ²⁶ (935-38)

These lines, which were held over from the less anti-Scottish first edition of *English Bards*, reveal Byron's earlier opinion of Scott was not as hostile. In fact, Byron's admiration for Scott and his support for Scotland were confirmed in an additional section from the first edition:

Scotland! still proudly claim thy native Bard,
And be thy praise his first, his best reward!
Yet not with thee alone his name should live,
But own the vast renown a world can give;
Be known, perchance, when Albion is no more,
And tell the tale of what she was before;

²⁶ Byron would remain committed to Scotland and his Scottish heritage throughout his life. In his "Address Intended to be recited at the Caledonian Meeting" he delivered in 1814 he supported the education of orphans of Scottish soldiers killed during the Napoleonic wars. In the third canto of *Childe Harold*, he would also praise the actions of the Highland regiments at the battle of Waterloo—the "nobler field" that Byron could only anticipate in 1809.

To future times her faded fame recall,
And save her glory, though his country fall. (941-48)

There is no distinction made here between Walter Scott's Scotland, "his country," and Byron's England. Byron, moreover, sees Scott as an international poet of the highest order who might "own the vast renown a world can give."²⁷ The irony, of course, is that Byron would surpass Scott's literary reputation less than three years later with the publication of *Childe Harold* in 1812. But the main thing we need to take away from Byron's mixed praise of Scott in *English Bards* is that he saw him, at one point, as a poet who had the potential to transcend cultural boundaries; this idea has important implications for Byron, who, over the course of his career, would choose to move liberally across different cultures and poetic traditions, deliberately drawing from them as inspiration for his own poetry.²⁸ In 1809, Byron was thus already thinking of himself as a "citizen of the world," endorsing his English *and* his Scottish roots and arguing on behalf of both.

²⁷ See Byron's gradus, which ranks Scott above all other nineteenth-century poets, in the Journal he kept between 14 November 1813 and 19 April 1814 (*BLJ* 3:219-20).

²⁸ Beatty, 106

III

Byron's ambivalent attitude towards Scott proved that he did not cast off his Scottish identity in *English Bards* and turn "wholly English." In fact, Byron aims some of his most humorous and well-known censure at the English Lake School poets: "simple" (232) Wordsworth, "gentle" (255) Coleridge, and their leader, Robert Southey, whom Byron implored to "cease [his] varied song!" (225). In the accompanying note to this line, Byron calls attention to Southey's preface to *Madoc* (1805), in which the author "disdain[ed] the degraded title of Epic." In response, Byron mockingly asks "Why is Epic degraded? . . . has he [Southey] substituted anything better in its stead?"²⁹ Byron suggests, moreover, that Romantic writers such as Southey are directly responsible for "degrading" classical literary standards by undermining the integrity of epic poetry:

The time has been, when yet the Muse was young,
When HOMER swept the lyre, and MARO sung,
An Epic scarce ten centuries could claim,
.....
Not so with us, though minor Bards content,
On one great work a life of labour spent:
With eagle pinion soaring to the skies,

²⁹ See Byron's note on Southey in *CPW* 1:403.

Behold the Ballad-monger SOUTHEY rise!
To him let CAMOENS, MILTON, TASSO, yield,
Whose annual strains, like armies, take the field.
First in the ranks see Joan of Arc advance,
The scourge of England, and the boast of France! (189-206)

Stuart Curran has remarked that at no time in British literary history was the public so inundated with epic poetry than it was during the Romantic period.³⁰ Byron shows an awareness of this trend, reminding his readers that for Homer and Virgil ("Maro") an epic poem was a lifetime project. Byron also mocks Southey's choice of epic subject matter, a romanticized portrayal of Joan of Arc ("The scourge of England"), as a sure sign of the decline of heroic literature.

As an admirer of Pope and the Augustans, Byron, of course, felt that classical literature should still serve as *the* touchstone for establishing literary taste:

Blest is the man! who dares approach the bower
Where dwelt the Muses at their natal hour;
Whose steps have pressed, whose eye has marked afar,
The clime that nursed the sons of song and war,

³⁰ *Poetic Form*, 158.

The scenes which Glory still must hover o'er;
Her place of birth, her own Achaian shore:
But doubly blest is he, whose heart expands
With hallowed feelings for those classic lands;
Who rends the veil of ages long gone by,
And views their remnants with a poet's eye!
WRIGHT! 'twas thy happy lot at once to view
Those shores of glory, and to sing them too;
And sure no common Muse inspired thy pen
To hail the land of Gods and Godlike men. (867-80)

Roderick Waller Wright has been lost to literary history; but for Byron, Wright's poem *Horæ Ionicae* (1809), a loco-descriptive account of the Ionian Isles written in Popean couplets, was a welcome return to classical subject matter in the Augustan literary style. In fact, in his preface to *Horæ Ionicae*, Wright claimed that he had prepared the volume specifically for "the classical reader."³¹ Along with Wright, Byron praised other nineteenth-century British authors inspired by the Augustan tradition. Notably, he invokes the names Thomas Campbell and Samuel Rogers, both

³¹ *Horæ Ionicae*, iv. The volume also includes a lengthy appendix complete with the Romaic alphabet and comparisons between ancient and modern Greek. Byron would affix the same kind of antiquarian scholarship to the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*.

of whom Byron would later meet through his connections with Lord Holland. In a note to *English Bards*, Byron declares that “it would be superfluous to recall to the mind of the reader the author of ‘The Pleasures of Memory’ and ‘The Pleasures of Hope,’ the most beautiful poems in our language, if we except Pope’s Essay on Man”; but, in the same note, he concedes: “so many poetasters have started up, that even the names of Campbell and Rogers are becoming strange.”³² In fact, Campbell and Rogers are at fault for their own literary decline in Byron’s estimation. After Campbell followed up *The Pleasures of Hope* with *Gertrude of Wyoming; or a Tale of Pennsylvania* (1809), which Byron disliked, Byron challenged him to “Come forth . . . give thy talents scope” (801), thus suggesting that Campbell, despite setting his poetry in foreign lands, had similarly undermined the integrity of his more philosophically-oriented poetry by turning to romance. He similarly called out Rogers for having “not fulfilled the promise of his first poems” but admitted that Rogers “has still very great merit.”³³ Indeed, Rogers, Byron declared, must come forth to change the literary tide: “rise at last, / Recal the pleasing memory of the past; / Arise! let blest remembrance still inspire . . . / Restore Apollo to his vacant throne” (805-08).

Likewise, Byron had mixed praise for the contributors to the *Greek Anthology* (1806) who collected and translated “fragments” of ancient poetry that offered insight

³² CPW 1:414.

³³ CPW 1:414.

into the “private events and domestic occurrences” of classical antiquity.³⁴ As the preface to the collection indicates, these fragments were important discoveries because they were “so little known to the English reader, and . . . so few [had] been familiarized to [them] through the medium of translation.”³⁵ Instead of praising ballad collectors such as Scott and Wordsworth, who mined the border countries of England and Scotland for their “rude” poetic fragments, Byron reserves his praise for the more classically-minded

associate Bards! who snatched to light
Those Gems too long withheld from modern sight;
Whose mingling taste combined to cull the wreath
Where Attic flowers Aonian odours breathe,
And all their renovated fragrance flung,
To grace the beauties of your native tongue;
Now let those minds that nobly could transfuse
The glorious Spirit of the Grecian Muse,
Though soft the echo, scorn a borrowed tone:
Resign Achaia’s lyre, and strike your own. (881-90)

³⁴ *Translations*, xi.

³⁵ *Translations*, v.

Byron here praises the “mingling taste” (Greek and English) found within the *Greek Anthology* in order to show that a classical literary standard had the potential to raise a culture and a language above the parochial concerns of Romantic writers such as Scott (this is the argument Byron will make more forcefully in *Hints from Horace* as we shall see in the next chapter). Byron, however, argues that the translators who contributed to the *Greek Anthology* must do more to help improve the impoverished state of British poetry in the early decades of the nineteenth century. As Byron reminds them, it is one thing to translate classical material, but it is quite another to transform it in the way Pope and Dryden did: by moving from translation to original composition. Hence, Byron’s imperative to the authors of the *Greek Anthology* that they must do more to influence literary tastes: “Resign Achaia’s lyre, and strike your own.” Only by reinforcing classical standards, Byron believed, would nineteenth-century British writers and readers be able to rise above the petty demands of romance poetry and the narrow nationalism of writers such as Scott in order to discover the freedoms associated with a cosmopolitan world view.

IV

Nevertheless, if the writers Byron felt most qualified to maintain the classical standards he admired could not do so, then there was little hope in putting any faith in British writers on either side of the English-Scottish border. Consequently, at the end

of *English Bards*, Byron chooses to adopt the perspective of a Cynical cosmopolitan who rejects any and all affiliations to society. Byron's rejection of British culture begins when he likens Britain's imminent fall to the collapse of ancient Athens, Rome, and Tyre:

What Athens was in science, Rome in power,
What Tyre appeared in her meridan hour,
'Tis thine at once, fair Albion! to have been;
Earth's chief dictatress, Ocean's lovely queen:
But Rome decayed, and Athens strewed the plain,
And Tyre's proud piers lie shattered in the main. (999-1004)

The Roman parallel is especially significant given the poem's indebtedness to Juvenal.³⁶ Both William Gifford and Francis Hodgson had published translations of Juvenal's satires by the time Byron began work on *English Bards*, and Hodgson's edition makes an explicit parallel between ancient Rome and early nineteenth-century Britain in a prologue written in heroic couplets:

And, as I spread that old indignant page,
Refer the picture to our shameless age;

³⁶ See Clearman, 87-99.

Feel but one pang, confess the healing smart
In but one citizen's corrected heart—
Then, though my sighs for Dryden's fire be vain,
Blest are the labours of my youthful strain.
Oh! Could I hope my native land would see
Her own disgrace in Rome's depravity.³⁷

Like Hodgson, Byron finds himself unable to sustain a consistent vision for reforming British society. Britain, with its vapid poetry and neglect of classical standards, has reached a nadir, a point where reform is impossible, and thus the poet must either choose to remain within or transgress its borders.

By the end of *English Bards*, Byron indeed triumphs over the degraded conditions of England and Scotland only by casting off his ties to Britain altogether and crossing its borders for the Continent. In the penultimate stanza of the second and subsequent editions, he exclaims

Yet once again adieu! ere this the sail
That wafts me hence is shivering in the gale;
And Afric's coast and Calpe's adverse height,

³⁷ *The Satires of Juvenal*, xxxix.

And Stamboul's minarets must greet my sight. (1017-20)

The lines anticipate Byron's departure for Portugal in the summer of 1809, only two months after he added these lines to the poem. But these lines offer more than biographical insight. Having witnessed the cultural corruption of Britain at the hands of the English and the Scottish, Byron acknowledges and accepts his freedom to cross over national borders. In the end of *English Bards*, Byron stands apart from any cultural community, from both the "coward Brood" of Scots in Edinburgh to the north and the "Degenerate Britons" who occupy London in the south. Byron, in effect, has adopted the position of a Cynical cosmopolitan, making it clear that he stands for no party and opposes any and all national interests. Although Byron would more fully develop this oppositional stance in his next major work, *Childe Harold, English Bards* shows the familiar Byronic persona already in the habit of transgressing cultural borders.

It might be argued that for all its patriotic rhetoric, its Popean verse form, and its mockery of Scottish culture and history, *English Bards* remains one of Byron's most "English" poems. Yet the contradictory reactions to the cultural and geographic spaces Byron traverses in *English Bards* reveal the ambivalence of his attitude toward his Anglo-Scottish identity in his formative years as a poet. Byron's ability to interact with and across geographic and cultural boundaries throughout *English Bards* comes, in part, from his unique cultural perspective of having spent large portions of his

childhood in both Scotland and England. We often see Byron shedding his Scottish skin by attacking Scotland, its cultural institutions, and its writers; we also see him cohabiting the country of his youth sometimes in a note and sometimes in a long verse paragraph praising a Scottish writer like Walter Scott. At the same time, Byron's patriotic rhetoric in praise of England and its traditions falls onto the deaf ears of its misguided literati, thus forcing him to transgress British borders altogether.

Throughout his years in exile, Byron would continue to negotiate and renegotiate the cultural topography of his youth. This is specifically the case in the tenth canto of *Don Juan* where the narrator reflects on his Scottish heritage and *English Bards* with nostalgia and humor:

And though, as you remember, in a fit
Of wrath and rhyme, when juvenile and curly,
I railed at Scots to shew my wrath and wit,
Which must be owned was sensitive and surly,
Yet 'tis in vain such sallies to permit,
They cannot quench young feelings fresh and early:
I 'scotched, not killed,' the Scotchman in my blood,
And love the land of 'mountain and of flood.' (10.19)

Nevertheless, *English Bards*, with its uneasy negotiations across cultural borders, remains an important text for charting the beginnings of Byron's cosmopolitanism. In the poem we discover aspects of Byron's liberal cosmopolitanism, which recognized the potential for cultural transcendence in a figure such as Walter Scott; we also see aspects of Byron the cultural conservative, rejecting Scottish cultural and literary traditions from the perspective of an English patriot; but we also see Byron scorning English and Scottish culture, and English and Scottish literary traditions, from the perspective of a Cynical cosmopolitan who refuses, and indeed rejects, his cultural ties to Britain altogether. *English Bards*, for all its cultural transgressions and contradictions, is perhaps best seen as a text that shows the wide range of Byron's cosmopolitanism before he had even ventured beyond British shores.

Chapter 3

TOWARDS AN INTERNATIONAL STANDARD: *HINTS FROM HORACE* IN 1811

In *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, Byron questioned his ties to England and Scotland while attempting to defend Augustan literary standards against the Romanticism of Walter Scott and the Lake poets. In recognizing the failure of his attempt, however, he adopted the posture of a Cynical cosmopolitan, rejecting all attachments to England and Scotland and holding all of Britain's literati responsible for their country's demise. In *Hints from Horace* (1811), Byron continued to develop this Cynical persona, arguing against British literary tastes from the perspective of Horace.¹ In so doing, he eschewed the oratorical *gravitas* of Juvenal in favor of the more relaxed conversational manner that would come to distinguish important later satires such as *Beppo* (1817) and *Don Juan* (1819-1824). Because of its formal characteristics and the generally conservative tenor that Byron adopted in defense of a classical standard in *Hints*, critics have tended to ignore the satire as an important contribution to the development of his cosmopolitan identity. In the following

¹ All references to *Hints from Horace* (hereafter *Hints*) will be taken from Peter Cochran's edition, which reproduces the original 1811 manuscript. Hereafter all references to the poetry and the notes will be cited parenthetically by line number.

chapter, I shall want to build upon James Chandler's argument that Byron's defense of the classical canon "cuts across national boundaries and rises above national interests" and suggest that there is in fact an international dimension to Byron's Horatian project.² In *Hints*, as we shall see, Byron uses Horace in particular and the classics in general as an international standard through which he opposes the increasingly nationalistic concerns of Britain's literary establishment.

I

In the early spring of 1811, Byron was living the cosmopolitan life-style he had been thinking about since 1807.³ He drafted *Hints* in Greece while situated among a culturally diverse group of students and locals at the base of the Acropolis in a Capuchin Monastery. Frederick Beaty asserts that he "probably would not have turned to a Horatian poem as a model had he not chanced upon a copy of Horace's poetry in the library of the Capuchin convent."⁴ There seems to be some truth to this assertion. From the early stages of its composition, Byron appears to have had no particular plan for the translation that would become *Hints*. He had been studying Latin and Romaic (modern Greek) and may have seen the translation in part simply as

² See Chandler, "The Pope Controversy: Romantic Poetics and the English Canon," 502.

³ See Byron's letter to Edward Noel Long discussed on page 10 of the Introduction.

⁴ *Byron the Satirist*, 40.

an academic exercise. In his very first mention of the poem on 5 March 1811, for instance, he commented that he had “begun an Imitation of the ‘De Arte Poetica’ of Horace (in rhyme of course) & have translated or rather varied about 200 lines and shall probably finish it for lack of other argument” (*BLJ* 2:42). Byron did finish the translation later that month with the intention of publishing it as *Hints* in a volume with a new edition of *English Bards* and another satire about the pillaging of Greek antiquities he had witnessed in Athens: *The Curse of Minerva*.⁵ Although *Hints* was never published during Byron’s lifetime, Byron expressed an unusual attachment to the poem, returning to it enthusiastically in 1820 while embroiled in a controversy over the merits of Alexander Pope.⁶ It seems that there may be more than pure “chance” behind Byron’s doubtlessly labored attempt to translate one of his favorite classical authors into his own poetic idiom. As Byron had explained to his printer Robert Dallas, Horace was the most difficult of the Latin poets to translate into English.⁷ Moreover, despite Peter Cochran’s surprise at Byron’s decision to translate Horace, who Cochran sees as “a kind of Roman Southey. . . . committed to the political status quo of his time and place [Augustan] Rome,” classical scholars of the early nineteenth century did not always view Horace’s politics in such absolute

⁵ See *BLJ* 2:74, 80.

⁶ For a discussion of *Hints* in the context of the Pope controversy, see Jane Stabler’s chapter on Byron and Pope in *Byron, Poetics and History*, 73-105.

⁷ See *BLJ* 2:90.

terms.⁸ William Gifford, in his introductory essay on Roman satire in *The Satires of Decimus Junius Juvenalis* (1806), for instance, reminded readers that Horace “took no active part in the government [i.e., the government ruled by Augustus] he had once opposed.” Gifford explained: “That both Augustus, and his minister were warmly attached to him, cannot be denied, but then it was as to a plaything. In a word, Horace seems to have been the *enfant gâté* of the palace, and was viewed, I believe, with more tenderness than respect.”⁹ Horace, it seems, was less “Augustan” than Cochran suggests. He was a poet who doubtlessly wrote verses in praise of Rome and Roman virtues, but he ultimately remained somewhere between political panderer and political exile, choosing to serve Augustus from a place of retirement at his Sabine farm instead of from the center of power in Rome.¹⁰ In many ways, the contradictory elements we see in Horace and his tenure as an Augustan court poet mirror the struggles Byron faces as a Cynical cosmopolitan who rejects all things British, but can still wax nostalgic for his native country.

Despite having renounced his ties to Britain in *English Bards* and transgressed its borders for the continent in 1809, Byron continued to read British periodicals, wanting to keep abreast of where he and his fellow Cambridge companions stood

⁸ See Cochran's Introduction to *Hints from Horace*.

⁹ *The Satires of Decimus Junius Juvenalis*, liii.

¹⁰ As David West argues, even in poems that seem to praise Augustan Rome, such as the second Ode in Book I, Horace equivocates and stops just short of “direct statement and blatant flattery.” See *The Complete Odes and Epodes*, xvi.

among the likes of established authors such as Walter Scott and Robert Southey. It was during his time abroad in Greece that Byron also proposed a plan to start a jointly-run literary review in the tradition of Addison and Steele. Byron wrote to Hobhouse on 15 May 1811, enthusiastically declaring that he would “be happy to make a *joint* in the *tail* of [Hobhouse’s] comet” when he returned (2: 46). He explained his plan on 2 July 1811 while en route to England:

I have been thinking again & again of a literary project we have at times started, to wit-- --a periodical paper, something in the Spectator or Observer way. There certainly is no such thing at present.—Why not get one, Tuesdays & Saturdays.—You must be Editor, as you have more taste and diligence than either Matthews or myself (I beg M’s pardon for lowering him to the same line with me) and I don’t think we shall want other contributors if we set seriously about it.-- --We must have for each day, one or two essays, miscellaneous, according to Circumstances, but now & then politics, and always a piece of poetry of one kind or other. . . . We can call it “La Bagatelle” (according to your idea) or Lillibulero, if you like, the name won’t matter so that the Contents are palatable. (*BLJ* 2:55-56)

The project clearly reflects the Augustan literary interests that appealed to Byron and his Cambridge friends: it is to be modeled on the “Spectator or Observer” and ironically named “La Bagatelle” (the trifle) or “Lillibulero” (little book). The main idea behind the project, as Byron described it, seems to be an attempt to bring the Augustan standards shared by his Cambridge circle into the world of nineteenth-century literary reviewing.

Although Byron and Hobhouse never saw the periodical through to press, *Hints*, which was composed at about the same time that Byron conceived of the

literary journal, can still be read as a statement of the literary principles both men shared. The poem, in fact, presents a more authoritative defense of the Augustan tradition than *English Bards* did, partly because it has both the classical authority of Horace and the Augustan authority of Pope behind it. The extended title Byron gave to *Hints*, “Being An Allusion in English Verse to the Epistle ‘Ad Pisones, De Arte Poetica,’ and Intended as a Sequel to ‘English Bards and Scotch Reviewers,’” shows Byron positioning himself within an established tradition of eighteenth-century imitators including Lord Rochester and, most significantly, Alexander Pope.¹¹ As the title suggests, the poem is not a direct translation but an “Allusion,” a designation that allowed Byron to take liberties with transforming the original, updating and infusing his imitation, as Pope had done in his Horatian imitations, with social and literary concerns reflecting his own day and age. Byron in fact made a point of preparing a reprinting of Horace’s original Latin alongside the imitation so his readers could see not only where he “left Horace, but where Horace has left [him].”¹² The assumption, of course, was that Byron’s British readers could and would read the original Latin; or if they could not read the original text, then they would be able to recognize and reconsider the importance of the classical past, thereby enlarging the scope of their

¹¹ See McGann’s commentary in *CPW* 1:427.

¹² See the original preface in Cochran’s edition of *Hints*.

literary imaginations. Hence, Byron's first sustained attempt at foreign translation can be seen an attempt to establish himself more completely as a cosmopolitan author.

In *Hints*, Byron made use of the international setting at Athens where the poem was written to solidify his authority as a cosmopolitan author. In the original 1811 manuscript preface, he had written the following:

Though it might be one of the obnoxious egotisms of authorship to state when or where a work was composed, I must incur this censure by stating that the following Imitation was begun and finished at Athens the only spot on earth which may partly apologize for such a declaration.¹³

Byron would have known that Horace had studied in Athens before moving onto Rome; yet by declaring Athens as the site of his poetic composition, Byron draws upon the authority of the classical setting to further his argument against the parochial literary interests of writers such as Scott and Wordsworth who chose to draw poetic inspiration from the border regions of England and Scotland. In this way, Byron was able to distance himself more from the British authors he had first attacked in *English Bards*. He added that "Two years have passed and many countries have been traversed since circumstance converted me into a Satirist," a statement that further suggests the maturity he felt he had achieved since the publication of his earlier satire.¹⁴ As the preface to *Hints* reveals, the cosmopolitan detachment that Byron

¹³ See the original preface in Cochran's edition of *Hints*.

¹⁴ See the original preface in Cochran's edition of *Hints*.

embraced at the end of *English Bards* had quickly become the defining characteristic of his poetic identity in 1811.

II

Byron's cosmopolitanism also becomes the basis for his argument against British reviewing culture in *Hints*. In a long prose note, for example, Byron took up arms against Hewson Clarke for a condescending article that appeared in the first issue of *The Scourge* in March 1811:

I have been rambling upwards of two years and heard nothing like the voice of Hewson Clarke, except the yell of the jackalls in the ruins of Ephesus. I also saw one Wolf, and five and twenty pirates near Cape Colonna in Attica . . . and an Editor and his gang, but excepting these I saw little to remind me of Criticism—except Ali Pacha's Fool with a brimstone coloured Jacket—at Tepaleen in Albania.¹⁵

Not only was Byron still disturbed by the memory of the grating “voice of Hewson Clarke,” and of English “Criticism,” he was also still angered by the unwelcome memory of Francis Jeffery, whom he still believed to be the author of the *Edinburgh Review*'s negative appraisal of *Hours of Idleness*. Thus, in *Hints*, Byron made a point of addressing Jeffrey and concluded:

¹⁵ CPW 1:430.

Is it for this on Ilion I have stood,
And thought of Homer less than Holyrood?
On shore of Euxine or Ægean sea,
My hate, untravelled, fondly turned to thee. (615-18)¹⁶

At “Ilion” (the Ancient site of Troy), much to his chagrin, Byron finds himself thinking of Jeffrey and Scotland (“Holyrood”), noting that his “hate untraveled” remains within British borders. Although Byron continues to use classical geography to establish a cosmopolitan dimension for *Hints*, he does so in an ironic way, revealing how imaginatively and geographically constrained he still feels after finding his thoughts shackled to Britain’s reviewers.

It is not surprising, then, that Byron uses Horace to attack Jeffrey’s narrow reviewing principles. Freely translating Horace’s assertion that “poets of moderate skill neither god nor men endure; nor do publishers,” Byron argues

But Poesy between the best and worst
No medium knows; you must be last or first;
For middling Poets’ mediocre volumes

¹⁶ These lines were taken out when Byron revised *Hints* in 1821. McGann prints the entire passage on Jeffrey separately, referring to them as “Lines Associated with *Hints from Horace*.” See *CPW* 1:318-19.

Are damned alike by Gods, and Men, and Columns. (585-88)¹⁷

Byron replaces Horace's "publishers" with the phrase "columns" to show that most British poets in the first decade of the nineteenth century were subject to critical abuse. In the corresponding note to these lines, however, Byron highlights the failure of the British critics to uphold Horace's statement about the inevitable failure of "middling poets," underscoring Jeffrey's willing "consession[s] to mediocrity" in two reviews: Thomas Campbell's *Gertrude of Wyoming; A Pennsylvanian Tale and Other Poems* (1809) and Jamie Graham's *British Georgics* (1809).¹⁸

Thomas Campbell, known best for *The Pleasures of Hope* (1799), a philosophical poem on human nature that Byron greatly admired, turned to New-World romance in 1809 with *Gertrude of Wyoming*. Set in the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania, the poem follows a young Englishman to America where he falls in love with a young Pennsylvanian. In his review, Jeffrey describes the poem as "pure and perfect poetry," despite being "somewhat dazzled" by "the most popular of our recent poems," namely the "antiquarian" romances of Walter Scott:

¹⁷ For Horace's version of lines 585-88, see lines 372-73 in Fuch's edition of *Horace's Satires and Epistles*.

¹⁸ Byron had read these reviews in issue 27 of *Edinburgh Review* for April 1809, in which both reviews appear. See CPW 1:586; Byron mistakenly gives the issue number as 31 in his note.

Without supposing that this taste has been in any great degree vitiated, or even imposed upon, by the babyism or the antiquarianism which have lately been versified for its improvement, we may be allowed to suspect that it has been somewhat dazzled by the splendour, and bustle and variety of the most popular of our recent poems; and that the more modest colouring of truth and nature [in Campbell's poem] may, at this moment, seem somewhat cold and feeble. . . . But we cannot help saying, in the mean time, that the work before us belongs to a class which comes nearer to our conception of pure and perfect poetry.¹⁹

Jeffrey revealed that his tastes were still grounded in the Augustan school of “pure and perfect poetry.” At the same time, Jeffrey also seemed to accept the fact that Campbell had been “somewhat dazzled by the splendour, and bustle and variety of the most popular of our recent poems,” which had established Romantic tastes as a viable alternative to Augustan poetry. Behind Jeffrey's assessment, Byron sensed the editor's confused notions of where he stood among the Augustan and the Romantic schools. As a writer who valued the classical authority of Horace, Byron took Jeffrey's equivocation as a sign of the *Edinburgh Review*'s failure to uphold a consistent set of literary standards. Campbell, moreover, was a Scot and a personal friend of Jeffrey, and elsewhere in his review, Jeffrey made concessions for the poem on nationalistic grounds.²⁰

The cultural biases of the *Edinburgh Review* were even more apparent in Jeffrey's review of Jamie Graham's *British Georgics*, which appeared in the April

¹⁹ See the *Edinburgh Review* 27 (1809): 1.

²⁰ See, for example, page 19 of the same review.

1809 issue alongside the review of Campbell's *Gertrude*. Jeffrey was more critical of Graham, describing the *British Georgics*, a didactic text in the tradition of Virgil and Hesiod, as antiquated, out of touch with contemporary tastes, and yet Jeffrey praised the poem because of the author's Scottish heritage:

The last peculiarity by which Mr. Graham's poetry is recommended to us, is one which we hesitate a little about naming to our English readers;--to be candid with them, however, it is his great nationality. We do love him in our hearts, we are afraid, so affectionately of Scotland. But, independent of this partial bias, we must say, that the exquisitely correct pictures which he has drawn of Scottish rustics, and of Scottish rural scenery, have a merit, which even English critics would not think we had overrated if they were as well qualified as we are to judge of their fidelity. We will add, too, in spite of the imputations to which it may expose us, that the rustics of Scotland are a far more interesting race, and far fitter subjects for poetry than their brethren of the same condition in the South. . . . To say in a word, they are far less *British* than the great body of English peasantry.²¹

In *Hints*, Byron attempts to make it clear to his readers that Jeffrey could willingly make concessions to poetic "mediocrity" as long as the author or the poem fit his Scottish "National" standard. Byron thus sees Jeffrey's nationalism as a critical weakness, and he was not alone in sensing the short-comings of the *Edinburgh Review*'s cultural biases. Walter Scott, who had left the *Edinburgh Review* in 1809, confirmed the "partiality" of the Edinburgh critics in his *Edinburgh Annual Register*, claiming that "the ties of private friendship sometimes occasion a tendency to partiality, of which we cannot deny there may be found traces even in the Edinburgh

²¹ See the *Edinburgh Review* 27 (1809): 216.

Review.”²² Surely, Jeffrey’s criticism was far from the principles of cosmopolitanism that Byron endorsed.

III

Byron’s comments on Scott, a self-confessed British Unionist, in *Hints* continued to reflect the ambivalence he felt toward the Scottish author. In one of his notes, for instance, he expresses embarrassment for Scott’s collaborative endeavors in the *Edinburgh Annual Register* with Campbell and Southey: “it is a good deal beneath Scott and Campbell, and not much above Southey, to allow the booby Ballantyne to entitle them, in the *Edinburgh Annual Register* (of which, by the bye, Southey is editor) ‘the grand poetical triumvirate of the day.’ . . . Poor Southey, it should seem, is the ‘Lepidus’ of this poetical triumvirate. I am only surprised to see him in such good company.”²³ Using Scott’s own words from his article “Of the Living Poets of Great Britain,” which appeared in the first issue of the *Edinburgh Annual Register* in 1810, Byron denigrates Southey as the weak link in the shared editorial “triumvirate.” By criticizing Southey in this way, and claiming that the periodical project was “beneath Scott,” Byron was clearly showing his sympathy for the Scottish author.

²² See Scott’s article “On the Present State of Periodical Criticism” reprinted in Curry, 148.

²³ *CPW* 1:439-40.

Elsewhere, however, Byron criticizes Scott as he had in *English Bards* for the narrowness of his antiquarian pursuits and especially for the way he saw those pursuits influencing literary tastes:

All, all must perish—but, surviving last,
The love of Letters half preserves the past;
True—some decay, yet not a few revive,
Though those shall sink, which now appear to thrive,
As Custom arbitrates, whose shifting sway
Our life and language must alike obey. (99-104)

The apocalyptic tenor of Byron's attitude towards the Romantic tastes perpetuated by Scott is confirmed in a note to these lines, in which Byron sarcastically declares that "Old ballads, old plays, and old women's stories are at present in as much request as old wine or new speeches." Byron concludes the note by sarcastically stating, "In fact, this is the millenium of black letter: thanks to our Hebers, Webers, and Scotts!" (93n). Richard Heber, an acquaintance of Wordsworth, Southey, and Scott was famous during his lifetime for having assembled one of the largest collections of rare and antiquarian books in England. Henry Weber, described by Scott as "a remarkable antiquary," published on a range of topics and edited collections of medieval romances that helped shape the early nineteenth century's taste for romance

literature.²⁴ Nevertheless, the Romantic movement, or the “millenium of black letter,” a sarcastic reference to the print type found in Gutenberg’s Bible, was, for Byron, a time when antiquarian interests in pursuit of Britain’s national past had narrowed the imaginative scope of British readers to forgettable “old ballads” and “old plays.”

Despite Byron’s mockery of these nationalistic literary pursuits of Scott and his antiquarian associates in *Hints*, we also find passages praising Scott’s technical merits in his early verse romances. This is especially surprising given the fact that most of the British critics on both sides of the River Tweed had attacked Scott for his failures with the tetrameter couplet.²⁵ Byron had also attacked Scott on the grounds of his careless technical facility in *English Bards* as we have seen. Yet, in *Hints*, Byron declares

Though at first view eight feet may seem in vain
Formed, save in Ode, to bear a serious strain,
Yet Scott has shown our wondering Isle of late
This measure shrinks not from a theme of weight,
And, varied skillfully, surpasses far
Heroic rhyme. . . . (405-10)

²⁴ See the entries for “Richard Heber” by Arthur Sherbo and “Henry Weber” by Margaret Clunies Ross and Amanda J. Collins in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

²⁵ Hayden, 127-28.

Byron reiterated his views on Scott's technical abilities with some qualification in a letter to Thomas Moore on 2 January 1814 that discusses his recently published poem *The Corsair* in terms of its meter:

In the present composition I have attempted not the most difficult but perhaps the best adapted measure to our language—the good old & now neglected heroic couplet—the Stanza of Spenser is perhaps too slow and dignified for narrative—though I confess it is the measure most after my own heart—and Scott alone (he will excuse the Mr. ‘we do not say Mr. Caesar’) Scott alone of the present generation has hitherto completely triumphed over the fatal facility of the octosyllabic verse—and this is not the least victory of his varied & mighty Genius. . . . The heroic couplet is not the most popular measure certainly—but as I did not deviate into the other from a wish to flatter what is called public opinion—I shall quit it without further apology & take my chance once more with that versification in which I have hitherto published nothing but compositions whose former circulation is part of my present & future regret. (*BLJ* 4:13)

Ignoring “public opinion,” Byron explains his decision to reinstate the heroic couplet in *The Corsair*. On the one hand, he refuses to dismiss the meter championed by his literary forefathers—Dryden, Pope, and Gifford—who are now out of public favor. On the other hand, recalling his previous experience with the heroic couplet in *English Bards and Hints from Horace*, Byron expresses “regret” for using the heroic meter to attack writers such as Scott. The appellation “Caesar” given to Scott in the letter in fact suggests a mixture of both admiration for and intimidation by the Scottish author; and Byron downplays his earlier attack on Scott by enthusiastically

acknowledging his “triumph” over the “fatal facility” of the tetrameter. Byron thus seems conflicted about his own choice of metrics, declaring simultaneously his praise for Spenser and the Spenserian stanza and for Pope and the heroic couplet. What we see, it appears, is Byron expanding his literary interests to meet the changing tastes of the times and ultimately broadening the scope of his own imagination, a fact that became evident with the publication of the Spenserian *Childe Harold* in 1812.

Nevertheless, Scott responded to Byron’s early criticisms of the tetrameter couplet in his introduction to the 1830 edition of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* on the grounds of its national characteristics:

the idea occurred to the Author of using the measured short line, which forms the structure of so much minstrel poetry, that it may be properly termed the Romantic stanza, by way of distinction; and which appears so natural to *our* language, that the very best of *our* poets have not been able to protract it into the verse properly called Heroic, without the use of epithets which are, to say the least, unnecessary. But, on the other hand, the extreme facility of the short couplet, which seems congenial to *our* language, and was, doubtless, for that reason, so popular with *our* old minstrels, is, for the same reason, apt to prove a snare to the composer who uses it in more modern days, by encouraging him in a habit of slovenly composition. The necessity of occasional pauses often forces the young poet to pay more attention to sense, as the boy’s kite rises highest when the train is loaded by a due counterpoise. The Author was therefore intimidated by what Byron calls the ‘fatal facility’ of the octosyllabic verse, which was otherwise better adapted to his purpose of imitating the more ancient poetry.²⁶ (*italics mine*)

²⁶ See Scott’s introduction to *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* in *The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott*, 52.

For Scott, meter seems to be tied exclusively to an ancient Scottish tradition of versification. Ever since the Union of England and Scotland in 1707, Scottish writers had been interested in preserving their own national voice through traditional folk ballads and songs.²⁷ Roderick Watson links the Scottish interest in traditional ballads to a cultural disposition that favors the spoken above the written word. Such poets as Robert Fergusson and Robert Burns had attempted to preserve the regional dialects and vernacular voices of the borderlands near the River Tweed. These Scottish poets, moreover, favored less rigidity and formality in their verse and tended to rework or revitalize the conventions of traditional English poetry. Instead of looking to Juvenal and Horace as models for satire as did Pope, Dryden, and later Byron, Burns drew from Scottish writers, including Robert Henryson and William Dunbar, for his distinctly Scottish verse satire: the so-called “Habbie Stanza,” also known as the “Burns Stanza,” originally named after the early eighteenth-century Scottish mock elegy, “Habbie Simson.”²⁸ Byron owned editions of the poetry of Burns as well as Scott's ballads and would have been aware of the trends in Scottish poetry at the beginning of the nineteenth century.²⁹ Byron's willingness to praise Scott's mastery of the tetrameter in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* even at the expense of undermining his

²⁷ Watson, 99-125.

²⁸ Watson, 106-07.

²⁹ *CMP* 238, 241.

endorsement of the “Heroic” meter reveals the personal difficulty Byron had in defending Augustan verse against the revival of traditional Scottish forms—forms that had become popular once again chiefly through the efforts of Scottish writers and ballad collectors like Burns and Scott. The technical flexibility that Byron ultimately endorses in *Hints* anticipates the technical flexibility of his later works, and it aligns him more explicitly with Horace's own relaxed approach to composition, neatly summarized in Pope's *Essay on Criticism*: “*Horace* still charms with graceful Negligence, / And without Method *talks* us into Sense” (653-54).³⁰

IV

The classical standard that Byron upheld in *Hints* directly called forth the authority of Alexander Pope, the eighteenth-century's most important defender of Horace. Echoing Horace's *Ars Poetica* and Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, Byron argued: ‘Tis hard to venture where our betters fail, / Or lend fresh interest to a twice-told tale” (183-84). More specifically, Byron highlights Pope's mastery of the pastoral and urges nineteenth-century writers such as Southey, who had attempted to resuscitate the genre with his *Botany Bay Eclogues* (1797), to “Let Pastoral be dumb; for who can hope / To match the youthful eclogues of our Pope?” (387-88). Byron also wrote disparagingly of contemporary writers and critics who preferred the less polished

³⁰ See “An Essay on Criticism” in *The Poems of Alexander Pope*.

verses of Chaucer and Spenser to those of Pope and Dryden: “What Chaucer, Spenser did, we scarce refuse / To Dryden’s, or to Pope’s maturer Muse” (81-2). Byron’s criticism of these earlier authors is not a critique of their poetic merits *per se*; his own views on Chaucer and Spenser were mixed. He had drafted *Childe Harold* in the Spenserian stanza, “the measure most after his own heart,” before writing *Hints*, while writing disparagingly of Chaucer in the “Reading List” he compiled in 1807.³¹ In contrasting Chaucer and Spenser, who had both experienced a critical revival during the Romantic period, with Pope and Dryden, who were both under attack from the literary establishment, Byron argues that his contemporaries have become too narrow in their idea of what constitutes a meaningful literary tradition by focusing exclusively on early English writers.

Instead, Byron argues that neglected writers such as Pope, who endorsed the study of the foreign literatures of Greece and Rome, could still offer a broad touchstone for learning and could still engender a more cosmopolitan understanding of literary tradition. Following his models closely in the following passage, Byron, in fact echoes Pope (and Horace) to reinforce the idea that the classics represent the highest form of artistic achievement: “Ye, who seek finished models, never cease, / By day and night, to read the works of Greece” (423-24). Nevertheless, Byron

³¹ “Chaucer notwithstanding the praises bestowed on him, I think obscene, and contemptible, he owes his celebrity, merely to his antiquity” (*CMP* 3). Byron’s comment that Chaucer’s popularity was due to his “antiquity” underscores his opposition to early nineteenth-century antiquarian tastes that privileged literary antiquity over literary quality.

tempers his endorsement of the classics with an awareness of their decline among nineteenth-century readers:

But our good fathers never bent their brains
To heathen Greek, content with native strains.
The few who read a page, or used a pen,
Were satisfied with Chaucer and old Ben;
The jokes and numbers suited to their taste
Were quaint and careless, anything but chaste;
Yet, whether right or wrong the ancient rules,
It will not do to call our Fathers fools! (425-32)

For Byron, British writers, “our good fathers” as he ironically labels them, refused to give proper study to the “heathen” Greeks because English authors such as Chaucer and “old Ben” were more “suited to their [Christian] taste.” Ironically, he found these same writers “quaint,” “careless,” and certainly not “chaste.” Byron later in the first canto of *Don Juan* and in his defense of Pope in his *Letter to John Murray Esq^{re}* pointed out the hypocrisy of Romantic writers such as William Lisle Bowles (who had accused Pope of licentious behavior).³² In the *Letter*, Byron asserts

³² CPW 5:42-3.

Let us hear no more of this trash about ‘licentiousness’—is not “Anacreon” taught in our Schools? translated—praised—and edited?—Are not his Odes the amatory praises of a boy?—Is not Sappho’s Ode on a Girl? . . . And are the English Schools or the English women the more corrupt for all this?³³

These so-called heathen writers, however, demonstrated none of the narrow-minded concerns that preoccupied nineteenth-century Britons in Byron’s estimation:

“Unhappy Greece! thy sons of ancient days / The Muse may celebrate with perfect praise, / Whose generous children narrowed not their hearts / With commerce, given alone to Arms and Arts” (509-12). Byron’s argument against the “narrow” values of his contemporaries came close to Wordsworth’s argument in “The World Is Too Much With Us,” in which the elder poet similarly rejected Britain’s culture of “getting and spending” in favor of the rich mythological tradition found in the literatures of ancient Greece and Rome. Byron showed that, by the beginning of the nineteenth century, the state of classical learning, and learning in general, had not only been replaced by “commerce,” but that it has also been commercialized in unimaginative ways. Indeed, reading classical texts in their original languages was no longer necessary with the aid of literary “dictionaries” such as Lempriere’s mythology: “Orpheus, we learn from Ovid and Lempriere, / Led all wild beasts, but Women, by the ear” (663-64). For Byron, the rigorous dedication it took to learn and read in a foreign language no longer seemed to be a worthy goal by British standards.

³³ *CMP* 178.

Hence, his decision to publish Horace's original Latin alongside his verse translation would serve as a reminder to his readers of the value of foreign literature.

V

After continuing to witness the commanding effects of Scott's influence over literary tastes and Jeffrey's influence in the literary reviews, Byron's opposition to England's bards and Scotland's reviewers seems to have grown even stronger during his time abroad. As Andrew Nicholson has shown, Byron had already made up his mind about Britain's literary establishment: "Taste is over with us, & another century, will sweep our Empire, our literature, & our name from all, but a place in the annals of mankind."³⁴ Arguing from the position of a well-traveled cosmopolitan in *Hints*, Byron made a point of using a foreign literary standard in Horace in hope of rejuvenating nineteenth-century British readers. For Byron, the Greek and Roman classics could still inspire meaningful poetry and offer sound critical precepts. The classics, moreover, offered broader touchstones for writers and critics who had fallen into a narrow understanding of what constituted a literary tradition and had become increasingly driven by national interests. Byron's use of Horace in 1811 can be read, of course, as an aristocratic attempt to preserve a classical standard against the rise of provincial writers such as Robert Burns. But, we can also look at Byron's translation of Horace in another way: as a cosmopolitan text that addresses and goes beyond the

³⁴ *CMP* 3.

nationalistic concerns of Jeffrey and Scott in order to promote a wider appreciation of imaginative literature within an international context.

Chapter 4

BECOMING A “CITIZEN OF THE WORLD”: *CHILDE HAROLD II* AND *THE CURSE OF MINERVA*

On 28 February 1811, over a year into his first Grand Tour of the Eastern Mediterranean, Byron wrote to his mother from Athens, enthusiastically declaring himself to be a cosmopolitan: “I feel myself so much a citizen of the world, that the spot where I can enjoy a delicious climate, & every luxury at a less expense than a common college life in England, will always be a country to me, and such are in fact the shores of the Archipelago” (*BLJ* 2:40-1). In addition to the amenable Eastern Mediterranean climate Byron enjoyed during his tour, he also found the Greeks, Albanians, and Turks to be hospitable and generally agreeable. As a Cynical thinker, however, Byron also recognized the limits of his internationalism. Like most educated Europeans in the first decade of the nineteenth century, Byron saw Greece as a country with a rich cultural legacy buried beneath centuries of Ottoman rule. His philhellenism, which called for a more serious appraisal of Greece in its nineteenth-century context, was at odds with many European philhellenes and travel writers who clung nostalgically to Greece’s classical past. By idealizing the glories of ancient Athenian democracy and fixating on the “heroism” of its former citizens, these

writers, as Byron saw it, failed to present Greece in a meaningful way for nineteenth-century readers. In *Childe Harold II*, his earliest commentary on Greece, his purpose was thus quite different from the purpose of the many travel accounts of Greece circulating among British readers during the first decade of the nineteenth century. Byron described his intentions clearly in a note affixed to the poem: “instead of considering what [the Greeks] have been, and speculating on what they may be, let us look at them as they are.”¹

Susan Oliver has recently looked at Byron’s cosmopolitan identity in *Childe Harold II* from the perspective of what she describes as his “personal desire to appear—and in many ways to be—transgressive” by “attacking perceptions that any [orientalist tropes] might be uniformly representative and immutable.”² Although *Childe Harold II* and its scholarly apparatus support such this interpretation, Oliver neglects the complex realities of Byron having to come to terms with Greece’s enslaved conditions. There is a Cynical side to Byron’s cosmopolitanism, announced explicitly in the epigraph from Fogueret’s *Le Cosmopolite*, and forcefully expressed in the poetry of *Childe Harold II* and *The Curse of Minerva*, two poems written among the Grecian scenes they describe between 1809 and 1811.³

¹ *CPW* 2:202.

² *Byron, Scott*, 106.

³ See my discussion of Fogueret’s *Le Cosmopolite* on pages 13-14 of the Introduction.

I

According to William St. Clair, most Greeks during the early decades of the nineteenth century were unaware of their ancient ancestors. Many were taught by the Turks to see the physical remains of classical Greece that surrounded them as the work of heathens. In fact, as St. Clair has explained, the idea of a “Philhellenic” movement for Greek independence originated not within Greek borders but within an international context in Europe.⁴ Travel writers, who were well-versed in ancient Greek history and culture, perpetuated the idea of an Athenian revival in the immediate wake of the events of the French Revolution. They also drew upon popular interests in classical civilizations that had begun much earlier in the eighteenth century. Scholars, topographers, painters, architects, and classical enthusiasts had begun to tour sites of classical antiquity *en masse* after archeological discoveries at Herculaneum and Pompeii in 1709. Archeological interest coincided with new interest in the life of Homer and the material conditions in which he composed. Major publications such as Thomas Blackwell’s *Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer* (1735) and Robert Wood’s *Essay on the Original Genius of Homer* (1775) had a significant impact on establishing scholarly interest in Greece.⁵ Meanwhile,

⁴ *That Greece Might Still Be Free*, 9, 13-14.

⁵ Simonsuuri, 134-35.

Johann Winckelmann's *History of the Art of Antiquity* (1764) was the first study to attempt a definition of ancient Greek art by systematically examining its various stages of development.⁶ Greece had also become an important destination for antiquarians. The antiquarians, if not independently financed, were supported by governments or, as was the case in Britain, well-funded groups such as the British Society of the Dilettanti. The Dilettanti, a group of connoisseurs and classical enthusiasts, established their mutual interests in Italy in 1732, but membership in the Society eventually required a tour of Greece. As Jason Kelly writes, the Dilettanti's "most influential and longstanding interest began in the early 1750s when it funded an Athenian expedition to observe, record, and publish significant monumental remains of Greek antiquities."⁷

The scholarly appendix Byron included with *Childe Harold* I-II shows an awareness of the most important archeologists and travel writers to have visited Greece during the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. In the second of three lengthy prose commentaries he wrote at the Capuchin Monastery in Athens in 1811, and included as part of the appendix, Byron offers his candid opinion of four of these writers: "Eton and Sonnini have led us astray by their panegyrics and projects;

⁶ See Matthew Wiencke's entry on "Johann Winckelmann" in *Britannica: Academic Edition*.

⁷ See Kelly's entry on the Society of the Dilettanti in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

but, on the other hand, De Pauw and Thornton have debased the Greeks beyond their demerits.”⁸ The first of these writers, William Eton, was a classical scholar and devoted philhellene who had first published *A Survey of the Turkish Empire* in 1798.⁹ Byron described the work as a trite celebration, or “panegyric,” which offered nothing of real value to the nineteenth-century reader concerned with Greek emancipation. In particular, he disagreed with Eton’s preface, which declared that “the Greeks will emancipate themselves from the yoke of Turkey” (x). Byron knew the Greeks did not have the means to “emancipate themselves,” and he wrote elsewhere in his notes to *Childe Harold* that “To talk, as the Greeks themselves do, of their rising again to their pristine superiority, would be ridiculous.”¹⁰ Eaton, in his chapter on “The Political State of Greece,” was particularly adamant about the prospect of Greek emancipation (“Greece can no longer submit to Turkish yoke”), supporting his argument with nostalgic musings on Greece’s ancient heritage: “to appreciate its probable consequences we must consider the past and present circumstances of that famous country; we must recur to the eclipse of her former splendor by the Turkish conquest” (334). The following passage gives a clear example of Eton’s approach:

⁸ CPW 2:201. The monastery was located at the base of the Acropolis. Byron stayed there from the summer 1810 until his departure for England in the spring of 1811.

⁹ All citations to *A Survey* will be cited parenthetically by page number.

¹⁰ CPW 2:202.

[I]t will be sufficient for me to recall to the remembrance of the scholar some of the brightest pages in the history of mankind; it will be sufficient to cite the names of those poets and orators, those statesmen and moralists, whose illustrious deeds and whose admirable precepts still extort the applauses of the universe. To Greece belonged a Homer and a Demosthenes, a Phocion and an Aristides, a Socrates, a Plato, an Aristotle, a Phidias, and an Apelles; in short, in whatever path the ardent and eccentric imagination of man has fought for fame, in that the Grecian name stands eminently conspicuous, if not arrogating to itself an unrivalled superiority. (334-35)

Eton's approach was no different than that taken by Sonnini de Manoncourt, a philhellene inspired largely by the events of the French Revolution. Sonnini had published *Voyage en Grèce et en Turquie* in 1809, a travel book that, like Eton's, describes Greece under Turkish occupation with sentimental longing and nostalgia for Greece's classical past.¹¹ In the introduction to *Voyage en Grèce*, Sonnini's British translator commented that "His narrative is interspersed with historical anecdotes which recall to mind the enthusiastic heroism of the knights of RHODES, the subtle activity of the Greeks, and the destructive policy of the Ottomans" (1:xviii). In the text proper, Sonnini, again like Eton, sees Greece's freedom as imminent:

The Ottoman government, like an immense and shapeless colossus, placed on a base of clay, seems ready to fall, and GREECE, which it crushes with its unsupportable weight, must ere long, according to every appearance, if not resume her ancient attitude, at least break her chains, and occupy a rank among other nations, in the number of which her ancient and complete slavery prevented her from being reckoned. (1:xxv)

¹¹ All citations from *Voyage en Grèce* will be cited parenthetically by volume and page number.

In Sonnini, we can see the influence of the Enlightenment theories of cosmopolitanism that culminated in Kant's *Towards a Perpetual Peace*. Sonnini suggests, for example, that even if Greece could "not resume her ancient attitude" and could only "occupy rank among other nations" in a Kantian cosmo-political state. Although Byron agreed, in theory, with Sonnini on this last point, he did so with far less certainty: "The Greeks will never be independent; they will never be sovereigns as heretofore, and God forbid they ever should! but they may be subjects without being slaves. Our colonies are not independent, but they are free and industrious, and such may Greece be hereafter."¹²

In contrast to Sonnini and Eton, Thomas Thornton, in *The Present State of Turkey* (1807), showed little hope for Greek independence, but, as with Eton and Sonnini, he based his argument on a nostalgic longing for Greece's ancient past.¹³ Taking issue with Eton specifically, Thornton writes of the modern Greeks

If indeed they be descendants of the ancient Greeks; for how fallen, how changed from those, who, alone in the whole history of man, have left one bright page, have illustrated one short period, and have held up to the insatiable admiration of posterity the only models of human nature which approach to perfection. Who are the modern Greeks? . . . They never sprang from those Athenians whose patriotic ardour could not wait the tardy approach of the Persian army, but impelled them over the plains of Marathon. . . . The lofty spirit of Athenian independence could not brook the mild yoke of Persian despotism. (69-70)

¹² CPW 2:201.

¹³ All citations from *The Present State of Turkey* will be cited parenthetically by page number.

In addition to faulting Thornton for his misguided approach to the question of Greek independence, Byron also found other reasons to attack the travel writer:

Mr. Thornton conceives himself to have claims to public confidence from a fourteen years' residence at Pera; perhaps he may on the subject of the Turks, but this can give him no more insight into the real state of Greece and her inhabitants, than as many years spent in Wapping into that of the Western Highlands.¹⁴

After spending upwards of two years in the Eastern Mediterranean, Byron felt he had at least a small claim to accuracy regarding the customs and manners of the cultures he encountered. Because Thornton had spent fourteen years of his life in Constantinople, Byron rejects his claim to be an authority on modern Greece, remarking that few Greeks actually lived in the capital city of Turkey. Byron, who had first-hand insight into both Greece and Turkey, thought that Thornton's knowledge of Greece amounted to little more than observations of a common tourist: "As to Mr. Thornton's voyages in the Black Sea with Greek vessels, they gave him the same idea of Greece as a cruise to Berwick in a Scotch smack would of Johnny Groat's house."¹⁵ Similarly, Byron attacked another Greek antiquary, Cornelius De Pauw, a Dutch geographer who published *Recherches Philosophiques sur les Grecs*

¹⁴ CPW 2:203.

¹⁵ CPW 2:203.

in 1787, for having only a superficial knowledge of the Greek culture he described. Specifically, Byron underscores De Pauw's erroneous assertion "that the British breed of horses is ruined by Newmarket, and that the Spartans were cowards in the field" and then sarcastically notes that De Pauw "betrays an equal knowledge of English horses and Spartan men. His 'philosophical observations' have a much better claim to the title of 'poetical.'"¹⁶

In *Childe Harold II*, Byron also attacked the English antiquarian and travel writer William Gell for failing to draw Greece and its environs as they really "were" in his *Geography and Antiquities of Ithaca* (1807) and *Itinerary of Greece* (1810). In an excised stanza to *Childe Harold II*, Byron sarcastically asks:

will the gentle Dilettanti crew
Now delegate the task to digging Gell,
That mighty limner of a birdseye view,
How like to Nature let his volumes tell,
Who can with him the folios' limit swell?
With all the author saw, or said he saw?
Who can topographize or delve so well?
No boaster he, nor impudent and raw,

¹⁶ CPW 2:204.

His pencil, pen, and Spade, alike without a flaw?¹⁷

Byron's criticism of Gell, which extends for the length of an entire stanza, focuses on the inaccuracies Byron perceived in Gell's topographical drawings and his exaggerated claims "With all [he] saw, or said he saw."¹⁸ The stanza served to reinforce Byron's feelings about the way in which writers such as Gell were misinforming the English-reading public about the political conditions of Greece in the first decade of the nineteenth century. It is, in fact, possible that Byron contributed significantly to a critical review of Gell's *Geography and Antiquities of Ithaca and Itinerary of Greece* upon his return to London in 1811. Thomas Moore, in his *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron, with Notices of His Life* (1832), attributes the review to Byron, but the printer's copy, as Andrew Nicholson has shown, bears the initials of Byron's Cambridge friend Francis Hodgson, thus making it difficult to determine the exact extent of Byron's contribution.¹⁹ Nevertheless, the reviewer shared Byron's approach in *Childe Harold II* of holding travel writers such as Gell accountable for romanticizing Greece; the review can thus serve as an illustration of how others such

¹⁷ These stanzas are reprinted in Peter Cochran's edition of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage Cantos I and II*, 59.

¹⁸ Gell had been "delegate[d] the task" of leading the Dilletanti's second Ionian expedition in 1811. See Gell's entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹⁹ See Hodgson's review in the *Monthly Review* 55 (August 1811): 371-85. Hereafter all references are taken from this version and cited parenthetically.

as Hodgson also found little value in the narrowly conceived travel literature of his day.

In his *Geography of Ithaca*, Gell attempted to prove the geographic accuracy of Homer's *Odyssey*. Hodgson's lengthy review provides numerous extracts from Gell on such points, but questions their accuracy, sensing the author's nostalgia for Homeric Greece as a barrier to making accurate judgments. To illustrate this, Hodgson extracts a section in which Gell discusses one of the modern religious festivals observed in Greece: "In the evening of the festival, the inhabitants danced before their houses; and at one we saw the figure which is said to have been first used by the youths and virgins of Delos, at the happy return of Theseus from the expedition of the Cretan Labyrinth. It has now lost much of that intricacy which was supposed to allude to the windings of the habitation of the Minotaur" (377). Hodgson protests that "This is rather too much for even the inflexible gravity of our censorial muscles. When the author talks, with all the *reality* (if we may use the expression) of a Lempriere, on the stories of the fabulous ages, we cannot refrain from indulging a momentary smile; nor can we seriously accompany him in the learned architectural detail by which he endeavours to give us." The reviewer adds that "We can certainly recommend a perusal of this volume to every lover of classical scene and story. If we may indulge the pleasing belief that Homer sang of a real kingdom, and that Ulysses governed it, though we discern many feeble links in Mr. Gell's chain of evidence, we are on the whole induced to fancy that this is the Ithaca of the bard and of the

monarch” (379). Hodgson ends his review of the *Topography* with this sarcastic comment: “With Homer in his pocket, and Gell on his sumpter-horse or mule, the Odyssean tourist may now make a very classical and delightful excursion” (380). Byron certainly would have agreed with Hodgson’s sarcasm. As we shall see in *Childe Harold II*, Byron’s purpose is to remove the spell of Greece’s classical charm for his readers and describe a Grecian tour that, while perhaps modeled in part on Homer’s *Odyssey*, is anything but a “very classical and delightful excursion.”²⁰

II

If Byron’s purpose in *Childe Harold II* was to look at the Greeks as they really were in 1810-1811, he would do so without any of the classical affectation found in writers such as Gell, Eton, Sonnini, Thornton, or De Pauw. Byron tells us in the course of *Childe Harold II* that “[Greece’s] glorious day is o’er, but not thine years of shame” (2.76). The experience of reading lines such as this one must have been jarring for many nineteenth-century British readers who were more accustomed to reading the popular travel books. Distancing himself from the standard accounts of Greece, Byron wrote to Hobhouse on 3 November 1811: “My own mind is not very well made up as to ye. Greeks, but I have no patience with the absurd extremes into which their panegyrists & detractors have equally run” (*BLJ* 2:125). Forging a middle

²⁰ For discussion of *Childe Harold II* in relation to Homeric epic, see Reiman, 314-17.

path between the extremes of the travel writers, Byron instead offers his readers a complex portrait of Greece that is driven by qualified praise for its classical legacy:

Fair Greece! sad relic of departed worth!
Immortal, though no more! though fallen, great!
Who now shall lead thy scatter'd children forth,
And long accustom'd bondage uncreate? (2.73)

In Byron's imagination, Greece remains both "Fair" (a country of beautiful antiquities) and a "sad relic." The latter description carries standard religious connotations of a sacred artifact as well as the narrator's subsequent realization of that artifact's "departed worth." But Byron is not sentimental about Greece's lost legacy; he realizes that not only is its former worth gone, but that its current situation is one of "long accustom'd bondage." Byron's qualified view of Greece and Greek independence in *Childe Harold* is reinforced by his musings in the notes. There, for example, Byron sarcastically reaffirms that the travel writers have merely "publish[ed] very curious speculations grafted on [Greece's] former state, which can have no more effect on their present lot, than the existence of the Incas on the future fortunes of Peru."²¹

²¹ CPW 2:203.

Although it should be noted that Byron proceeds in his description of Greece in *Childe Harold* II by drawing upon an arsenal of classical commonplaces, he just as readily undercuts those allusions. For instance, we find obligatory references to Spartan heroism (“The hopeless warriors of a willing doom, / In bleak Thermopylae’s sepulchral strait” [2.73]); allusions to the Thirty Tyrants and Greece’s resistance to their tyranny (“Thrasybulus and his train” [2.74]). Elsewhere, we discover typically Romantic poeticisms illustrating Nature’s decisive role in the fate of human civilization:

And yet how lovely in thine age of woe,
Land of lost gods and godlike men! art thou!
Thy vales of ever-green, thy hills of snow
Proclaim thee Nature’s varied favourite now. (2.85)

Still the narrator, in a scene like this, remains in his own words a “stranger . . . / Linger . . . to gaze, and sigh ‘Alas!’” (2.86). That is, Byron tempers his classical enthusiasm for the “Land of lost gods and godlike men!” with an awareness of Greece’s present reality. And his approach, which discusses Greece within an international context, is often Cynical, showing little sympathetic attachment to its land or its people; he notes, for instance, that in modern Greece there are no longer “godlike men” or heroes where “every carle can lord it o’er thy land” (2.74). And

rather than criticize the early nineteenth-century Greeks, he mocks their apathy: “Will Gaul or Muscovite redress ye? no! / True, they may lay your proud despoilers low, / But not for you will Freedom’s altars flame” (2.76). Even if the Greeks were able to overthrow the “proud” Turks with foreign help, Byron insinuates that Greece would still end up “enslaved,” becoming a colonial subject to a European power.

The scholarly notes to *Childe Harold* II allow us to see more clearly the Cynical side to Byron’s cosmopolitan imagination. This Cynical cosmopolitanism is perhaps nowhere more apparent than in his comparison of Eastern and Western customs and manners in the last of the long prose letters he included in the appendix. In his “ADDITIONAL NOTE, ON THE TURKS,” Byron begins “As far as my own slight experience carried me I have no complaint to make; but am indebted for many civilities (I might almost say for friendship), and much hospitality, to Ali Pacha, his son Veli Pacha of the Morea, and several others.”²² Byron continues by describing the range of customs and behaviors he saw during his travels. He recalls, for example, that the “Suleyman Aga, late Governor of Athens, and now of Thebes, was a *bon vivant*, and as social a being as ever. . . . During the carnival, when our English party were masquerading, both himself and his successor were more happy to ‘receive masks’ than any dowager in Grosvenor-Square.” The Aga’s convivial behavior becomes a springboard for a larger discussion of Eastern customs that Byron seems to

²² CPW 2:209.

have felt his readers would find surprising based upon their limited understanding of the Eastern Mediterranean:

In all money transactions with the Moslems, I ever found the strictest honour, the highest disinterestedness. . . . With regard to presents, an established custom in the East, you will rarely find yourself a loser. . . . In the capital and at court the citizens and courtiers are formed in the same school with those of Christianity. . . . The lower orders are in as tolerable discipline as the rabble in countries with greater pretensions to civilization. A Moslem, in walking the streets of our country-towns, would be more incommoded in England than a Frank in a similar situation in Turkey. . . . In all the mosques there are schools established, which are very regularly attended; and the poor are taught without the church of Turkey being put into peril.²³

Towards the end of the passage, Byron then asks his readers a rhetorical question:

“Who shall then affirm that the Turks are ignorant bigots, when they thus evince the exact proportion of Christian charity which is tolerated in the most prosperous and orthodox of all possible kingdoms?” This kind of thinking and questioning does much to reinforce Oliver’s view of Byron as a “transgressive” cosmopolitan who, in works such as *Childe Harold* and *The Turkish Tales*, crosses “dark barriers” in order to demystify cultural differences.²⁴ However, Byron’s remarks on the Turks do not stop with his rhetorical question. Byron instead chooses to end his discussion with a pointed and ironic remark about the Greeks that qualifies the positive comparisons he has made over the course of several pages:

²³ CPW 2:209-11.

²⁴ Scott, *Byron*, 14.

But, though [the Turks] allow all this, they will not suffer the Greeks to participate in their privileges: no, let them fight their battles, and pay their haratch (taxes), be drubbed in this world, and damned in the next.²⁵

While there may be a wealth of surprising similarities between the Turk and the Briton in Byron's estimation, there remain inexplicable reasons for the Greeks to be an enslaved people. This is precisely the kind of Cynical thinking that prevents his endorsing the unifying cosmopolitanism of eighteenth-century writers such as Goldsmith and Enlightenment philosophers such as Kant.

We find further indications of Byron's Cynical cosmopolitanism in allusions to classical philosophers such as Socrates who were known to have influenced the Cynics: "Well didst thou speak, Athena's wisest son! / 'All that we know is, nothing can be known.' / Why should we shrink from what we cannot shun?" (2.7). Byron realizes how unreasonable human beings from all corners of the globe can be. Hence, the Cynical narrator that guides the poem must forever remain cognizant of the limits of any cosmopolitan enthusiasm he might profess for Greece and its surrounding environs:

By pensive Sadness, not by Fiction, led—
Climes, fair withal as ever mortal head
Imagin'd in its little schemes of thought;

²⁵ *CPW* 2:211.

Or e'er in new Utopias were aed,
To teach man what he might be, or he ought;
If that corrupted thing could ever such be taught. (2.36)

Humankind's depravity, according to Byron, is a result of its own self-willed ignorance. Robert Gleckner sees in this stanza a confirmation of Byron's nihilistic world view and suggests that his purpose in *Childe Harold II* "is clearly not to moralize or correct."²⁶ While I agree with Gleckner's focus on Byron's overall pessimism, Byron, being a Cynical thinker, in fact does have an instructive and "moral" purpose in mind. That purpose, in *Childe Harold II*, is quite clear: to make his readers aware of the degradation of humanity on a global scale. As Byron reasons, if educated and civilized Turks can not see the unreasonableness of enslaving fellow human beings (the Greeks), then there is little point in urging the kind of cosmopolitan unity espoused by Enlightenment thinkers such as Kant.

This Cynical logic is the same kind of logic that Byron employs in the Albanian stanzas of *Childe Harold II*. One of the more memorable passages is the vivid description of Ali Pasha's palace at Tepelene where "men of every clime appear to make resort" (2.61). The scene, which reminded Byron of Walter's Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, reinforced the cosmopolitan makeup of the Eastern Mediterranean as Byron had experienced it:

²⁶ Byron and the Ruins of Paradise, 79-80.

Richly caparison'd, a ready row
 Of armed horse, and many a warlike store
 Circled the wide extending court below:
 Above, strange groups adorn'd the corridore;
 And oft-times through the Area's echoing door
 Some high-capp'd Tartar spurr'd his steed away:
 The Turk, the Greek, the Albanian, and the Moor,
 Here mingled in their many-hued array. (2.57)²⁷

Despite this mixed display of cultural energies, Byron undercuts the illusion of a cosmopolitan utopia a few stanzas later, reminding readers that “Here woman’s voice is never heard: apart, / And scarce permitted, guarded, veil’d, to move” (2.61). The Ali Pasha, moreover, despite Byron’s encouraging comments about his hospitality and his general demeanor, is “a man of war and woes; / . . . [with] deeds that lurk beneath, and stain him with disgrace” (2.62). A few lines later, Byron turns the Pasha’s “deeds” to “crimes that scorn the tender voice of Ruth, / Beseeming all men ill, but most the man / In years, have marked him with a tyger’s tooth” (2.63). Byron’s inability to reconcile Ali’s generous nature with his unconscionable “crimes”

²⁷ Byron compares the scene to Scott’s description of Branksome Castle in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*. See *BLJ* 1:227.

against humanity leads us back to his overall Cynical approach to international relations in *Childe Harold II*. Byron remained alert to the violent realities of the human condition that affected all parts of the globe: “Blood follows blood, and, through their mortal span, / In bloodier acts conclude those who with blood began” (2.63). This idea is confirmed only a few stanzas later by the introduction of an Albanian War song (discussed in detail in the next chapter), which underscores the fact that even the creative energy in the Eastern Mediterranean, embodied in its oral poetry, harbored a darker, destructive reality.

III

If the travel writers who had written on Greece failed to do so in a way that would meaningfully describe the plight of nineteenth-century Greeks, then the actions undertaken by Lord Elgin to remove the Parthenon marbles from Athens represented an even more pernicious kind of injustice in Byron’s mind. In fact, more than anything else he witnessed in Greece, the work of Elgin and his associate Lord Aberdeen solidified Byron’s decision to renounce his allegiance to Britain and become a “citizen of the world.” In *Childe Harold II*, and a new satire he wrote in 1811 called *The Curse of Minerva*, Byron did not hide the embarrassment and shame he felt as a Briton witnessing the systematic removal of the Parthenon marbles by British hands.

In *English Bards*, Byron offered an early appraisal of Elgin and other British antiquaries in Greece, including George Hamilton Gordon, the fourth Earl of Aberdeen:

Let ABERDEEN and ELGIN still pursue
The shade of fame through regions of Virtu;
Waste useless thousands on their Phidian freaks,
Mis-shapen monuments, and maimed antiques;
And make their grand saloons a general mart
For all the mutilated blocks of art. (1027-32)

Byron's criticism focuses on the marbles themselves and not the imperialism that undergirded their removal. Both Aberdeen and Elgin believed the Parthenon marbles to be the authentic work of the famed Phidias.²⁸ Byron, however, rejects the Phidian hypothesis and uses it as an opportunity to satirize Elgin (and his physically deformed nose): "Lord Elgin would fain persuade us that all the figures, with and without noses, in his stone-shop, are the work of Phidias; 'Credat Judæus!'"²⁹

²⁸ William St. Clair says that antiquaries during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries debated ad nauseam the idea that Phidias may have had his hand in the creating the marbles. See *Lord Elgin and the Marbles*, 177-79.

²⁹ *CPW* 1:418. The Latin quote comes from Horace's satires. See Fuchs' translation: "Apella the Jew may believe this if he likes" (1.5:100-01).

Byron's time in Athens in particular and Greece in general allowed him to focus his arguments against men such as Elgin and Aberdeen. His animosity towards both men is reflected in an alternate version of stanza 13 drafted for *Childe Harold II*:

Come then, ye classic thieves of each degree
Dark Hamilton, and sullen Aberdeen,
Come pilfer all the Pilgrim loves to see
All that yet consecrates the fading scene,
Ah! better were it ye had never been
.....
Than ye should bear one stone from wronged Athena's sight.³⁰

This stanza, infused with the Juvenalian anger that we find in parts of *English Bards*, may have been rejected by Byron because its tone is incongruous with the more melancholy mood of *Childe Harold II*. The stanza on Elgin that Byron did include in *Childe Harold II*, however, more forcefully reveals the shame and embarrassment he feels as a Briton in Greece:

Cold is the heart, fair Greece! that looks on thee,

³⁰ See page 59 of Cochran's e-text edition of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage Cantos 1 and 2*.

Nor feels as lovers o'er the dust they lov'd;
Dull is the eye that will not weep to see
Thy walls defac'd, thy mouldering shrines remov'd
By British hands, which it had best behov'd
To guard those relics ne'er to be restor'd.
Curst be the hour when from their isle they rov'd,
And once again thy hapless bosom gor'd,
And snatch'd thy shrinking Gods to northern climes abhorr'd! (2.15)

During his first Grand Tour Byron had found it increasingly difficult to maintain any sense of pride in the country of his birth. The unconscionable actions of the Scottish-born Elgin gave Byron yet another reason to distance himself from his British roots and become a Diogenes-like "citizen of the world." In fact, Byron argues that Greek antiquarians such as Elgin, who are driven by personal or nationalistic motives, represent a false kind of cosmopolitanism. Despite Elgin's seemingly altruistic gesture to "guard [Greece's] relics" from neglect or destruction at the hands of the Turks, Byron realizes that the marbles will remain in British hands "ne'er to be restor'd" to their rightful owners. All Byron can do is to urge future travelers to approach Greece with a sense of respect for its sacred relics:

Let such approach this consecrated land,

And pass in peace along the magic waste:
But spare its relics—let no busy hand
Deface the scenes, already how defac'd!
Not for such purpose were these altars plac'd. (2.93)

IV

The references to Elgin in *Childe Harold II* are rather tame in comparison to the more scathing remarks in *The Curse of Minerva*. Byron's first reference to the last of the satires he wrote in 1811 during his first Grand Tour appears in a letter to Hobhouse on 17 November of that year: "Cawthorne is . . . at work with fifth Edition of E[nglish] B[ard]s[;] this & the H[int]s from Horace, with a thing on Ld. Elgin, called the 'Curse of Minerva' which you have never seen, will constitute Master Lintot's department, and make a monstrous vol. of Crown Octavo" (*BLJ* 2:131). The poem was never published with *English Bards* or *Hints* as Byron originally intended. Nor did the poem ever reach a large audience during his lifetime; only eight copies were privately circulated in 1812. Byron later salvaged the opening section of the satire, using it as part of the third canto in *The Corsair* (1814). Nevertheless, *The Curse of Minerva* (not published until 1831) remains an invaluable source for charting the development of Byron's Cynical cosmopolitanism during his first Grand Tour.

Although *The Curse of Minerva* and *Childe Harold II* were written over a year apart, both poems have common themes and characteristics. In choosing a British traveler for a narrator in *The Curse of Minerva*, Byron employs the same device he had already used in *Childe Harold I-II*. The traveler in his new satire is, like Harold and the narrator of the other poem, “Alone” and “friendless,” though this traveler does not share the same Cynical world view that Byron employs in *Childe Harold II*. Whereas the narrator of the latter, as we have seen, approaches Greece with a qualified enthusiasm regarding European attitudes towards Greece and the question of Greek emancipation, the narrator of *The Curse of Minerva*, who initially seems unaware of the political conditions in nineteenth-century Greece, views Greece and its antiquities with unqualified nostalgia:

As thus, within the walls of Pallas' fane,
I mark'd the beauties of the land and main,
Alone, and friendless on the magic shore,
Whose arts revive, whose arms avenge no more;
Oft, as the matchless dome I turn'd to scan,
Sacred to Gods, but not secure from man,
The past returned, the present seem'd to cease. (55-61)

The traveler's enthusiasm for Greece's "beauties" makes him an emotional participant in the scene.³¹ As such, he appears susceptible to flights of imaginative fancy induced by the antiquities that surround him, and he acknowledges a nostalgic desire to escape the "present." Byron thus seems to be holding up the traveler and his ignorance of the cultural conditions of nineteenth-century Greece to direct scrutiny.

In addition to his nostalgia for Greece's ancient past, the traveler carries a romantic sensibility. He observes the moonlight that shines intermittently "O'er the chill marble, where the startling tread / Thrills the lone heart like echoes from the dead" (69-70). There are overtones of *Childe Harold* as the traveler contemplates the "wreck" (72) of Greece, but *The Curse of Minerva* adds Gothic qualities to generate suspense. The speaker, already in an excited state of mind, exclaims

Long had I mused, and treasured every trace
The wreck of Greece recorded of her race,
When lo! a giant form before me strode,
And Pallas hailed me in her own abode! (71-74)

³¹ See *BLJ* 3:132. This enthusiasm is even more explicitly stated in the original version of line 58: "Whose arts and arms but live in poets' lore."

Minerva, the traveler seems to believe, is not just a figure of his imagination, but an actual spirit in the flesh. Hobhouse's Greek diary for 6 January 1810 records a superstition among the Greeks that may have influenced *The Curse of Minerva*:

Lusieri also mentioned a singular superstition of the Greeks. They consider that the antique statues in Greece are men and women enchanted by some magician, and that they will at some future time recover their pristine form. Some men employed in loading my Lord Elgin's marbles a few days past, refused to put one of the chests on board, saying that it was an Arabin [sic], or had a spirit within, and some Greeks who conveyed two busts to Captain Leake declared they heard the Arabin groan and scream most piteously within them. Some of these statues, they say, have been heard to bewail at leaving their friends and fellow marbles in the Acropolis.³²

Whether or not Byron had such superstitions in mind, the ghost of Minerva that appears to the traveler jars him from his reverie: "Yes, 'twas Minerva's self—but ah! how chang'd, / Since o'er the Dardan field in arms she rang'd!" (75-76). Moreover, "Gone were the terrors of her awful brow, / . . . Her helm was dinted, and the broken lance / Seem'd weak and shaftless e'en to mortal glance" (79-82). The classically-minded traveler has known only the Minerva of the Trojan War ("the Dardan field") and the heroic Minerva of ancient lore. Now he is forced to confront a nineteenth-century version of the goddess who speaks with knowledge of both the historical past and the historical present:

'Mortal!' ('twas thus she spake) 'that blush of shame

³² See Hobhouse's "Athens" diary, 130.

Proclaims thee Briton, once a noble name;
First of the mighty, foremost of the free,
Now honoured *less* by all, and *least* by me:
Chief of thy foes shall Pallas still be found—
Seek'st thou the cause of loathing?—look around.
Lo! here, despite of war and wasting fire,
I saw successive tyrannies expire:
'Scap'd from the ravage of the Turk and Goth,
Thy country sends a spoiler worse than both. (89-98)

The Goddess interrupts the traveler's nostalgic reverie when she next instructs him to
“Survey this vacant violated fane; / Recount the relics torn that yet remain” (99-100).
And she instructs more emphatically that not all who conquered Greece, despite their
historical reputations, were plunderers like Lord Elgin:

These Cecrops placed, *this* Pericles adorn'd,
That Adrian rear'd when drooping Science mourn'd
What more I owe let Gratitude attest—
Know Alaric and Elgin did the rest.
That all may learn from whence the plunderer came
The insulted wall sustains his hated name:

For Elgin's fame thus grateful Pallas pleads,
Below, his name; above, behold his deeds! (101-08)

Pallas' historical survey has important implications for understanding the false cosmopolitanism of Lord Elgin as Byron saw it. Cecrops was the founder and first King of Athens, whereas Pericles initiated the city's greatest period of architectural rebuilding and oversaw the construction of the Parthenon. Later Roman imperialists such as Hadrian, Minerva explains, appreciated Grecian shrines, ordering the Roman Pantheon to be constructed in imitation of the Greek Parthenon. Elgin, in contrast, has shown no respect for Greece and its culture:

Be ever hail'd with equal honour here
The Gothic monarch and the Pictish peer:
Arms gave the first his right, the last had none,
But basely stole what less barbarians won. (109-12)

Byron was fond of hyperbolic comparisons for satiric effect. In *English Bards*, he compared Francis Jeffrey with the infamous George Jeffries, who had been the presiding judge at the "Bloody Assizes" of 1685, because the two men shared a

name.³³ In *The Curse of Minerva*, the comparison between Alaric, the leader of the Germanic Goths responsible for sacking Rome in the fifth century AD, and Elgin was equally hyperbolic. Even though Alaric was notorious for his plundering, he had spared Athens, according the fifth-century (AD) historian Zosimus, after witnessing a vision of Athena dressed in full battle attire when making his approach to the city.³⁴ In *The Curse of Minerva*, Byron thus holds up Elgin, whom he felt had absolutely no “right” to steal the Parthenon marbles from the Greeks, as a false friend of the Greeks and history’s most egregious barbarian.

V

The Curse of Minerva does not have the probing and complex exploration of Greek independence that we find in *Childe Harold II*. The poem is, of course, a one-sided invective with the sole purpose of exposing the crimes of Lord Elgin. Yet if we read the poem as a cosmopolitan text, we can see that it builds upon the Cynical world view Byron employed in *Childe Harold II*. The poem, in fact, ends in the same way that *English Bards* had ended, with Byron showing himself to be a “citizen of the world,” rejecting his native country and predicting Britain’s demise. Not only will

³³ See McGann’s note to *English Bards* line 439 in *CPW* 1:407.

³⁴ Waterfield, 262.

Elgin receive his comeuppance (“Though not for him alone revenge shall wait”
[209]), but Britain will lose its Empire:

Hers were the deeds that taught her lawless son

To do what oft Britannia’s self had done.

Look to the Baltic—blazing from afar,

Your old ally yet mourns perfidious war:

.....

‘Look to the East, where Ganges’ swarthy race

Shall shake your tyrant empire to its base;

Lo, there Rebellion rears her ghastly head,

And glares the Nemesis of native dead;

.....

‘Look on your Spain, she clasps the hand she hates,

But coldly clasps, and thrusts you from her gates.

Bear witness, bright Barossa! thou canst tell

Whose were the sons that bravely fought and fell. (211-32)

Peter Cochran singles out these three stanzas in particular for their lack of harmony with the rest of the poem.³⁵ Yet all three verse paragraphs serve an important function in that they reveal the scope of Byron's Cynical cosmopolitanism in 1811. Clearly, Byron is thinking globally and more explicitly criticizing the stability of the British Empire than ever before. The first reference to the "Baltic" alludes to the Battle of Copenhagen, a pre-emptive military strike undertaken by the British against the Danish in 1807; the Danes, ironically, were a neutral "ally" of Britain in the war against Napoleon at the time. The second reference to "the East" refers to rebellions in India in 1809 and 1810 that threatened British supremacy in that region of the world. The final reference is to Spain and Britain's failure to make military and political progress in the Peninsular Wars. Byron underscores the Battle of Barossa because Spain had refused British military cooperation during the battle.³⁶ In each instance, Byron rejects all allegiance to the country of his birth and sarcastically presages its demise, thus reaffirming his position as a Cynical cosmopolitan, who chooses to maintain a position of cultural independence while mocking the failure of Britain's imperial ambitions around the world.

³⁵ See Cochran's Introduction to *The Curse of Minerva*.

³⁶ Borst, 145-46.

Chapter 5

BARDIC COSMOPOLITANISM: *CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE*

In his philosophic essay *Project for a Perpetual Peace*, Immanuel Kant underscored the irony of national songs of “Thanksgiving” that celebrated military victories:

It would not ill become a people that has just terminated a war, to order, besides their thanksgiving-day, a solemn fast, in order to ask forgiveness of God for the crime the nation has just committed, and which the human race still goes on to perpetrate, for refusing to live with other nations in legal order; to which, jealous of a proud independence, it prefers the barbarous means of war, without being able to obtain thereby what it desires, the secure enjoyment of its rights. The thanksgivings which are rendered during the war, the hymns that are chanted by us, like true Israelites, to the God of hosts, are glaringly inconsistent with the moral idea of the Father of men; they announce a culpable indifference for the principles, which nations ought to observe in the defense of their rights, and express an infernal joy at having slain a multitude of men, or annihilated their happiness.¹

Kant’s observation would have surely appealed to Byron, whose criticism of the Peninsular Wars is a theme that frequently recurs in the first canto of *Childe Harold*. Yet Kant’s vision for a cosmopolitan world-state, developed over the course of *Project for a Perpetual Peace*, would have been met with skepticism by Byron. Kant believed the world was governed *a priori* by reason and progressively moving

¹ Kant, 27.

towards a unified and violence-free world. As we saw in the last chapter, Byron's Cynical attitude towards the kind of cosmopolitan unity Kant endorsed was based upon his having to come to terms with the enslaved state of Greece under Turkish occupation. Despite the hospitality and the generally amenable conditions he discovered among the cultures he encountered during his first Grand Tour, the reality of his discovery that "blood follows blood" across all cultures prevented him from fully embracing any progressive theory of cosmopolitanism. In the last chapter, I dealt with Byron's attempts in *Childe Harold II* and *The Curse of Minerva* to describe Greece as it really "was" in the first decades of the nineteenth century by paying close attention to the historical details Byron offered in both poems. In this chapter, I want to focus on Byron's use of the romance genre and the bardic tradition in *Childe Harold I-IV* to further his purpose of describing world events as they really "were" during the Napoleonic era.

In romance narratives, as Katie Trumpener explains, "the bard is the mouthpiece for a whole society, articulating its values, chronicling its history, and mourning the inconsolable tragedy of its collapse."² As a Cynical cosmopolitan, however, Byron rarely mourns the "tragedy" of what he perceives to be the shortcomings of the world's various nations and peoples. Meanwhile, Walter Scott, the Romantic period's most influential practitioner of romance poetry and its most popular supporter of the Union between Scotland and England, celebrated the cultural

² *Bardic Nationalism*, 6.

progress that can be born out of periods of societal collapse in his own romance poems. According to Susan Oliver, Scott was also the most important literary influence on the genesis of *Childe Harold*. Oliver argues that Byron, in *Childe Harold* I-II, reworks the orientalist tropes Scott employed in his early verse romances by demystifying cultural taboos associated with the Eastern Mediterranean. I want to build upon Oliver's argument but focus more specifically on the way both Scott and Byron engage the bardic tradition through common features such as song, heroism, and romance. In so doing, I argue that Byron's Cynical approach to global unity in *Childe Harold* I-IV is a direct response to Scott's unifying and progressive cosmopolitanism in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*.

I

Scott wrote *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* between 1803 and 1804 to build upon the success of his collection of border ballads in *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802-03).³ His ballad collection, modeled on Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765), served the same political purpose that *The Lay* would: to explore Anglo-Scottish history from the perspective of "conjectural history," which

³ All references to *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (hereafter *The Lay*) are taken from *The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott* (Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 1909). All references to the poem will be cited parenthetically by canto and stanza. All references to Scott's notes will be footnoted and cited by page number.

“presupposes that there exists a law of the necessary progress of society.”⁴ This is a theme that Scott carefully worked out over the course of his ballad collection. Similarly, as Oliver has argued, in *The Lay*, “Cycles of revenge, the corrupting properties of power and the evils of individualism are encountered and overcome in the course of the narrative.”⁵ Scott’s romance, ends with a celebration of communal unity between the English and the Scottish, thus suggesting a world that a Cynical cosmopolitan such as Byron would reject. Scott would eventually write several other verse romances with similar historical trajectories including *Marmion* (1808), *The Lady of the Lake* (1810), and *Rokeby* (1813) before turning his talents to the novel once Byron had surpassed him as the most popular poet of the age. *The Lay*, however, remains Scott’s most influential early romance, and part of its popular appeal was the way it spoke to the British public on both sides of the Scottish-English border.

The theme of “communal virtue and unity” works itself out over the course of convoluted plots and subplots in *The Lay*. Scott’s poem actually begins in a state of communal disunity between two feuding Scottish clans: the Buccleuchs and the Cranstouns. Janet Scott of the Buccleuch family, a widow skilled in the art of magic, vows revenge for the murder of her husband by members of the Cranstoun clan. The plan is complicated by an existing romance between Janet’s daughter Margaret and Henry Cranstoun, heir to the Cranstoun clan. The English, meanwhile, threaten to

⁴ Oliver, 74.

⁵ Oliver, 73

invade Scotland from the south, temporarily uniting the feuding Scottish families. In the end, the hostilities between the two countries, and the rival Scottish clans, are settled by a duel between the Scotsman Henry Cranstoun and an Englishman named Richard Musgrave. Musgrave is defeated and killed in one-on-one combat, and Janet subsequently drops her plans for revenge against the Cranstoun clan and urges marriage between her daughter and Henry.

Scott's recent biographer John Sutherland describes *The Lay* as "an excessively belligerent and war-glorifying poem."⁶ Yet we are never shown much war or belligerence in the course of the romance between the English and the Scottish. This is surprising since Scott saw Homeric epic as the foundation of "Romance" poetry.⁷ In the end of *The Lay*, Scott, through his bardic narrator, chooses not to describe the details of the climactic battle between Musgrave and Cranstoun. Rather, after a long description of the prelude to the day of the battle and a brief description of the battle itself, we learn only that "the death-pang's o'er! / Richard of Musgrave breathes no more" (5.23). The narrator, ever mindful of his immediate audience in the poem, an attentive group of courtly females, explains his decision not to describe the details of combat:

⁶ Sutherland, 99.

⁷ See Scott's "Essay on Romance," in *Scott's Miscellaneous Works*, 6:136-37. See also Simon Dentith's discussion of Scott's essay in *Epic and Empire in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, 28-36.

Ill would it suit your gentle ear,
Ye lovely listeners, to hear
How to the axe the helms did sound,
And blood poured down from many a wound;
For desperate was the strife and long,
And either warrior fierce and strong.
But, were each dame a listening knight,
I well could tell how warriors fight. (5.21)

One of Scott's primary political purposes in *The Lay* is to celebrate the cosmopolitan unity between the English and the Scottish. Hence, he chooses not to dwell on the hostilities that had plagued the two countries; rather, he defers the bloody details of battle for the sake of a polite audience of Anglo-Scottish female readers. In this way, he turned bardic literature away from the Homeric tradition and "civilized" the morally questionable elements found in heroic literature.⁸ This transition from the age

⁸ Most Romantic writers criticized Homeric literature. William Blake, writing about Homeric epic, argued that the "Classics, it is the Classics! & not Goths nor Monks, that desolate Europe with Wars." See "On Homer's Poetry" in *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, 267. Robert Southey, in his Preface to *Joan of Arc*, admitted that "Homer is indeed, the best of poets, for he is at once dignified and simple"; yet, he also maintained that an epic hero needed "sensibility and feeling—more than can be found in an Achilles or an Aeneas" (*The Poetical Works of Robert Southey*, 1:iii). Wordsworth, who attempted to translate Virgil's *Aeneid* in 1824, more

of the Homeric warrior to the age of the civilized knight is symbolized in the character of Lord Dacre, an English knight and mirror image of Homer's Achilles. Instead of attending the standoff between Cranstoun and Musgrave, "angry Dacre rather chose / In his pavilion to repose" (5.5). The era of Achilles, Scott seems to suggest, has ended with the relatively peaceful unification of feuding Scotsman and hostile Englishmen:

They met on Teviot's strand;
They met and sate them mingled down,
Without a threat, without a frown,
As brothers meet in foreign land:
The hands, the spear that lately grasped,
Still in the mailed gauntlet clasped,
Were interchanged in greeting dear;

generally declared that "no antient [sic] Author can be with advantage so rendered" into blank verse because "Their religion, their warfare their course of action and feeling, are too remote from modern interest to allow it" (*The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth, The Later Years*, 1:250). Joseph Cottle, in his Preface to *Alfred, An Epic Poem* (ii-iii), without naming Homer, took an even more negative view of heroic literature when he wrote that such poems "exhibit disgusting representations of war and slaughter" and concluded "The age appears to be drawing near, when the principles of poetic pleasure will be accurately investigated; when that which has been long established will be distinguished from that which is essential, and when Poetry will be divested of those appendages which have limited her usefulness by rendering her too frequently contemptible in the eye of Philosophy."

Visors were raised and faces shown,
And many a friend, to friend made known,
Partook of social cheer. (5.6)

As Sutherland points out, war in Scott's *Lay* "dissolves into the first international soccer match," and "Battle [becomes] sport by another name."⁹

Some drove the jolly bowl about;
With dice and draughts some chased the day;
And some, with many a merry shout,
In riot, revelry, and rout,
Pursued the football play. (5.6)

The verse paragraphs that follow continue in the same manner as the formerly feuding clans and hostile nations all partake in "peaceful merriment" (5.7) and celebratory feasts. Meanwhile, Margaret Buccleuch, seizing the "dawning day" (5.10), espies Henry Cranston and recognizes that "True love's the gift which God has given" (5.13). The feud has ended, English and Scottish hostilities have ceased, and the cycle of vengeance that formerly existed among the warring factions has been broken. Scott has effectively relegated destructive social energies to history and

⁹ *The Life of Walter Scott*, 100.

shown the progress of civilization through cultural unification. In *The Lay*, Scott thus positions himself as a cosmopolitan in the Kantian tradition as one who believes that societies, despite the historical hostilities that may exist or have existed between them, are inevitably moving towards unification and perpetual peace.

II

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Byron's Cynical answer to Scott's unifying cosmopolitan message in *The Lay*, examines the brutal effects of war on various societies throughout history. Whereas Scott celebrates the social progress that comes out of war, Byron dwells upon the social regression associated with violent struggle. While romance narratives historically celebrated idealized love and its potential to influence human behavior, Byron deliberately reverses this generic paradigm. Even though *Childe Harold* was published with the subtitle "A Romaunt" in 1812 to indicate its place within the literary genre that Scott had made popular with *The Lay* in 1805, Byron's purpose was highly ironic and subversive.

On its surface, however, *Childe Harold* is indebted to the romance genre in several ways: it imitates the poetic form and the archaic diction found in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*; it ostensibly involves a heroic quest, or pilgrimage, undertaken by a knight; in this case, the title "Childe" designates Harold as a yet unproven medieval

knight.¹⁰ And, as Erik Simpson has shown, the poem consciously draws upon characters and themes associated with medieval literary minstrelsy found in the poetry of James Beattie and Scott.¹¹ This minstrel themes become clear at the very beginning of the poem when the narrator refers to *Childe Harold* as “so plain a tale—this lowly lay of mine” (1.1). The *OED* defines “Lay,” itself an antiquated term by the early nineteenth century, as a “short lyric or narrative poem intended to be ‘sung’” and explains that the word had become synonymous with “song” between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. In the third canto of *Childe Harold*, the narrator again refers to the poem as a song, a “dreary strain” (3.4) and makes several more references to the singing of his “Tale” (3.3). Byron’s narrator, moreover, appears as the first of two bardic figures in the poem. Childe Harold, the title character, plays a “harp” (1.13), and the narrator refers to him as a minstrel who sings “with untaught melody” (1.13). Harold, of course, also entertains the reader with his own songs throughout the poem, directly imitating one of Scott’s narrative techniques in *The Lay* as we shall see. In *Childe Harold*, Byron shows for the first time that he was willing to engage in a “literary” conversation with Scott about romance literature and the way Scott used romance to evade social realities and promote cosmopolitan unities instead.

¹⁰ Kucich, 115.

¹¹ *Literary Minstrelsy*, 91-7. Byron recognized Beattie and Scott as influences on *Childe Harold* in his Preface to the first two cantos. See *CPW* 2:4.

Byron's take on romance literature in general and Scott's romances in particular is Cynical in orientation. In *Childe Harold* I-II, Byron included the epigraph from Fogueret's *Le Cosmopolite* to show his cosmopolitan disregard for nationalism and to set a misanthropic tone for the poem. Over the course of the first canto, it becomes clear that Byron rejects the medieval romance tradition, mocking every convention of the genre: its archaic diction, its romantic themes, and especially its chivalric values.¹² Byron's attack on the chivalric values associated with war, in fact, is the predominant theme in the first canto and much of the second. In the first canto, the deeply ironic stanzas on the battle at Talavera, described as a "splendid sight to see" (1.40), are clear examples of Byron working within a Cynical mode, reinforcing his belief that war remained a barrier to the kind of cosmopolitan unity Scott endorsed in *The Lay*.¹³

Their rival scarfs of mix'd embroidery,
Their various arms that glitter in the air!
What gallant war-hounds rouse them from their lair,
And gnash their fangs, loud yelling for the prey!
All join the chase, but few the triumph share;
The Grave shall bear the chiefest prize away,

¹² McGann discusses Byron's mockery of chivalric values in *Fiery Dust*, 56-7.

¹³ See stanzas 41-44.

And Havoc scarce for joy can number their array.

Three hosts combine to offer sacrifice;

Three tongues prefer strange orisons on high;

Three gaudy standards flout the pale blue skies;

The shouts are France, Spain, Albion, Victory!

The foe, the victim, and the fond ally

That fights for all, but ever fight in vain,

Are met—as if at home they could not die—

To feed the crow on Talavera's plain,

And fertilize the field that each pretends to gain. (1.40-1)

Instead of coming together in a state of peaceful cosmopolitan unity, three different nations ("France, Spain, Albion") instead choose to "fight in vain."¹⁴ Such was the state of the world during the Napoleonic Wars as Byron saw it. In a letter to his mother, Byron underscored the irony of referring to the battle of Talavera as a "victory" by reminding her of the human cost involved: "you have heard of the battle near Madrid, & in England they will call it a victory, a pretty victory! two hundred officers and 5000 men killed all English, and the French in as great force as ever"

¹⁴ William Borst argues that these stanzas "constitute one of the most bitter and sardonic pronouncements on war in all poetry" (*Lord Byron's First Pilgrimage*, 45).

(*BLJ* 1:221). In a suppressed note to *Childe Harold I*, Byron reiterated the irony of the so-called “victory” at the Battle of Talavera: “Sorely were we puzzled how to dispose of that same victory of Talavera; and a victory it surely was somewhere for everybody claimed it.”¹⁵ Byron also saw the irony in the distrust and disunity that still existed between the British and Spanish forces that were supposedly allied against Napoleon. As Borst explains, “Byron and Hobhouse both showed irritation that Spanish reports of the battle gave credit for the victory to their general Cuesta . . . [since] his jealousy of Wellesley and his lack of cooperation contributed much to the ineffectualness of the Talavera campaign.”¹⁶

Outside of Talavera, Byron finds that the Spanish are surprisingly indifferent to the wars being waged around them. In Seville, this indifference comes to symbolize the internal disunity that existed among the Spanish people:

But all unconscious of the coming doom,
The feast, the song, the revel here abounds;
Strange modes of merriment the hours consume,
Nor bleed these patriots with their country's wounds. (1.46)

¹⁵ *CPW* 2:275.

¹⁶ *Lord Byron's First Pilgrimage*, 37.

Whereas Scott, in *The Lay*, celebrates such “modes of merriment” after the Scottish clan feuds have ended and the Scots have united with the English, Byron can only be cynical about the “jovial merriment,” noting the irony of a Spanish culture that cannot yet boast of being independent. Indeed, Spain was still partly under the control of French forces in 1809 and 1810, and Napoleon’s brother had earlier been declared King of Spain in 1808. As Byron saw it, Spain was no different, and no better off, than Greece was in 1810 and 1811: both countries lacked internal unity and both countries were unable or unwilling to do anything about their enslaved conditions.

The full extent of Byron’s Cynical perspective on the lack of cultural unity he witnessed in Spain, however, appears in the stanzas on the Spanish bull-fight. On 30 July 1809, Byron witnessed the spectacle in the amphitheater at Puerta Santa Maria. According to McGann, the description of the fight presents another “parody of the rites of chivalry.”¹⁷ The fight, more specifically, parodies the climax of Scott’s *Lay*: the one-on-one combat between Musgrave and Cranstoun. In the course of several stanzas devoted to the bull-fight, Byron deliberately inverts Scott’s climatic battle scene, describing a standoff not between two chivalrous knights, but between a man and a beast. In setting up the scene, Byron continues in the sarcastic manner he had deployed earlier in the stanzas on Talavera, referring to the bull-fight as a “sweet sight for vulgar eyes” (1.79) and then capturing all of the violent energies of the spectacle:

¹⁷ CPW 2:280.

Thrice sounds the clarion; lo! the signal falls,
The den expands, and Expectation mute
Gapes round the silent Circle's peopled walls.
Bounds with one lasting spring the mighty brute,
And, wildly staring, spurns, with sounding foot,
The sand, nor blindly rushes on his foe:
Here, there, he points his threatening front, to suit
His first attack, wide waving to and fro
His angry tail; red rolls his eye's dilated glow. (1.75)

Whereas Scott celebrated the social progress that came out of the duel between Musgrave and Cranstoun by evading the bloody details of the combat, Byron refuses to acknowledge any kind of progress in his version of Scott's duel. Choosing instead to dwell on the horrific details of the bull-fight, Byron creates a pathetic scene for his audience:

Another, hideous sight! unseam'd appears,
His gory chest unveils life's panting source,
Tho' death-struck still his feeble frame he rears,
Staggering, but stemming all, his lord unharm'd he bears. (1.77)

The death of the bull in the final phase of the fight is described with equally grotesque imagery: “On foams the bull, but not unscath’d he goes; / Streams from his flank the crimson torrent clear” (1.76), and he remains “Foil’d, bleeding, breathless” but “furious to the last” (1.78) until, with heroic resignation, he falls stoically “Without a groan” (1.79). In Byron’s estimation, the bull, not the bull-fighter, emerges as the hero of this pathetic spectacle. The dramatic energy of the ten stanzas that describe the bull-fight is driven by the same kind of realistic detail we find in the battle scenes of Homer’s *Iliad*. In contrast to Scott, who rejected the style of Homeric literature out of deference to his “civilized” audience, Byron wrote with a sense of Homeric realism, shocking his readers into an understanding of the brutal realities of the scenes he described. Battles, as Byron saw them, are no different than bull-fights: both represent humanity’s unhealthy passion for bloodlust. Such passions, Byron believed, remained barriers to social progress and unification.

In the fourth canto of *Childe Harold*, Byron continues to express his Cynical attitude towards cosmopolitan unity by looking at the failures of ancient Rome to maintain a cosmopolitan standard. That failure is symbolically illustrated in a scene of gladiatorial combat that Byron models upon the Spanish bull-fight. The scene of gladiatorial combat in the fourth canto, written in 1817 several years after Byron toured Spain, urges a similar kind of pathetic reflection from its reader in the more condensed space of two stanzas. The theme is no longer man’s inhumanity to

animals, but man's inhumanity to man. The immediate impetus for Byron's description of Roman gladiatorial combat came from seeing the statue of the Dying Gaul at the Capitoline Museum when he toured Rome with Hobhouse in the spring of 1817. Personifying the sculpture, Byron draws a heroic portrait of a stoic warrior who "Consents to death, but conquers agony" (4.140). There is a certain Promethean quality to the gladiator, whose wound bleeds "Like the first of a thunder-shower"—a heroic quality in a warrior that nevertheless yields to a very human and pathetic vision of a dying father:

The arena swims around him—he is gone,
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch who won.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away;
He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday. (4.140-41)

Byron's overall focus is less on the gladiator himself than it is on the gladiator's thoughts of his family and "his rude hut." The gladiator, unable to be reunited with his family, remains a symbol of humanity's isolation and disunity, dying alone after being "inhumane[ly]" "Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday." Rome itself, which sets the scene for the climactic fourth canto of *Childe Harold*, becomes an eternal symbol for the decline and fall of all civilization. Unlike Scott's *Lay*, which presented a progressive view of society in its movement from feudal disunity and war to peaceful civilization and cosmopolitan unity, Byron's *Childe Harold* I-IV presents history as cyclical, but he dwells mostly on the periods of historical decline partly because he wants to keep his reader aware of the state of things as they really "were" in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Spain, Greece, and Italy all remained enslaved by foreign powers and by their own apathy. Byron's symbolic mirroring of the bull-fight episode with the Dying Gaul in the fourth canto shows that nineteenth-century Spain was no better off than Rome was during first century AD. In *Childe Harold*, Byron was thus being quite deliberate in revising the scope and purpose of the romance genre as popularized by Scott. Using the genre for ironic purposes in *Childe Harold*, Byron rejected Scott's unifying message in *The Lay* and remained a Cynical cosmopolitan, denying allegiance to any one of the countries his characters traversed and reflecting unromantically upon the state of humanity as one of disunity, isolation, and perpetual slavery.

III

The sixth and final canto of Scott's *Lay*, however, begins with Scott's bardic narrator castigating cosmopolitans such as Byron, who feel no attachment to their "native" land:

BREATHES there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
 This is my own, my native land?
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned
 From wandering on a foreign strand?
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;
For him no minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentred all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonored, and unsung. (6.1)

In *Childe Harold*, Byron, of course, reversed Scott's sentiments about patriotic duty and the importance of staying rooted at home. As a Cynic, Byron praised the individual (who Scott sees as an egoist "concentred all in self") who chose to turn his back on his "native land" and challenge his patriotic duties. For Byron, "wandering on a foreign strand" had allowed him to see the realities of war and the effects of British imperialism in the Spanish Peninsula and in the Eastern Mediterranean. For the Tory Scott, however, British patriotism was not something to be taken lightly. Scott's loyalty to the British establishment was perhaps most clearly expressed at the beginning of *Marmion* in his introductory verses dedicated to William Stewart Rose, who was the acting British Treasurer of the Navy in 1808 when his second romance was published.¹⁸

The Lay celebrates cultural unity and patriotic duty through the art of song in a way that is quite different from Byron's use of song in *Childe Harold*. The setting of the sixth canto of Scott's *Lay*, in fact, is an international convocation of British bards: "to Branksome Hall / The minstrels came at festive call" (6.3). These bards are not simply court entertainment; by the end of Scott's *Lay*, they have attained heroic status: "Trooping they came from near and far, / The jovial priests of mirth and war; / Alike for feast and fight prepared / Battle and banquet both they shared" (6.3). On a narrative level, the feast is staged to celebrate the marriage of Henry Cranstoun and

¹⁸ In the introduction, Scott praises recently deceased British patriots such as Pitt, Fox, and Nelson for unifying their country in the war against Napoleonic France. See *The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott*, 89-93.

Margaret, but on a more thematic level, the feast celebrates the Union of England and Scotland and the bard's role in securing that Union. Albert Græme, a borderer "who struck the harp so well / Within the Land Debatable" (6.10), is the first minstrel to appear before the wedding party. The "simple song" he relates becomes a lesson in cultural relations that involves an "English ladye bright" who "would marry Scottish knight" (6.11). The ladye's brother, however, refuses to accept the marriage of the two cultures and so poisons his sister; the Scotch knight murders the brother in revenge and then, we are told, "[took] the cross divine" and "died for [the ladye's] sake in Palestine" (6.12). The simple refrain that the bard repeats throughout the ballad is "Love shall still be the lord of all!" (6.12), thus establishing the need for a higher morality to quell cultural hostilities and end the cycle of perpetual violence. Indeed, that need is symbolized, for Scott, in the knight's honorable fight in the name of "Love" and his fight in the name of Christianity in Palestine.

The next bard is "Fitztraver of the silver song" (6.13), a bard of "loftier port" (6.13) than Græme. When the bard's patron, "gentle Surrey" (6.13), is killed by Tudor, Fitztraver "called wrath and vengeance down" (6.15) with his harp and continued to sing of Surrey's fame. Fitztraver song, like Græme's, thus tells another story of unreciprocated love as a consequence of the violent and "capricious" acts of one individual. The story focuses specifically on the execution of Henry Howard, the Earl of Surrey, by Henry VIII in 1546. As Scott informs us in his notes to *The Lay*, Surrey "was unquestionably the most accomplished cavalier of his time; and his

sonnets display beauties which would do honor to a more polished age.”¹⁹ But the main focus of the ballad is on a marvelous “incident said to have happened to the Earl in his travels” when he visited the alchemist Cornelius Agrippa. Agrippa, who presented Surrey with a vision of his absent lover, the Lady Geraldine, in a magic mirror, adds to the Gothicism of the bard’s song. The short ballad ends with a pronouncement of Surrey’s death and his bard’s outrage against the “wild caprice of [Henry VIII’s] despotic sway” (6.20). At the conclusion of Fitztraver’s song we are told that “Both Scots and Southern chiefs prolong / Applauses” (6.21), thus reinforcing a shared sense of cultural unity through a symbol of mutual hatred: both the Scots and English, according to Scott, “hated Henry’s name as death” (6.21).

The last bard to offer a song is Harold the “bard of brave Saint Clair” (6.21), a family of Norman extraction that later settled in the Mid-Lothian region of Scotland.²⁰ Harold, we are told, was nursed on the “restless seas” that “Howl round the storm-swept Orcades” (6.21). In these “rude isles” he learned of “roving war” and “grim idolatry” (6.22) and only later in his life did Harold learn a “milder minstrelsy” of the kind that Scott privileges for his polite readers. Harold’s tale builds upon the supernatural motifs in Fitztraver’s song, describing the mysterious death at sea of the “lovely Rosabelle” (6.23) on her way home to her family at Roslin hall on the night her father is holding a banquet. The residence is subsequently set ablaze in mysterious

¹⁹ *The Complete Poetical Works*, 523.

²⁰ *The Complete Poetical Words*, 523.

fashion, destroying all of its inhabitants and desecrating those buried within its catacombs. The immediate impetus behind the song seems to be a way to further the supernatural themes of *The Lay*'s subplot involving a dwarfish page and a magical book of spells. Indeed, Harold's song is also the only song that ties directly into the action of the scene. At the conclusion of his lay, in a sudden "flash of lighting" (6.25), the dwarf breaks in upon the feast, creating hysteria among the merrymakers and leaving all in a state of terror before disappearing from the tale.

All three songs that are integrated into the sixth canto of *The Lay* seem to function in meta-textual ways, commenting on the larger themes of British national unity in the story: Græme's song reinforces Scott's argument that Anglo-Scottish society needs to see beyond feudal vengeance and accept a message of fellowship and "Love"; Fitztraver's song introduces supernatural elements, while implying that in order for society to progress, men of power must resist perpetuating cycles of vengeance (e.g., King Henry VIII's murder of Surrey); Harold's last song specifically reinforces the bard's power (Scott probably has himself in mind here) to work magic upon his audience. The mysterious and foreboding events that transpire at Roslin Hall on the night of a castle ball in Harold's song seem to blend seamlessly into the festival at Branksome Hall, blurring the line between fact and fiction. For Scott, bardic songs, moreover, have the power to unite different cultures. The scene at Branksome, in fact, moves all of the wedding guests to prayer: "Then each, to ease his troubled breast, / To some blest saint his prayers addressed" (6.27). In order to

“renounce . . . dark magic’s aid” (6.27), the scene ends with a more extensive religious pilgrimage to Melrose Abbey (burial place of the wizard Michael Scott) and another prayer: a “solemn requiem for the dead” (6.30). Holistically, the ballads in the sixth canto symbolize Scott’s celebration of the art of song as a communal experience in which shared values can be reinforced and social fears can be cathartically released. In the end, the magical powers of song overcome the powers of vengeance, what Scott calls “dark magic.” The end of cultural hostilities is made secure by a pilgrimage, which the English and the Scots undertake together to establish cosmopolitan unity through shared religious values.²¹

IV

The effects of song in *Childe Harold* are quite different from the unifying effects they have in *The Lay*. Amidst the scenes of battle and human isolation, Byron’s bardic romance proceeds as a pastiche of invented and fragmented songs that reinforce the lack of harmony that Byron sees among the various cultures he encounters. In *Childe Harold*, the narrator and title character are in transition from the outset, having left Harold’s “father’s hall” (1.7) for a life of perpetual wandering. And Harold’s songs, like those sung by Demodocus in Homer’s *Odyssey* and by the

²¹ Oliver also notes the secular unity that occurs among the bards, commenting that the songs taken collectively are used by Scott to suggest a “drawing together’ of oral traditions from disparate parts of Scotland, and from Cumberland in England, in a celebration of a heterogeneous but unified minstrelsy” (72).

various British bards in Scott's *Lay*, also serve meta-textual purposes.²² In the course of the poem, Harold sings two songs of exile in the opening canto ("Childe Harold's 'Goodnight'" and "To Inez"), listens to one in the second canto (an Albanian War Song), and sings another song about unreciprocated love in the third canto. All of Harold's songs, which are Byron's original compositions, serve to illustrate the ongoing literary conversation between Byron and Scott in *Childe Harold* I-IV. This can be seen in the first song Harold sings upon his departure from British shores: "Childe Harold's Goodnight." In his Preface to *Childe Harold* I-II, Byron claimed that he modeled the song on a ballad Scott had earlier published in his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* entitled "Lord Maxwell's Goodnight." Scott's ballad has the theme of exile as its focus, which clearly made it an appropriate choice for the exiled Childe Harold to form his own song in response. "Lord Maxwell's Goodnight" describes the events in the life of a Scottish chieftain who went into exile after killing Sir James Johnstone, a family rival, in 1608. Sentenced to death for murder, Maxwell was later executed upon his return to Scotland. The ballad, as presented in *The Minstrelsy*, treats only Maxwell's exile and makes no mention of his homecoming and death, thus leaving Scott to guess in his prefatory remarks that the ballad must have been

²² This is specifically the case in Homer's *Odyssey* when the Phaeacian bard Demodocus is summoned by the king and queen to entertain Odysseus and Nausicaa; he sings three songs that each function as meta-commentaries on the events and the characters in the scene. When he sings of the doomed love affair between Ares and Aphrodite, for instance, his song becomes a warning to Odysseus to keep his distance from Nausicaa, who represents a threat to his *nostos*.

composed sometime prior to Maxwell's return: sometime between 1608 and 1613. Like the events in *The Lay*, however, the ballads show the progress of civilization from lawlessness to justice and ultimately to romance and unity.²³ And justice, of course, prevails in Scott's civilized and moral universe just as social unity and peace prevail at the end of *The Lay*. For example, although "Lord Maxwell's Goodnight" does not include mention of Maxwell's execution, Scott makes a point of supplying the details of Maxwell's dismal fate in his prefatory notes. In so doing, Scott insinuates that Maxwell's death was justified because it was carried out in accordance with established law.

Byron, however, resists Scott's moral teleology in "Childe Harold's Goodnight." The song, in fact, celebrates long-term Cynical independence from Harold's homeland, beginning with the line: "'Adieu, adieu! my native shore" (1.13). Harold reflects stoically upon his ancient estate, which is now "desolate" and "Deserted," and accepts his exile. He has no apprehensions about his future: "Yet marvel not, Sir Childe, that I / Am sorrowful in mind" (1.14) he tells his page, "I, who am of lighter mood, / Will laugh to flee away" (1.15). His only "grief," we are informed, is that "[He] leave[s] / No thing that claims a tear" (1.15). Echoing Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*, Harold sings "And now I'm in the world alone, / Upon the wide, wide sea" (1.15). The same stanza more specifically reveals ironic parallels with Homer's *Odyssey*:

²³ Oliver, 19-68.

But why should I for others groan,
When none will sigh for me?
Perchance my dog will whine in vain,
Till fed by stranger hands;
But long ere I come back again,
He'd tear me where he stands. (1.15)

Harold's reference to the "dog" he has left behind, of course, recalls Odysseus' dog Argus, who sees through his master's disguise upon his return to Ithaca. Harold's pessimistic outlook on his own *nostos*, reverses the Homeric scenario and establishes his character as a Cynical Ulysses who believes that even his own dog would not welcome him home should he return. Indeed, he remains determined to "swiftly go / Athwart the foaming brine; / Nor care what land thou bear'st me to, / So not again to mine" (1.15).

Harold's second and final song in the first canto, "To Inez," rehearses the same theme of exile developed in "Childe Harold's Goodnight." The narrator, for example, prefaces "To Inez" by asking "who may smile that sinks beneath [Harold's] fate?" (1.84). The song thus turns out not to be an address to a friend or lover as the title might suggest, but rather another statement of the bardic character's isolation and perpetual exile from his native country. Thematically, the song again presents an

ironic reversal of the Odyssean *nostos* but also draws attention to other ancient tales of doomed exile. Harold, we learn, endures the “ceaseless gloom / The fabled Hebrew wanderer bore” (1.40). Harold’s song, like the songs of the Wandering Jew and the Ancient Mariner, is both his curse and his means of atonement. In this way, Byron shows that he finds value in the art of song, but such value for him is limited to the effect it has on the singer. Harold, in the context of the story, does not sing for a larger audience as Scott’s bards do in *The Lay*; nor does Harold sing to preserve the histories of chivalric societies and heroic individuals; rather, he sings in order to forget the pain of separation and to relieve the pain of exile.

The act of poetic creation is a theme that becomes increasingly important in the later cantos of *Childe Harold*. This is especially true in the third canto, which Byron had written under the direct influence of Shelley and the indirect influence of Wordsworth, who had influenced his discussion of art’s generative powers.²⁴ Indeed, in the third canto, Byron memorably declared that “’Tis to create, and in creating live / A being more intense” (3.6). In the fourth canto, which presents a more skeptical view of human creativity, this celebration of creating “A being more intense” is qualified and rephrased in terms of man’s logical faculties: “let us ponder boldly—’tis a base / Abandonment of reason to resign / Our right of thought—our last and only place / Of refuge” (4.127). In the third canto, however, Byron used the creative act of singing to continue his exploration of the themes of disunity and isolation. Just before

²⁴ Robinson, 14-40.

Harold disappears from the narrative, the title character sings a song to the Rhine. With “absent greetings” Harold stands bereft of an unnamed addressee with whom he might share the experience. In something of an inversion of Wordsworth’s conclusion to “Tintern Abbey,” in which the poet’s sister shares his experience of the landscape, Harold remains alone with the scene laid out before him:

Nor could on earth a spot be found
To nature and to me so dear,
Could thy dear eyes in following mine
Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine! (3.97)

Harold’s lament thematically parallels Byron’s wish for his absent daughter Ada and thus functions as another meta-comment on one of the larger themes in *Childe Harold* I-IV: the pain of familial separation. When Lady Byron left her husband and took their daughter Ada with her in January 1816, the little girl was only five weeks old. The entirety of the third canto is thematically structured around Byron’s separation from his daughter, opening with the lament: “Is thy face like thy mother’s, my fair child! / Ada! sole daughter of my house and heart?” (3.1). Yet, as the canto progresses, the narrator discovers a greater sense of purpose in his art, a creative purpose that helps to sustain the pain of separation. By the end of the canto, when the thoughts of his daughter return, his tone gains greater authority and confidence

through the experience of composing the poem itself: “My daughter! . . . / I see thee not,--I hear thee not,--but none / Can be so wrapt in thee; thou art the friend / To whom the shadows of far years extend” (3.115). There are also multiple allusions to the narrator in the process of singing: “My daughter! with thy name this song begun— / My daughter! with thy name thus much shall end.” And, Byron continues, noting:

Albeit my brow thou never should'st behold,
My voice shall with thy future visions blend,
And reach into thy heart,--when mine is cold,--
A token and a tone, even from thy father's mould. (3.115)

The conflation of the oral and visual here reaffirms Byron's belief in the power of language to move an audience even when that audience is not present before the singer; indeed, Byron realizes that his “voice” will be heard (that is, seen) by his daughter when she grows up. As a Cynical cosmopolitan, however, Byron willingly adapts to a life of exile and accepts the reality of the separation from his family. The only unity that Byron can accept is the unity provided by art, an art that can reconcile (temporarily at least) the contradictions of his divided life.

The canto thus ends with a more explicit affirmation of the power of the speaker's poetic art as he offers a prayer for his daughter:

Sweet by thy cradled slumbers! O'er the sea,
And from the mountains where I now respire,
Fain would I waft such blessing upon thee,
As, with a sigh, I deem thou might'st have been to me! (3.118)

The verbs “respire” and “waft” are both suggestive of the poem’s bardic qualities. The *OED* defines “respire” as breathing normally after many anxious and anxiety-ridden moments, such as those the narrator had suffered in the first two cantos. For Scott’s bardic narrator in *The Lay* such moments of reprieve are conducted in the context of his courtly female audience, who always give him the encouragement to continue his strain to its end. For Byron’s bardic narrator, however, there is no immediate audience. In *Childe Harold*, the opportunity to “respire” is a rare opportunity, which only temporarily grants Byron a reprieve from the darker strain of his Cynical song.

In fact, *Childe Harold*’s darker strain, which meditates upon the realities of cultural disunity, captures Cynical truths in a way that the idealized cosmopolitanism of Scott’s *Lay* does not. As a Cynic, Byron may have found himself living in a divided world, but he found such living superior to a life filled with falsely imposed political or nationalistic beliefs. In the Albanian War song that appears in the second canto of *Childe Harold*, Byron noted the contradictory nature of such beliefs.

Although the Albanian poem is Byron's composition, it is the only song next to "Childe Harold's Goodnight" to be based upon an actual oral source. On the one hand, the fact the Albanian War Song has its origins in a foreign source that would have been unknown to Byron's readers shows the range of his antiquarianism, which sought to go beyond the Anglo-Scottish songs that Scott drew upon for his *Border Minstrelsy* and his *Lay*. On the other hand, the Albanian War song, which Byron and Hobhouse heard recited on their way to the court of despotic Ali Pasha, thematically functions in the same way as the other ballads in *Childe Harold*: to reinforce the narrator's separation from society.

Byron sets the scene for the Albanian song by showing Harold's inability, or perhaps unwillingness, to integrate with the Albanians that surround him. Harold is described as standing "at a little distance" apart from a "rude" and "barbarous" group of Albanian soldiers (2.72). Byron also notes the unusual and seemingly barbaric qualities of the song: "in concert they this lay half sang, half scream'd." Unlike Anglo-Scottish songs of the bards at the end of *The Lay* that stress the need for Anglo-Scottish unity and peaceful reconciliation, Byron's Albanians presage the inevitability of war: "Tambourgi! Tambourgi! thy 'larum afar / Gives hope to the valiant, and promise of war" (2.649-50).²⁵ The Albanians ask "Shall the sons of Chimari, who never forgive / The fault of a friend, bid an enemy live? / Let those

²⁵ All references to the Albanian War song will be cited parenthetically by line number.

guns so unerring such vengeance forego?" (2.557-59). "Vengeance," a central theme that is overcome by "civilized" justice in Scott's *Lay*, remains a formidable part of Albanian culture as Byron depicts it in his song. After several stanzas that describe Albanian heroism in battle, the song ends with an affirmation of their indomitable military spirit:

Selictar! unsheath then our chief's scimitār:
Tambourgi! thy 'larum gives promise of war.
Ye mountains, that see us descend to the shore,
Shall view us as victors, or view us no more! (2.689-90)

In the context of Byron's lament for the enslaved Greeks in the second canto, the Albanian War song becomes a moment where the narrator is roused to speech. For immediately following the song, the narrator interjects with his famous apostrophe to "Fair Greece! sad relic of departed worth! / Immortal, though no more! though fallen, great!" (2.73). Byron, of course, wants to emphasize the heroic and independent spirit of the Albanians as a contrast to the enslaved and spiritless Greeks. The fact that he chose to include an Albanian song instead of a song of Greek patriotism seems to reflect Byron's belief that the Greeks lacked the drive to liberate themselves from Turkish occupation. Byron would have seen the Albanian song as Kant would have seen it: as an ironic reminder that any culture that used songs of Thanksgiving to

celebrate militarism and victory over another cultural group would surely prevent the flowering of a cosmopolitan world governed by perpetual peace.

V

Although Byron would have agreed with Scott that bards have the power to move and shape their audience, the social injustices that Byron witnessed in the Eastern Mediterranean between 1809 and 1811, and during his years of exile (1816-1824), led him to see the failure of Scott's cosmopolitanism in works such as *The Lay*. Scott constructed his bardic stories as national tales that celebrated the unification of the English and the Scottish. Trumpener has shown how the function of the bard figure in Romantic poetry and fiction differs according to the national interests of the writer. For example, Thomas Gray's "bard leaps to his death before giving up his national identity and the loss of his culture in defiant refusal of the English imperialistic project, whereas the dying bard in Charles Maturin's *Milesian Chief* (1812) figures the death of the Irish court culture under English occupation, anchoring undying feudal loyalties and memories of the former national glory."²⁶ As Oliver has argued, Scott's bard in *The Lay* survives his story and shows a willingness to work within the frame of a larger Anglo-Scottish British Empire.²⁷ For instance, in the final scene of the poem, Scott's bard retires to his lowly cottage in the

²⁶ Trumpener, 8.

²⁷ *Scott, Byron, and the Poetics of Cultural Encounter*, 81-2.

borderlands, offering to “sing achievements high / And circumstance of chivalry, / Till [a] rapt traveler would stay, / Forgetful of the closing day” (6.574-78). In contrast, Byron’s bardic figure, Childe Harold, is tellingly forgotten and then unceremoniously dropped from the poem at the end of the fourth canto.²⁸ We might read the loss of Harold as Byron showing the bard figure to be an obsolete or impotent figure in nineteenth-century British culture—a figure who must be supplanted by the authoritative voice of the poet himself. If this is the case, then this lends further support for Byron’s Cynicism, since the Cynic always embodies his beliefs in speech and in act. Scott, the leading Romantic practitioner of bardic poetry before Byron, however, developed a bardic persona that resisted what Oliver terms “radical energies” and instead accepted the status quo of British imperial authority and reinforced Anglo-Scottish unity and patriotic duty. Byron’s famous apostrophe to the ocean at the end of the fourth canto, on the other hand, reaffirms his commitment to a Cynical cosmopolitanism that is not located in any one country or geographic region; rather,

Man marks the earth with ruin—his control

Stops with the shore;--upon the watery plain

The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain

²⁸ See Byron’s Preface to *Childe Harold IV* in *CPW* 2:122: “there will be found less of the pilgrim than in any of the preceding, and that little slightly, if at all, separated from the author speaking in his own person.”

A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown. (4.179)

In contrast to British writers such as Scott, who chose to locate themselves within a specific geographical region, the ocean remained Byron's symbol of Cynical defiance, reinforcing his acceptance of a cosmopolitan existence that had begun in a song of exile with "Childe Harold's Goodnight."

Chapter 6

CYNICAL COSMOPOLITANISM: *DON JUAN* AND *THE AGE OF BRONZE*

In the opening stanzas to the seventh canto of *Don Juan*, just before the poem turns to an extended discussion of the ironies of war, Byron defends himself from the critical charge that he has “A tendency to under-rate and scoff / At human power and virtue, and all that” (7.3). His argument is simply that his ideas are neither new nor provocative: “I say no more than has been said in Dante’s / Verse, and by Solomon and by Cervantes.” He then goes on to list several more thinkers from Plato to Rousseau who argued in one way or another that “life was not worth a potato” (7.4). For his part, Byron humbly admits “I pretend not to be Cato, / Nor even Diogenes.— We live and die, / But which is best, you know no more than I.” Although Byron names Diogenes as a philosopher that he might consider emulating, he evades the idea and simply repeats Socrates’ skeptical take on life and death.¹ Byron, of course, knew that Diogenes, like Socrates before him, had put his philosophical beliefs into practice in the most demanding ways. In other words, Byron knew that in order to

¹ In Plato’s *Apology*, Socrates’ last words are: “The hour of departure has arrived and we go our ways—I to die, and you to live. Which is better, God only knows.” See Benjamin Jowett’s translation of the *Apology*, 29.

emulate Diogenes and endorse his Cynical philosophy, it would require a great deal of conviction and, of course, physical action.

As early as 1809, Byron had asserted his independence from British society, adopting a Cynical world view that would involve a great deal of “sneering” and “mocking.” Over the course of four chapters, I have traced the development of Byron’s Cynical cosmopolitanism from its beginnings in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* and *Hints from Horace*, two neoclassical poems written in response to the provincial tastes of the British literary establishment, to its various manifestations in *Childe Harold* I-IV, in which Byron, in the guise of a Cynical cosmopolitan, pessimistically surveyed the effects of slavery and war on different societies. In the following chapter, I suggest that during the years leading up to his involvement in the Greek war for independence, Byron’s Cynical cosmopolitanism continued to develop in ways that aligned more closely with ancient Cynicism as it was practiced by Diogenes. As we shall see, in the late “English cantos” of *Don Juan* and in the late satire *The Age of Bronze*, Byron explicitly adopts the figure of Diogenes as his alter-ego. In so doing, he internalizes Diogenes’ Cynical philosophy, acting upon moral convictions and eventually joining the Greek Revolution in the summer of 1823.

I

In 1819 Byron had been living in exile for three years and had settled into an Italian culture he found congenial to both his personal and artistic temperaments.

Living in the family home of his new *amorosa*, the Countess Teresa Guiccioli, he began *Don Juan*, his unfinished satiric masterpiece that would be published by two different publishers at various times between 1819 and his death in 1824. For many critics, the Italian setting allowed Byron to find the voice he had been lacking in his earlier poems. Philip Martin, in his critical study of Byron's relationship with his audience, *Byron: A Poet Before His Public*, for instance, argues that the *ottava rima* employed first in *Beppo* (1817) and then in *Don Juan* represented a new freedom and point of view that was altogether "non-serious" and "non-English."² Focusing mainly on the Italian influences in *Don Juan*, Martin pays little attention to the late "English cantos" in which he sees the poem begin to "decline" and Byron becoming indifferent to the material.³ While Martin's argument seems needlessly harsh, it should be noted that in the first two English cantos of *Don Juan*, in which Byron laments *in propria persona* Napoleon's demise and his own literary decline, he struggles to articulate his purpose as a writer; he seems to admit to having lost the conviction to create. McGann sees this loss of conviction as Byron working through complex feelings of nostalgia: "Much of the English Cantos is grounded in Byron's nostalgia for a world he had left behind with equal bitterness and regret."⁴ Stephen Cheeke, who has also

² *Byron: A Poet Before His Public*, 184

³ *Byron: A Poet Before His Public*, 185, 193.

⁴ *CPW* 5:742.

written on Byron's nostalgia in the English cantos, adds to McGann's assertion, arguing that Byron "was both peculiarly vulnerable to [nostalgia's] influence and particularly suspicious of its effects."⁵ Building upon the suggestions of both critics, I argue that the English cantos of *Don Juan* allow us to see the final stages in the development of Byron's Cynical cosmopolitanism. Byron comes to realize that his nostalgia can only be overcome through conviction to moral principle and direct action, two important themes in *The Age of Bronze* (1823), Byron's last formal satire in the neoclassical style of *English Bards*.

The English cantos of *Don Juan* properly begin when the well-traveled protagonist finds himself on British shores after a series of adventures, misadventures, and amorous encounters: on a Mediterranean island, in a harem in Turkey, and at the court of Catherine the Great. At the start of the tenth canto, we are informed that Don Juan, who "grew a very polished Russian," (10.21), has finally brought his cosmopolitan sophistication to England. While England does not represent a return for the Spanish protagonist, it does represent a significant return for the narrator, who over the course of the poem has become more closely aligned with Byron himself.⁶ Upon his approach to English shores, Byron reveals that he returns in a state of uncertainty with "mixed regret and veneration" (10.66). The complexity of

⁵ *Byron and Place*, 158.

⁶ Graham, 161.

this nostalgia becomes apparent just a few stanzas later when he espies “Albion’s earliest beauties, / Thy cliffs, *dear* Dover!” (10.69). The self-confident and Cynical Byron, who had categorically rejected his native country in *English Bards*, could still be disturbed by memories of home, youth, and his former fame. Indeed, Byron’s movements across Europe after 1816 only exacerbated the realities of a long period in exile, contributing to what Peter Graham describes as the “half-satiric, half-elegiac” perspective that dominates the English cantos.⁷

Byron’s return to England in the late cantos of *Don Juan* also involves a return to the most important political figure of his youth: Napoleon Bonaparte. Napoleon appears more often in the English cantos, particularly in the eleventh canto, than anywhere else in *Don Juan*, and each reference to the fallen French commander represents a nostalgic return to the figure of opposition Byron had defended as early as his school days at Harrow. In late 1822, when he completed the eleventh canto, Napoleon had been dead for over a year, but his memory continued to haunt the poet. Just as Napoleon had found himself in his last years confined to St. Helena, alienated from his political supporters, so too does Byron, exiled in Italy and alienated from a readership that once adored him, find himself suffering a similar fate:

In twice five years the ‘greatest living poet,’

Like to the champion in the fisty ring,

⁷ Graham, 162.

Is called on to support his claim, or show it,
Although 'tis an imaginary thing.
Even I—albeit I'm sure I did not know it,
Nor sought of foolscap subjects to be king.—
Was reckoned, a considerable time,
The grand Napoleon of the realms of rhyme. (11.65)

Byron no longer seems concerned with having to prove himself to his critics. Even though he still sees the poet as a figure who must defend himself in a “fisty ring,” a violent game, he realizes the victor’s title is nevertheless “an imaginary thing” and that his own time has passed. Byron’s literary fall as it were, which he imaginatively links to Napoleon’s fall, becomes the dominant theme in the eleventh canto. Indeed, in the next stanza Byron compares his poetry to Napoleonic battles, claiming that *Don Juan*, “*was* [his] Moscow, and Faliero / My Leipsic, and my Mont Saint Jean seems Cain” (11.56; italics mine). The past tense here in reference to *Don Juan* suggests the jaded attitude Byron has adopted towards his poetic vocation since he was still in the process of writing that poem. The full extent of this jaded attitude comes when Byron predicts his ultimate defeat in Napoleonic terms: “But I will fall at least as fell my hero; / Nor reign at all, or as a *monarch* reign; / Or to some lonely isle of Jailors go” (11.56).

But underneath the surface of this self-mocking humor, a more serious nostalgic longing coexists. In fact, Byron's Napoleonic posture of complacency in defeat sits uneasily alongside a Childe Harold-like inquisitiveness and world-weariness in the *ubi sunt* stanzas that begin "Where is Napoleon the Grand?" (11.77). In these stanzas, Byron admits his frustration at the changed times and the nostalgic thrust of the eleventh canto comes to an end in a more exasperated display of anger: "I have seen Napoleon, who seemed quite a Jupiter, / Shrink to a Saturn" (11.83). We need to remember that Byron's attitude toward Napoleon, though it constantly shifted throughout his life, often involved feelings of anger and betrayal. When Byron first learned of Napoleon's abdication, for instance, he looked to the moral authority of Juvenal for an answer: "Oh that Juvenal or Johnson could rise from the dead! 'Expende—quot libras in duce summon invenies? [Weigh Hannibal; how many pounds' weight will you find in that greatest of commanders?]'"" (*BLJ* 3:256). Such mixed feelings of anger and betrayal must be kept in mind if we are to understand Byron's decision to return to Juvenalian satire in *The Age of Bronze* and adopt Diogenes as Napoleon's replacement.

II

The suppressed anger under the surface humor of the "English cantos" comes through more clearly when Byron returns to the Romantic authors who occupy the larger battlefield of the British literary marketplace:

Some persons think that Coleridge hath the sway;
And Wordsworth has supporters, two or three;
And that deep-mouthed Boeotian, 'Savage Landor,'
Has taken for a swan rogue Southey's gander. (11.59)

Byron returns to the Lake Poets, his favorite targets of satire, with what appears to be a slight change in tone from his earlier attacks in *English Bard* and the Dedication to *Don Juan* (3-5). The smug mockery of the Lakers in the earlier poetry has given way to a begrudging mockery that perhaps shows Byron's own frustrated sense that his years of fame are well behind him. Coleridge, for instance, is no longer the obscure metaphysician Byron railed at, but as public taste dictates, he may even "hath the sway." Wordsworth, though he has few supporters, still *has* supporters. And Southey is now seen as only a "rogue," which may even smack of jealousy. Graham, in fact, has argued that parts of *Don Juan* may be Byron's attempt to rival Southey's *Letters from England* in content and style.⁸ By the end of the section on the Lake Poets, Byron's anger, comes to a head:

This is the literary *lower* Empire,

⁸ *Don Juan and Regency England*, 34-61.

.....

Now, were I once at home, and in good satire,
I'd try conclusions with those Janizaries,
And show them *what* an intellectual war is. (11.62)

By labeling his literary enemies “Janizaries” Byron transforms the Lake Poets into tyrannical Turkish soldiers that must be overthrown with force if he is to wage a proper “intellectual war.”⁹ Byron seems to insinuate that action may be necessary, waxing nostalgic for both a return to England or, at least, for a return to a poetic “home” in the “good satire” of his youth: the Juvenalian satire of *English Bards*.¹⁰

Nevertheless, Byron realized that a return to Juvenalian invective would belie the Horatian respectability on the surface of *Don Juan*.¹¹ Furthermore, as a Cynical cosmopolitan, Byron knew that he must suppress any irrational desire to return to his native country in order to settle petty literary disagreements. He thus found a compromise in what Andrew Stauffer describes appropriately as a “deferral of both

⁹ According to the *OED*, the “Janizary” was an elite soldier in the Turkish Army who often served as an escort for Western tourists. The cultural displacement—Easternized Lakers—also reveals the extent to which Byron had Greek independence on his mind in 1822 when the country was still under control of the Turks.

¹⁰ Byron had challenged Southey to a duel and talked of returning home or going to the “coast of France” for this purpose. See Marchand, *Byron: A Biography*, 3:968.

¹¹ See McGann, *Don Juan in Context*, 69: “*English Bards* was written under the aegis of Juvenal, *Don Juan*, on the other hand, was just as deliberately Horatian.”

violence and forgiveness,” which “result[ed] in a kind of mystification.”¹² This deferral is evident in the stanzas that immediately follow the attack on the Lake Poets. Although Byron had thoughts of another “intellectual war” he equivocates and then rejects such a fight:

Indeed I’ve not the necessary bile;
My natural temper’s really aught but stern,
And even my Muse’s worst reproof’s a smile;
And then she drops a brief and modern curtsy,
And glides away, assured she never hurts ye. (11.63)

Byron reminds his readers of his “natural temper” again in the thirteenth canto: “My Muse, the butterfly hath but her wings, / Not stings, and flits through ether without aim, / Alighting rarely” yet he still maintains that “were she but a hornet, / Perhaps there might be vices which would mourn it” (13.89). As early as 1807, in his “Childish Recollections,” Byron had talked of his satiric temperament as one that is more likely to forgive than it is to “sting”:

Let keener bards delight in Satire’s sting,
My Fancy soars not on Detraction’s wing;

¹² *Anger, Revolution, and Romanticism*, 143.

Once, and but once, she aim'd a deadly blow,
To hurl Defiance on a secret Foe;
But, when that Foe, from feeling or from shame,
The cause unknown, yet still to me the same,
Warn'd by some friendly hint, perchance, retir'd,
With this submission, all her rage expir'd.
From dreaded pangs that feeble Foe to save,
She hush'd her young resentment, and forgave. (1:79-88)

The curse of “Forgiveness” that Byron levels against his critics in *Childe Harold IV* is perhaps the most famous instance of Byron deferring his anger and offering his forgiveness instead.¹³ In the English cantos of *Don Juan*, however, Byron fails to sustain the same kind of Cynical self-confidence that he carried with him throughout *Childe Harold* as a cosmopolitan living in voluntary exile.

His waning confidence is apparent in the twelfth canto of *Don Juan* as his nostalgic reflections on his past celebrity and his years of fame in England become more acute:

Well, if I don't succeed, I *have* succeeded,
And that's enough; succeeded in my youth,

¹³ See *CPW* 2:4.135.

The only time when much success is needed:

And my success produced what I in sooth
Cared most about; it need not now be pleaded—

Whate'er it was, 'twas mine: I've paid, in truth,
Of late, the penalty of such success,
But have not learned to wish it any less. (12.17)

Byron seems to be mired in nostalgia for his past and uncertainty about his future. It takes Byron two more cantos to reach a point where he can firmly reassert his authority as a “citizen of the world,” and come to understand more clearly how he might overcome the uncertainties associated with his nostalgic laments:

The world is all before me, or behind;

For I have seen a portion of that same,
And quite enough for me to keep in mind;--

Of passions, too, I have proved enough to blame,
To the great pleasure of our friends, mankind,

Who like to mix some slight alloy with fame:
For I was rather famous in my time,
Until I fairly knock'd it up with rhyme. (14.9)

Like Adam and Eve in Milton's *Paradise Lost* (12.646), Byron realizes he too has lost a paradise, in his case fame. At the same time, he realizes that he has seen a "good portion" of the world and can use his cosmopolitan philosophy to rise above his own narrow-minded laments for lapsed fame. Byron understands that he must continue to write because the act of writing, like his Cynical philosophy, is an act of conviction:

I think that were I *certain* of success,

I hardly could compose another line:

So long I've battled either more or less,

That no defeat can drive me from the Nine.

This feeling 'tis not easy to express,

And yet 'tis not affected, I opine. (14.12)

Nevertheless, at this peculiar moment in *Don Juan* Byron seems to be at a loss for words. The witty and fluid conversation he has been carrying on with the reader turns into a self-conscious monologue that breaks down and turns to confession: "This feeling 'tis not easy to express." But Byron has already informed us that he writes out of personal conviction no matter what the outcome of his labor might be: "no defeat can drive me from the Nine." He reiterated this in a letter to John Hunt on 17 March 1823: "Every publication of mine has latterly failed; I am not discouraged by this,

because writing and composition are habits of my mind, with which Success and Publication are objects of remoter reference—*not causes* but *effects*, like those of any other pursuit” (*BLJ* 10:123).¹⁴

For much of the English cantos, it is precisely Byron’s lack of conviction to move forward beyond his nostalgia for his lost fame and for Napoleon that leads to momentary dead-ends in the conversation. For a poet whose career had included much Cynical “sneering” and “snarling” against political and cultural depravity in all corners of the globe, Byron knew that a return to “good satire” in the Juvenalian style of *English Bards* was an appropriate next step. In fact, as his thoughts turned more and more towards the revolutionary events transpiring in Greece in 1822, Byron found that the Horatian *Don Juan* would not be a suitable model for expressing his renewed interest in Greek independence. In the early months of 1823, he returned to Juvenalian satire to explore the state of international relations in post-Napoleonic Europe. *The Age of Bronze*, a response to Greek revolutionary activity and the reactionary politics transpiring in Italy at the Congress of Verona in 1822, reaffirmed Byron’s commitments to liberal politics and to Cynical cosmopolitanism.

¹⁴ Byron’s questioning the value of publication while underscoring the value of writing for its own sake raises interesting questions about his motives for writing with such productivity in the last years of his life; writing seems to have become a self-less act to help others: e.g., the financially challenged Leigh Hunt, by contributing to *The Liberal*; and Mary Shelley, who, in the wake of Shelley’s death needed an income that Byron supplied by having her make fair copies of his late poems.

III

On 19 December 1822, Byron told Douglas Kinnaird, “I tell you that the two most successful things that ever were written by me—i.e. the E[nglish] B[ards] and the C[hilde] H[arold]—were refused by one half ‘*the trade*’ and reluctantly received by the other” (*BLJ* 10:62).¹⁵ A desire to return to the “two most successful things” he had ever written may have been inevitable for a poet who saw his collapse in Napoleonic terms. The frustration that Byron felt was compounded by his recent break with his long-time publisher, John Murray. The break was the culmination of several factors, not the least being Byron’s association with John and Leigh Hunt and their “radical” literary journal, *The Liberal*. Murray deemed the brothers “wretches” and scolded Byron: “it is dreadful to think upon your association with such outcasts from Society, it is impossible, I am sure, that you can conceive any thing like the horrid sensation created in the mind of the public by this connexion, unless you were here to feel it” (*LJM* 455). Much of Murray’s ire derives from the reaction readers had toward *The Liberal*’s first issue in 1822, which included Byron’s *Vision of Judgment*, a scathing attack on the poet laureate Robert Southey. Murray took the publication as a personal insult and informed Byron: “My Company used to be courted for the pleasure of talking about you—it is totally the reverse now—& by a re-action, even your former works are considerably deteriorated in Sale” (*LJM* 456).

¹⁵ See also Byron’s letters of 23 December 1822 and 25 December 1822 in *BLJ* 10.

The Age of Bronze, the last of Byron's neoclassical satires, was thus written during a period of anger over his lapsed fame, his former publisher, and his former alter ego, the sublime but flawed figure of Napoleon. The choice to return to neoclassical satire was appropriate. Byron's anger required a temporary departure from the Horatian *sermo pedestris* style of *Don Juan* and a return to the *sæva indignatio* of Juvenal. While *The Age of Bronze* has been generally ignored by critics, who rightly complain that the densely allusive nature of the poem makes it a difficult read, it remains perhaps the most important late poem for understanding the full scope of Byron's Cynical cosmopolitanism.¹⁶ As we shall see, Byron used *The Age of Bronze* as a sounding board for his philosophical and political convictions in a way the comic *Don Juan* would not allow.

The target of Byron's satire in *The Age of Bronze* was the Congress of Verona (October - December 1822), a meeting between the early nineteenth-century's largest political powers ostensibly to redraw the map of post-Napoleonic Europe. The true impetus behind the Congress, however, was, as Frederick Beaty writes, France's desire to gain the "consent of their European allies to intervene militarily in Spain in order to overthrow a constitutional regime there and reestablish the autocratic rule of the Bourbon monarch Ferdinand VII."¹⁷ Byron knew the Congress would subvert the

¹⁶ See CPW 7:120. McGann acknowledges that *The Age of Bronze* is "not light reading" but argues that it is one of Byron's "most interesting late works."

¹⁷ Beaty, 171-72.

revolutionary movements in Spain and also Greece because many countries involved in the Congress, particularly Russia, Austria, and Prussia, opposed the spread of revolutionary principles. The irony that nations newly freed from the tyranny of Napoleon's regime (nations that included Russia, Austria, and Prussia) should now try to "be *their* Tyrant's ape" (97-98) was not lost on Byron. While Hobhouse had actually gone to the Congress hoping for positive support for the liberal cause, Byron was less optimistic: "I doubt if the Congressors will be so pacific as you anticipate" (*BLJ* 10:57). And he was right. On 28 January 1823, the king of France announced his readiness to restore Ferdinand VII to the Spanish throne, and he succeeded soon after during that same year.

When Byron published *The Age of Bronze* anonymously on 1 April 1823, all signs seemed to suggest that the satire had its intended effect upon the public. Most of the reviews of the poem, even those that were hostile, commented upon the forceful conviction the satirist displayed in the poem. *The Literary Chronicle* called the poem a "powerful satire," and *The Edinburgh Magazine* concurred, describing it as "impressive and vigorous."¹⁸ *The Literary Gazette*, which believed the poem to be inspired but not written by Byron, noted an important stylistic difference between Byron's earlier poetry and the *The Age of Bronze*: "Far be it from us to say that this is

¹⁸ See *The Literary Chronicle* 14 (April 1823): 210; and *The Edinburgh Magazine* 12 (April 1823): 483.

the cleverest performance of Byronism; but there are some smart things in it; and, with two or three exceptions, less rancour and inhumanity than we have been accustomed to from that venomous den.”¹⁹ Similarly, the *Black Dwarf*, which knew Byron to be the author, saw a change in Byron’s approach to the question of Greek and Spanish independence in *The Age of Bronze*: “The revolutions of Greece and the Peninsula are not forgotten:--and the best wishes of the bard attend them. Yet we cannot help wishing his Lordship had at an earlier period animated those nations by these ‘thoughts that breathe and words that burn’ with which his muse is so familiar.”²⁰

Of the few twentieth-century critics who have discussed the poem in any detail, McGann I think rightly attributes the force of the satire to its philosophical center in Byron’s adoption of Diogenes as an alter-ego:

I am Diogenes, though Russ and Hun
Stand between mine and many a myriad’s sun;
But were I not Diogenes, I’d wander
Rather a worm than *such* an Alexander!
Be slaves who will, the Cynic shall be free;
His tub hath tougher walls than Sinopè:

¹⁹ See *The Literary Gazette*, 5 April 1823, p. 211.

²⁰ See *The Black Dwarf* 10, no. 14 (April 1823): 466.

Still will he hold his lanthorn up to scan

The face of monarchs for an 'honest man.' (476-83)

Byron alludes to several famous anecdotes about the life of Diogenes: his meeting with Alexander the Great at Corinth when he unabashedly asked the conqueror to step out of his sunlight; his legendary bathtub; and his abortive search for an "honest man." Byron, who had declared his admiration for Diogenes at the beginning of the seventh canto of *Don Juan*, formally adopts the Cynical philosopher as his alter ego in *The Age of Bronze*. The adoption is symbolic, coming as it does on the heels of Byron's nostalgic laments for Napoleon in the English cantos of *Don Juan*. As we shall see, Byron's decision to replace his former persona with Diogenes shows a conviction to move forward and put his nostalgia for Napoleon firmly behind him.

IV

The first several sections of *The Age of Bronze* eulogize Napoleon and retrace his entire career without ever naming the military commander. The failure to name Napoleon is a deeply purposeful gesture as Byron, admittedly confused and upset over the trajectory and outcome of Napoleon's career, refuses to grant the fallen commander immortality in the context of his poem. Although Byron does name Napoleon in the seventh section (line 361) and the eighth section (line 399), in the long opening sections of the poem, which deal with the entirety of Napoleon's career,

the impersonal “he” repeated over and over generates distance between the poet and his long-time hero.²¹ Byron is unable to comprehend Napoleon’s epic fall and his last years of captivity on St. Helena where he remained suspended somewhere between a “dungeon and a throne”:

Alas! why must the Atlantic wave
Which wafted freedom gird a tyrant’s grave—
The king of kings, and of slaves the slave,
Who burst the chains of millions to renew
The very fetters which his arm broke through,
And crush’d the rights of Europe and his own,
To flit between a dungeon and a throne? (253-259)

The sublime irony of Napoleon’s fall is reflected in Byron’s choice of verbs: “wafted,” “burst,” “crush’d” all suggest Napoleonic energy that has nevertheless deflated into the “flit” of the concluding line. Although Byron calls Napoleon a “tyrant,” asking “why must the Atlantic wave” of freedom “gird a tyrant’s grave,” he refuses to accept the fact that Napoleon’s message of liberty has fallen into a state of suspended mediocrity.

²¹ See lines: 43, 49, 71, 74, 91, 96, 99, 118, 131, 132, 162, 173, 231, 242.

The concept of liberty, symbolized as a “soaring Spirit” (89) in *The Age of Bronze*, is the very spirit that allows Byron to move beyond his nostalgic and confused lamentations. The liberty theme becomes more prevalent immediately following the long opening sections when Byron turns his focus to the revolutionary events sweeping across Europe and the Americas. Byron devotes most of his attention to Spain and Greece, remembering his time there between 1809 and 1811 with reference to the bronze bull of the Greek “Phalaris,” which has moved across cultural boundaries and renewed its roar in the Spanish “Tauridor”:

Up! up again! undaunted Tauridor!

The bull of Phalaris renews his roar;

Mount, chivalrous Hidalgo! not in vain

Revive the cry—‘Iago! and close Spain!’ (356-59)

Echoes of the revolutionary enthusiasm of pre-Waterloo Spain return us to the politics and geography of *Childe Harold* I. In the earlier poem, we need remember that Byron’s calls for independence were pessimistically dismissed by the poem’s misanthropic narrator who discovered Spain chained to its own grotesque passion for bloodlust in the bull-fighting arena. But, in light of the new tyrannies planned by the Congress of Verona against Spain, Byron’s call for the Spanish to “Revive the cry” of “Iago” carries more conviction. Indeed, in contrast to his comments in 1812, he looks

upon Spain in 1823 with more optimism for its future state, a state that might be built upon both its past and its present: “Such have been, such shall be, such are. Advance, / And win—not Spain, but thine own freedom, France!” (376-77). Beaty has remarked that this rhetoric of liberty, which clearly alludes to Byron’s earlier poetry, is meant “to recapture some of the lost popularity of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*.”²² However, Byron’s return to his earlier poetry in *The Age of Bronze* seems to be more deliberate than nostalgic. The poem shows Byron speaking with more conviction about his political and philosophical principles than he had done so in *Childe Harold* I-II.

As a way of further illustrating Byron’s revisionary approach to the Cynical misanthropy of *Childe Harold*, we can contrast Byron’s opinions of Greece in 1812 with his opinions of Greece in 1822. We recall, of course, the apprehensions Byron expressed about Greek independence in *Childe Harold* II in his notes: “instead of considering what they have been, and speculating on what they may be, let us look at them as they are.” And, in the poem itself, Byron pessimistically argued that Greece was enslaved, emasculated, and without hope for freedom without foreign intervention. That was in 1812. Ten years later, the Greek Revolution was a year under way, and Byron has become increasingly interested in lending his support to the cause:

²² Beaty, 176.

'Tis the *old* aspiration breathed afresh,
To kindle souls within degraded flesh,
Such as repulsed the Persian from the shore
Where Greece *was*—No! she still is Greece once more. (268-71; B's italics)

The italicized “was” is important because it reverses his thinking in *Childe Harold II*, which, in part, decried European philhellenes who used nostalgia as the basis of their arguments for Greek independence. But Byron's historical imagination in 1822 is swollen with classical precedent:

Break o'er th' Aegean, mindful of the day
Of Salamis—there, there, the waves arise,
Not to be lulled by tyrant victories.
Lone, lost, abandoned in their utmost need
By Christians unto whom they gave their creed,
The desolated lands, the ravaged isle,
The fostered feud encouraged to beguile,
The aid evaded, and the cold delay,
Prolonged but in the hope to make a prey;--
These, these shall tell the tale, and Greece can shew
The false friend worse than the infuriate foe.

But this is well: Greeks only should free Greece,
Not the barbarian, with his mask of peace. (287-99)

The “false friend” who wears a “mask of peace” is a significant theme in *The Age of Bronze*, drawing us back to Diogenes’ failed search for an honest man. Yet Diogenes did not give up his search, thus showing the strength and conviction of his philosophic principles. This is the message that Byron had internalized by 1822. Instead of simply “sneering” and “snarling” at the social evils confronting humanity, Byron realized that he must, in deference to his Greek mentor, continue his own search for honesty and justice. The paradox and the irony of the search for the Cynic, of course, is that an *honest* man can never be found. Byron said as much in the eleventh canto of *Don Juan* (see my introduction): “I’ve done to find the same throughout life’s journey, / But see the world is only one attorney” (11.28). Although Byron claims that he did not find one *honest* man in his travels, in *The Age of Bronze* he realizes that such men do exist in the annals of history. To show the range of his historical knowledge, Byron devoted considerable attention to the American republic and revolutionary movements in South America. In fact, Washington, Franklin, and Bolivar are three international heroes who surpass Napoleon because they were not plagued by vanity. As Byron reminds us

Vanity herself had better taught

A surer path even to the fame he sought,
By pointing out on history's fruitless page
Ten thousand conquerors for a single sage. (241-44)

At the Congress of Verona, Byron encounters only turncoat politicians, who, in his estimation, are more dangerous than actual monarchs. As a general introduction to the ironies of the Congress, Byron mocks "Strange sight this Congress! destined to unite / All that's incongruous, all that's opposite" (706-07); and then claims,

I speak not of the Sovereigns—they're alike,
A common coin as ever mint could strike:
But those who sway the puppets, pull the strings,
Have more of motley than their heavy kings.
Jews, authors, generals, charlatans, combine,
While Europe wonders at the vast design. (708-13)

The last sections of the poem show Byron continuing his search for an *honest* man among the Congressmen, noting that the French "Montmorency, the sworn foe to charters, / Turns a diplomatist of great éclat, / To furnish articles for the 'Debâts'" (718-20). Montmorency was a French revolutionary who later gave his support to the Royalists when they gained power in 1814. Byron also exposes the French *Journal*

des Débats, which was once a revolutionary mouthpiece upon its founding in 1789, supporting Napoleon during his reign, but later turning its back on Napoleonic principles and supporting the Royalist government.²³

In contrast to these political turncoats, the Cynics maintained strong convictions about the necessity of having principles and acting upon them. In fact, Diogenes is said to have mocked political orators who made “a fuss about justice in their speeches, but never practise[d] it” (*Lives* 6.31). Endorsing Diogenes’ Cynical view of politicians, Byron attacks the folly that he sees in the French Senate and the British Commons, two platforms he sees perpetuating lies and spewing empty rhetoric: “Our British Commons sometimes deign to hear; / A Gallic Senate hath more tongue than ear; / Even Constant, their sole master of debate, / Must fight next day his speech to vindicate” (490-93). By way of contrast, Byron reminds us of the convictions of classical orators such as Demosthenes:

When Tully fulmined o’er each vocal dome,
Demosthenes has sanctioned the transaction,
In saying eloquence meant ‘Action, action!’ (499-501)

²³ See McGann’s commentary in *CPW* 7:129-130.

McGann points us to the *Third Olynthiac* of Demonsthenes for a better understanding of Byron's allusion.²⁴ In that oration, as David Phillips has shown, Demonsthenes argued for the diversion of Athenian funds to aid its Olynthian allies against the threats of Philip of Macedon.²⁵ In his oration, however, Demonsthenes noted the "inconsistency between the speeches being given in the Assembly and the current state of affairs" that were transpiring outside of Athens. Byron clearly sees a parallel between the Athenian assembly, which balked at the idea of aiding the Olynthians, and the events at the Congress of Verona, which rejected the revolutionary movements transpiring in post-Napoleonic Europe. In the conclusion to his oration, Demonsthenes, firmly committed to the Olynthians, called for an end to deliberations and insisted upon immediate plans for "Action." Similarly, Byron seems to realize that there is a point where political discussion ends and direct action is needed, especially in places such as Spain and Greece. The section on Demonsthenes remains one of the shortest sections in *The Age of Bronze*, yet it is also the most important for understanding Byron's state of mind in late 1822 when he was just a half a year away from joining the Greek Revolution.

²⁴ See *CPW* 7:127.

²⁵ *Athenian Political Oratory*, 66.

Byron's first thoughts of joining the Greek cause were stated in a letter to Thomas Moore in August 1822: "I had, and still have, thought of South America, but am fluctuating between it and Greece" (*BLJ* 9:198). Later, in the spring of 1823, Lady Blessington recorded that "Byron seem[ed] quite decided on going to Greece; yet he talk[ed] of this project as if it were more a duty than a pleasure."²⁶ According to Blessington, then, *The Age of Bronze*, which Byron had drafted in December 1822, would have been written about the same time that he had made up his mind to join the Greeks in Missolonghi. With this detail in mind, we can see why Byron's *Age of Bronze* carried such forceful convictions about the need to act on political and philosophical principles. In the satire, we thus need to look at Byron's endorsement of Diogenes and Cynical philosophy not simply in terms of its misanthropic distrust of society and its institutions—a misanthropy that Byron had projected in earlier poems such as *Childe Harold*. As David Mazella has argued, the modern conception we have of the misanthropic cynic bears little relation to the Cynicism of Diogenes; in our modern understanding, the cynic has not the moral conviction of his ancient counterpart. As Mazella argues, the modern "joyless, anti-intellectual, and self-enclosed version of cynicism only travesties the fearless, physically active philosophy

²⁶ *His Very Self and Voice*, 358.

of Diogenes the Cynic and his followers.”²⁷ This, I think, is a crucial point to remember about Byron’s Cynical cosmopolitanism in his later years. In *Childe Harold* I-II, we saw that Byron’s Cynical misanthropy was primarily used rhetorically; inspired by the French tradition of Fogueret de Montbron’s *Le Cosmopolite*, the Byron of *Childe Harold* “sneers” and “scorns” humanity in order to reveal to his readers the errors of their ways of thinking about places such as Spain, Greece, and Rome. In the late cantos of *Don Juan* and finally in *The Age of Bronze*, however, Byron’s Cynical cosmopolitanism develops into an “active philosophy” that goes beyond Cynical rhetoric. Byron’s decision to continue Diogenes’ search for an *honest* man despite the futility of the search was a commitment to action as was Byron’s decision to join the Greek revolutionaries in the summer of 1823. Thus, what we see in *The Age of Bronze* is not simply bitter lament for lost political ideals met with the scorn of a disillusioned Cynic; rather, in Byron’s late satire, we see him consciously revisiting the Cynical misanthropy of *Childe Harold* and replacing it with the Cynical conviction to take it upon himself and act upon his moral principles.

²⁷ *The Making of Modern Cynicism*, 15.

Epilogue

NATIONAL POETS OF MANKIND: BYRON AND POPE

In November 1807, during his last month at Cambridge, Byron prepared a “Reading List” of all the books he had read up to that point. The list has two parts: one is a list of “Poets” and the other is a list of “Historical Writers.” Each is organized, quite deliberately, not by author or title, but by country. The list of “Poets” in particular reveals much about the cosmopolitanism we have come to associate with Byron. He first lists England and then follows with Scotland, Ireland, Wales, France, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Italy, Arabia, Persia, Greece, Latin [Roman], America, Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Hindostan, The Birman Empire, China, and Africa.¹ Although Byron claimed that the list included only works he had read, this was not always the case. The description that follows the entry for Hindostan, the name used to describe South Asia during the Romantic period, is telling in this respect: “Hindostan, is undistinguished by any great Bard or at least the Sanscrit is so imperfectly known to Europeans, we know not what Poetical Relics may exist.” Even though Hindostan boasts no “great Bard,” Byron, with antiquarian enthusiasm, is hopeful that the region may eventually claim its place in world literature. This kind of

¹ *CMP* 1-3.

literary inclusiveness is suggestive for it shows that Byron's literary interests are not limited by national or geographic boundaries. Byron goes on to say that in his list of "English" authors he has "merely mentioned the greatest" since "to enumerate the minor poets would be useless, as well as tedious, [sic] perhaps Gray, Goldsmith, and Collins, or Thomson might have been added as worthy of mention in a *Cosmopolite* account" (Byron's italics).

This is the first instance I know of Byron having used the term "*Cosmopolite*." Although he seems to suggest that his reading list cannot be considered a true cosmopolitan list *because* of the writers he has excluded, his acknowledgement of such exclusions only affirms the breadth of his literary interests at an early point in his career. Byron, of course, has long been recognized as a "World Poet" who routinely drew inspiration from diverse literary traditions and styles for his own creative purposes, particularly in late works such as *Beppo* and *Don Juan*. However, as early as 1811, Byron was arguing for an international literary standard. In *Hints from Horace*, Byron had attacked the literary provincialism of writers such as Walter Scott and Francis Jeffrey from the perspective of a Cynical cosmopolitan. In 1821, Byron returned to *Hints* with the thought of finally publishing the satire, but instead he wrote three new prose arguments in defense of Alexander Pope. In my Epilogue, I want to focus on the way these prose writings further Byron's thinking about literary traditions and standards. I argue that in the course of defending Pope, Byron uses the

rhetoric of cosmopolitanism to reinforce his argument with the British literary establishment and defends the stylistic diversity of his own poetry in the process.

I

In a journal entry dated 24 November 1814, Byron sketched his famous “Gradus ad Parnassum,” a pyramid in which he placed, by order of literary rank, the most popular British poets of the early nineteenth century. At the top the pyramid stands Walter Scott, the “Monarch of Parnassus” and the “most *English* of bards” (*BLJ* 3:219-20). Below Scott is Samuel Rogers, and below Rogers are Thomas Moore and Thomas Campbell; in the next level below we find the Lake Poets (Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge), and beneath them, the writers Byron refers to simply as “The Many.” Although Byron conceded “I have ranked the names upon my triangle more upon what I believe popular opinion, than any decided opinion of my own,” he returned to his rankings three years later with a more decisive point of view in a letter to his publisher John Murray on 15 Sept 1817 he wrote:

I am convinced the more I think of it—that he and *all* of us—Scott—Southey—Wordsworth—Moore—Campbell—I—are all in the wrong—one as much as another—that we are upon a wrong revolutionary poetical system—or systems—not worth a damn in itself--& from which none but Rogers and Crabbe are free—and that the present & next generations will finally be of this opinion.—I am the more confirmed in this—by having lately gone over some of our Classics—particularly *Pope*—whom I tried in this way—I took Moore’s poems & my own & some others--& went over them side by side with Pope’s—and I was really astonished (I ought not to have been so) and mortified—at the ineffable distance in point of some—harmony—effect—and

even *Imagination* Passion--& *Invention*—between the little Queen Anne’s Man--& us of the lower Empire—depend upon it [it] is all Horace then, and Claudian now among us—and if I were to begin again—I would model myself accordingly—Crabbe’s the man—but he has got a coarse and impracticable subject--& Rogers the Grandfather of living Poetry—is retired upon half-pay. (*BLJ* 5:265-66)

In 1817, Byron had come to see himself and his contemporaries as part of a “lower Empire” of poets. Alexander Pope stands as the author Byron would wish to “model” himself upon if he were “to begin again.” It is not surprising that two years after writing this letter to Murray, Byron found himself publicly defending Pope from the critical abuse he had long suffered at the hands of the leading Romantic authorities.

As Andrew Griffin has shown, the post-Augustan depreciation of Pope began in the middle of the eighteenth century with Joseph Warton’s *Essay on Pope* (1756) and Edward Young’s *Conjectures on Original Composition* (1759), but the Romantics were the most relentless in seeking to undermine Pope’s position within the pantheon of British authors.² The so-called “Pope Controversy” of the early nineteenth century began in earnest in 1806 with the publication of the Reverend William Lisle Bowles’ thirteen-volume edition of Pope. In a lengthy introduction, Bowles maintained an unashamedly hostile opinion of Pope’s character and his poetry. His attacks were based on dubious biographical claims about Pope’s possible relationships with Martha Blount and Lady Mary Montague. Bowles also believed

² *Wordsworth’s Pope*, 24-64.

that Pope's poetry held little value for the Romantic generation because the satirist had only "Wit" and "Polish" but no "Passion" and no understanding of "Nature." Moreover, as James Chandler argues, Pope's nineteenth-century opponents were among the first to attack him, and indeed the entire Augustan period, upon national grounds.³ The grounds of this attack are laid out most clearly in Francis Jeffrey's discussion of Pope and the French Continental school in his review of Richard Weber's *The Dramatic Works of John Ford* (1811), which appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* for August 1811.

Jeffrey's review combines general literary history with a specific discussion of Weber's edition of Ford. Specifically, Jeffrey offers a lengthy appraisal of eighteenth-century British writers, including an all important discussion of Pope that Byron would remember when he wrote *Some Observations Upon An Article In Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* (1820) almost a decade later. Of Pope, Jeffrey writes:

Pope is a satirist, and a moralist, and a wit, and a critic, and a fine writer, much more than he is a poet. He has all the delicacies and proprieties and felicities of diction — but he has not a great deal of fancy, and scarcely ever touches any of the greater passions. He is much the best, we think, of the classical Continental school; but he is not to be compared with the masters — nor with the pupils — of that Old English one from which there had been so lamentable an apostacy. (281)⁴

³ "The Pope Controversy," 481-509.

⁴ All references to Jeffrey's review of Ford will be cited parenthetically by page number.

These lines, though not intended by Jeffrey to play a role in the Pope controversy, were nevertheless appropriated by some of the leading voices in the controversy and used as authoritative statements against Pope.⁵ Jeffrey downgrades Pope's status as a poet for two reasons: Jeffrey describes satire, Pope's main poetical mode, as a genre that is somehow distinct from and therefore inferior to poetry, Pope possessing little "passion" and no "great deal of fancy";⁶ Jeffrey also judges Pope's association with the "classical Continental school" of French poets, who had been so influential on British tastes during the eighteenth century, as an affront to British literary and cultural sensibilities in the nineteenth century when England was at war with France. Jeffrey's endorsement of "that Old English" school of poetry, by which he primarily meant any British writer that came before the Restoration, reveals how much an anti-continental, or anti-cosmopolitan stance, had become intertwined with his literary opinions by 1811.

⁵ See "Lord Byron and Pope" in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 9 (April 1821): 227-23. The reviewer responds to Byron's *Letter to John Murray Esq^r* by quoting Jeffrey almost verbatim: "He [Pope] is a moralist, a wit, a critic, and a fine writer, much more than he is a poet" (229). See also "Rhapsodies Over a Punch-Bowl" in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 11 (March 1822): 344-48. The negative connection Jeffrey makes between Pope and the French school was well established by 1822: "his Essay on Man, or his Elegy on a an Unfortunate Lady—the very two of his works that one could the most easily imagine to have been written not by an Englishman; and if the French and Italians be not of the same way of thinking about Pope, that is only one instance more that there is very little of just or tasteful criticism in France and Italy" (348).

⁶ Here Jeffrey uses the word "fancy" not in its later Coleridgean sense, but in the eighteenth-century sense to mean "imagination."

In the same review, Jeffrey further elaborated upon the ways he saw literary cosmopolitanism infecting British poetry and national sensibilities during the Restoration:

The Restoration made things still worse: for it broke down the barriers of our literary independence, and reduced us to a province of the great republic of Europe. The genius and fancy which lingered through the usurpation, though soured and blighted by the severities of that inclement season, were still genuine English genius and fancy; and owned no allegiance to any foreign authorities. But the Restoration brought in a French taste upon us, and what was called a classical and a polite taste; and the wings of our English Muses were clipped and trimmed, and their flights regulated at the expense of all that was peculiar, and much of what was brightest in their beauty. (278)

For Jeffrey, British literary authority is maintained through cultural independence and reinforced through the establishment of cultural “barriers.” For the Romantic poets, generally speaking, independence from influence and tradition was synonymous with the idea of originality.⁷ Jeffrey seems to suggest that for a nation to be a “province,” a part only, of the whole of the “great republic of Europe,” would be a willing admission of cultural inferiority to tyrannical foreign authority. Pope’s main shortcoming, then, was his willingness to develop a continental standard for poetry—a standard that welcomed the foreign influence of the French neoclassical tradition.

Jeffrey’s desire to establish the boundaries for a British literary tradition upon national grounds is reinforced by his qualified praise of John Dryden, Pope’s

⁷ This notion can be traced back to Edward Young’s *Conjectures on Original Composition* (1759).

predecessor and another writer heavily influenced by the French “Continental”

school:

Dryden was, beyond all comparison, the greatest poet of his own day; and, endued as he was with a vigorous and discursive imagination, and possessing a mastery over his language which no later writer has attained, if he had known nothing of foreign literature, and been left to form himself on the models of Shakespeare, Spenser, and Milton; or if he had lived in the country, at a distance from the pollutions of courts, factions, and playhouses, there is reason to think that he would have built up the pure and original school of English poetry. (280-81)

This is perhaps Jeffrey’s most explicit endorsement of what amounts to a literary history built upon nationalistic principles. Dryden’s failure, much like Pope’s failure as a poet, lay in knowing *something* of “foreign” literature and indeed deliberately modeling himself upon foreign writers in his many translations and imitations of “foreign” classical authors. Jeffrey’s rejection of literary modeling that did not originate in the “pure and original school of English poetry,” would have alarmed Byron, who routinely modeled himself upon foreign authors and, of course, satirists such as Pope.

II

The context for Jeffrey’s appraisal of Pope shows that the Romantic depreciation of the satirist was more than a debate over the merits of a single poet. In fact, it shows that the controversy was more than a debate over the relative merits of

the Augustans and the Romantics. The Pope controversy showed the extent to which nationalism had become a viable way of assigning value to poets and their poetry in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Jeffrey's nationalism not only went against Byron's cosmopolitanism, but, for Byron, it also revealed the limitations of critics who attempted to fix literary taste according to a narrow set of values—a theme that Byron had explored in *Hints from Horace*. Hence, when we come to Byron's most substantial statement written in defense of Pope, in his *Letter to John Murray Esq^{re}* (1821), we see Byron engaging with, and indeed defending, Pope against the provincial attitudes of Jeffrey and his followers.⁸ Byron confounds Jeffrey's narrow view by naming Pope the “moral poet of all Civilization” and the “National poet of Mankind” (151). For Pope to be both “National” (that is, a part of a nation) and of “Mankind,” (that is, a part of a larger humanity) is for Pope to be neither national or international, patriotic or unpatriotic, but rather to be a poet who transcends such facile categorizations. This is the same kind of Cynical logic that Diogenes used when he declared himself to be a “citizen of the cosmos.”

In fact, along these same lines Byron argued that “The depreciation of Pope is partly founded upon a false idea of the dignity of his order of poetry” (143). By “order of poetry,” Byron explained that he meant Pope's “Ethical poetry” or “Didactic poetry—or by whatever name you term it” (143). As the foremost satirist

⁸ All references to Byron's *Letter to John Murray Esq^{re}* (hereafter *Letter*) will be taken from Nicholson's *CMP*.

and “Didactic” poet of the Romantic period, Byron surely has himself in mind as he makes a case for Pope. And it is clear in the informal and sarcastic manner of Byron’s argument for “Ethical poetry” (“by whatever name you term it”) that he mocks any attempt to classify poetry in general as superficial and misleading. He further illustrates this idea by looking at the “relative” merits of specific Italian writers:

The Italian—with the most poetical language—and the most fastidious taste in Europe—possess now five *great* poets—they say,—Dante—Petrarch—Ariosto—Tasso—and lastly—Alfieri----and whom do they esteem one of the highest of these—and some of them the very highest—Petrarch the *Sonneteer*. (142)

Byron instead posits the idea that the “poet who *executes* best—is the highest—whatever his department” (143); and, in a note on this passage, he makes special mention of poets, such as Dante, who defy classification:

Where is Dante? His poem is not an *epic*; then what is it? He himself calls it a ‘divine comedy;’ and why? This is more than all his thousand commentators have been able to explain. Ariosto’s is not an *epic* poem; and if poets are to be *classed* according to the *genus* of their poetry, where is he to be placed? . . . Poets are classed by the power of their performance, and not according to its rank in a *gradus*. . . . Schlegel and Madame de Stael have endeavoured also to reduce poetry to *two* systems, classical and romantic. The effect is only beginning. (142)

Byron, of course, has himself and *Don Juan* in mind as an example of a stylistically elusive author and a genre-defying poem.⁹ But the general message he wants to convey in his note on Italian poetry is that any attempt to classify poets according to a rigid system of value or worth—as he had done with his own gradus in 1814—is futile from a critical perspective and limiting from an artistic point of view.

III

William Wordsworth's "Essay, Supplementary to the Preface" of *Poems* (1815) is one of the most important critical documents of the Romantic period for illustrating the kind of literary systematizing that Byron adamantly rejected.¹⁰ The "Essay," which Byron had read by the end of 1815, is subsequently the most important source for understanding his decision to enter the Pope controversy *in propria persona*. As he informed his long-time Cambridge friend Francis Hodgson on 22 December 1820, "The Scoundrels of Scribblers are trying to run down *Pope*, but I hope in vain. It is my intention to take up the Cudgels in that controversy, and to do

⁹ As Peter Graham writes, "*Don Juan* has always been difficult to fit into existing generic categories. Is it an epic whose conventional attributes are sometimes but not always neglected, defied, inverted?—a romance with a difference?—a novel in verse?—a story where the nonnarrative elements are really the most important ones? The surest thing to say is that most boundaries are transgressed in the poem's cosmopolitan ramble through time, cultures, and literary styles" (6).

¹⁰ All references to the "Essay, Supplementary to the Preface" (hereafter "Essay") are taken from the third volume of *The Prose Works of Wordsworth* and cited parenthetically by page number.

my best to keep the Swan of Thames in his true place. This comes of Southey and Turdsworth and such renegade rascals with their systems" (*BLJ* 7:253).

Wordsworth's "system" was particularly troubling to Byron, who, in an excised preface to *Don Juan*, revealed that it was Wordsworth, not just Southey as the published version would have it, who led him to write his "epic" satire on the Lake Poets and their poetical systems. In the original preface, Byron began by referring to Wordsworth's early poem "The Thorn," reprinting two lines ("I measured it from side to side / 'Tis three feet long, and two feet wide") to be held up as an example of the kind of "prosaic" poetry Wordsworth favored over Pope's more "polished" lines.

Byron states his opinion of Wordsworth's poetry quite clearly:

Let me be excused from being particular in the detail of such things as this is the sort of writing which has superseded and degraded Pope in the eyes of the discerning British Public. . . . This rustic Gongora and vulgar Marini of his country's taste has long abandoned a mind capable of better things to the production of such trash as may support the reveries which he would reduce into a System of prosaic raving that is to supersede all that hitherto by the best and wisest of our fathers has been deemed poetry.¹¹

McGann has discussed at length the ways in which *Don Juan* attempts to refute poetical systems such as Wordsworth's because, as he writes, Byron saw "systematic philosophy not as a tool for exploring difficult problems but as a device for settling

¹¹ See *CPW* 5:81-82.

matters.”¹² But the full effect of Wordsworth’s poetical systematizing was especially troubling for a cosmopolitan author such as Byron. Byron specifically attacks the geographic insularity of Wordsworth and the Lake Poets in his “Dedicatory” stanzas to *Don Juan*:

You, Gentlemen! by dint of long seclusion
From better company have kept your own
At Keswick, and through still continued fusion
Of one another’s minds at last have grown
To deem as a most logical conclusion
That Poesy has wreaths for you alone;
There is a narrowness in such a notion
Which makes me wish you’d change your lakes for ocean. (5)

For Byron, the limited geography of Wordsworth and the Lake poets reflected the narrowness of their views on literature, politics, and society.

Wordsworth’s narrow attitude towards literary tradition is especially evident in his “Essay,” which attacks Pope on the grounds that his satire does not “contain a single new image of external nature” (73). Like Jeffrey, Wordsworth finds little value

¹² *Don Juan in Context*, 148. This is also why Byron preferred the Cynics, who rejected the systematic philosophy of thinkers such as Plato and even refused to acknowledge their own philosophy as a philosophy.

in Augustan poets in general: “To what a low state knowledge of the most obvious and important phenomena had sunk, is evident from the style in which Dryden has executed a description of Night in one of his Tragedies, and Pope his translation of the celebrated moonlight scene in the Iliad.” Wordsworth continues, declaring that

Dryden’s lines are vague, bombastic, and senseless; those of Pope, though he had Homer to guide him, are throughout false and contradictory. . . . If these two distinguished writers could habitually think that the visible universe was of so little consequence to a poet, that it was scarcely necessary for him to cast his eyes upon it, we may be assured that those passages of the elder poets which faithfully and poetically describe the phenomena of nature, were not at that time holden in much estimation, and that there was little accurate attention paid to those appearances. (73-74)

Wordsworth argues that Pope and Dryden are inferior poets because they did not draw inspiration from the “visible universe.” In Byron’s estimation, however, Wordsworth’s belief that he understood Nature and all its workings was ironic given his seclusion within the limited geographical region in which he was retired.

Byron first responded to Wordsworth’s comments on Pope in a letter to Leigh Hunt on 30 October 1815:

I have two petty & perhaps unworthy objections in small matters to make to him—which with his pretension to accurate observation & fury against Pope’s false translation of the “Moonlight scene in Homer” I wonder he should have fallen into—these be they.—He says of Greece in the body of his book—that it is a land of

“*rivers—fertile plans--& sounding shores*
Under a cope of *variegated sky*”

The rivers are dry half the year—the plains are barren—and the shores *still & tideless* as the Mediterranean can make them—the Sky is anything but variegated—being for months and months—but “darkly”—deeply—beautifully blue.”—The next is in his notes—where he talks of our “Monuments crowded together in the busy &c. of a large town”—as compared with the “still seclusion of a Turkish cemetery in some *remote* place”—this is pure stuff—for *one* monument in our Churchyards—there are *ten* in the Turkish--& so crowded that you cannot walk between them—they are always close to the walks of the towns—that is—merely divided by a path or road—and as to “*remote* places”—men never take the trouble in a barbarous country to carry their dead very far” (*BLJ* 4:324-25).

The irony of Byron’s letter, of course, is that he feels Wordsworth’s attack on Pope to be anything but a “small matter.” And, in the letter, we see Byron battling Wordsworth on the grounds of his own authority as a cosmopolitan author. Citing a descriptive passage from *The Excursion* on Greece and a note upon a “Turkish Cemetery,” Byron points out the inaccuracies in Wordsworth’s descriptions of an external nature of which he had no first-hand experience, thereby indicting him for the same faults Wordsworth found in Pope’s Homer. In this way, Byron continued to argue from the standpoint of practical experience, a method of arguing that informs all of his works and reinforces the Cynical foundations of his cosmopolitanism.

Wordsworth’s attempt to undermine Pope by constructing British literary history upon narrow cultural and poetical principles was indeed alarming to a cosmopolitan writer such as Byron, who, by 1821, had seen a great deal of foreign society and drawn influence from a diverse collection of foreign literatures for his own poetry. Hence, his defense of Pope as the “National poet of Mankind” becomes a

defense of all poets who defy classification and categorization—including Byron himself. Indeed, in his *Letter* Byron uses his worldly experience to criticize the attempts of writers such as Bowles, Wordsworth, and Jeffrey to classify poets and poetry according to any narrow system of cultural or literary value:

I have seen a little of all sorts of Society—from the Christian—Prince—and the Mussulman Sultan and Pacha--& the higher ranks of their countries,-- down to the London boxer, ‘the *Flash and the Swell*’—the Spanish Muleteer—the wandering Turkish Dervise---the Scotch Highlander—and the Albanian robber—to say nothing of the curious varieties of Italian social life.- ---Far be it from me to presume that there ever was or can be such a thing as an *Aristocracy of Poets*. . . . but there *is* a Nobility of thought and of Style—open to all Stations—and derived partly from talent--& partly from education—which is to be found in Shakespeare—and Pope—and Burns—no less than in Dante and Alfieri. (159)

Byron’s attempt to debunk the idea of an “Aristocracy of Poets” and to replace it with a literary tradition that is “open to all stations,” regardless of cultural or social position, brings us back full circle to the cosmopolitan thinking that had inspired his “Reading List” in 1807. Byron’s cosmopolitanism may have been born out of his culturally diverse reading, but it became a literary standard when he chose to incorporate that reading into his own creative endeavors. Byron’s defense of Pope in *Some Observations* (1820) and his *Letter* (1821) thus shows him arguing for a literary tradition without borders that directly opposes the insular beliefs espoused by many of the Romantic period’s leading poets and cultural authorities. For Byron, literary traditions are meant to be transgressed and it is up to cosmopolitan authors to

challenge literary and cultural standards that enforce a narrow understanding of imaginative literature. In his defense of Pope, Byron thus continued to reject nineteenth-century British literary and cultural standards, joining his favorite author as a “National poet of Mankind.”

REFERENCES

- Beatty, Bernard. "The force of 'Celtic memories' in Byron's thought." In *English Romanticism and the Celtic World*, ed. Gerard Carruthers and Alan Rawes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. 103-116.
- Black, Jeremy. *Italy and the Grand Tour*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.
- Blake, William. *Poetry and Prose: The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*. Ed. David V. Erdman. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982.
- Borst, William. *Lord Byron's First Pilgrimage*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948.
- Brannum, R. Bracht. "Defacing the Currency: Diogenes' Rhetoric and the *Invention of Cynicism*." In *The Cynics: The Cynic Movement in Antiquity and its Legacy*, ed. R. Bracht Brannum and Marie Odile Goulet-Cazé. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000. 81-104.
- Brighouse, Harry and Gillian Brock. *The Political Philosophy of Cosmopolitanism*. Ed. Brighouse and Brock. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Britannica: Academic Edition*. 2011. <http://www.britannica.com/>.
- Byron, George Gordon, Lord. *Lord Byron: The Complete Poetical Works*. Ed. Jerome J. McGann. 7 vols. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980-93.
- . *Byron: The Complete Miscellaneous Prose*. Ed. Andrew Nicholson. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.
- . *Byron's Correspondence and Journals: From Newstead, and Southwell, and Other Places in England: November 1799-July 1809*. Ed. Peter Cochran. <http://petercochran.files.wordpress.com/2009/02/01-england-1791-180919.pdf/>.
- . *Byron's Letters and Journals*. Ed. Leslie A. Marchand. 12 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973-82.

- . *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage Cantos 1 and 2*. Ed. Peter Cochran.
http://www.internationalbyronsociety.org/images/stories/pdf_files/childe1.pdf
 /.
- . *The Curse of Minerva*. Ed. Peter Cochran.
http://www.internationalbyronsociety.org/images/stories/pdf_files/curse_minerva.pdf.
- . *Hints from Horace*. Ed. Peter Cochran.
http://www.internationalbyronsociety.org/images/stories/pdf_files/hints_horace.pdf.
- . *His Very Self and Voice: Collected Conversations of Lord Byron*. Ed. Ernest J. Lovell, Jr. New York: MacMillan Company, 1954.
- . 'What comes uppermost': *Byron's Letters and Journals. Supplementary Volume*. vol. 13. Ed. Leslie A. Marchand. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1994.
- Chandler, James. "The Pope Controversy: Romantic Poets and the English Canon." *Critical Inquiry* 10 (1984): 481-509.
- Cheeke, Stephen. *Byron and Place: History, Nostalgia, Translation*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.
- Clearman, Mary. "A Blueprint for *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*: The First Satire of Juvenal." *Keats-Shelley Journal* 19 (1970): 87-99.
- Colley, Linda. *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.
- Companion to British Literature*. Ed. Julia Wright. 2 vols. Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons, 2010.
- Cottle, Joseph. *Alfred, An Epic Poem*. Ed. Donald H. Reiman. New York: Garland, 1979.
- Curran, Stuart. *Poetic Form and British Romanticism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

- Curry, Kenneth. *Sir Walter Scott's Edinburgh Annual Register*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1977.
- Cutler, Ian. *Cynicism: From Diogenes to Dilbert*. North Carolina: McFarland and Company, 2005.
- Dentith, Simon. *Epic and Empire in Nineteenth-Century Britain*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Desmond, William D. *Cynics*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008.
- Elledge, Paul. *Lord Byron at Harrow School*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000.
- Eton, William. *A Survey of the Turkish Empire*. London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1798.
- Fielding, Henry. *The Works of Henry Fielding Esq^r*. 10 vols. London: J. Johnson, 1806.
- Gleckner, Robert. *Byron and the Ruins of Paradise*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967.
- Goldsmith, Oliver. *The Miscellaneous Works of Oliver Goldsmith*. 4 vols. London: J. Johnson, 1801.
- . *The Citizen of the World: Or, Letters from a Chinese Philosopher Residing in London, To His Friends in the East*. 2 vols. London: E. Spragg, 1798.
- Goldweber, David R. "Byron and Gifford." *Keats-Shelley Review* 12 (1998): 105-130.
- Graham, Peter W. *Don Juan and Regency England*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1990.
- Griffin, Edward. *Wordsworth's Pope: A Study in Literary Historiography*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Hayden, Robert. *The Romantic Reviewers 1802-1824*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969.

- Hobhouse, John Cam. "Athens Diary." Ed. Peter Cochran.
<http://petercochran.files.wordpress.com/2009/12/05-athens.pdf>
- Hodgson, Francis. "The Geography and Antiquities of Ithaca." *Monthly Review* 55 (August 1811): 371-85.
- Horace. *The Complete Odes and Epodes*. Trans. David West. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- . *Horace's Satires and Epistles*. Trans. Jacob Fuchs. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1977.
- Johnson, Samuel. *A Dictionary of the English Language*. London: A. Wilson, 1812.
- Juvenal. *The Satires of Juvenal*. Trans. Francis Hodgson. London: T. Bensley, 1807.
- . *The Satires of Decimus Junius Juvenalis*. Trans. William Gifford. London: W. Bulmer and Co., 1806.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Project for a Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Essay*. Trans. London: Stephen Couchman, 1796.
- Kucich, Greg. *Keats, Shelley, and Romantic Spenserianism*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991.
- Laertius, Diogenes. *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*. Trans. R. D. Hicks. 2 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979.
- Lucian. *Lucian's Dialogues*. Trans. Howard Williams. London: George Bell & Sons, 1888.
- Marchand, Leslie A. *Byron: A Biography*. 3 vols. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1957.
- . "'Childe Harold's Monitor': The Strange Friendship of Byron and Francis Hodgson." In *The Evidence of the Imagination: Studies in Interactions between Life and Art in English Romantic Literature*, ed. Donald H. Reiman, Michael C. Jaye, and Betty T. Bennett. New York: New York University Press, 1978. 285-311.
- Martin, Philip W. *Byron: A Poet Before His Public*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

- Mazella, David. *The Making of Modern Cynicism*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007.
- McGann, Jerome J. *Don Juan in Context*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976.
- . *Fiery Dust: Byron's Poetic Development*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968.
- Moles, John. "The Cynics." In *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought*, ed. C. J. Rowe. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000. 415-34.
- Murray, John. *The Letters of John Murray to Lord Byron*. Ed. Andrew Nicholson. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007.
- Oliver, Susan. *Scott, Byron, and the Poetics of Cultural Encounter*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. 2011. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/>.
- Oxford English Dictionary*. 2011. <http://www.oed.com/>.
- Paulson, Ronald. *The Life of Henry Fielding: A Critical Biography*. Cambridge: Wiley-Blackwell, 2000.
- Phillips, David. *Athenian Political Oratory*. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Pittock, Murray G. H. *Scottish Nationality*. New York: Palgrave, 2001.
- Plato. *The Apology, Phædo, and Crito of Plato*. Trans. Benjamin Jowett. New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1909.
- Pope, Alexander. *The Poems of Alexander Pope*. Ed. John Butt. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963.
- Plutarch. *Plutarch's Lives*. Ed. John Langhorne. 6 vols. London: Thomas Davison, 1809.

- Reiman, Donald H. *Intervals of Inspirations: The Skeptical Tradition and the Psychology of Romanticism*. Greenville: Penkeville, 1988.
- Robinson, Charles E. *Byron and Shelley: The Snake and Eagle Wreathed in Fight*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976.
- The Romantics Reviewed: Contemporary Reviews of British Romantic Writers, Part B: Byron and Regency Society Poets*. Edited by Donald H. Reiman. 5 vols. New York: Garland, 1972.
- Scott, Walter. *The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott*. Ed. J. Logie Robertson. New York: Oxford University Press, 1909.
- . *Scott's Miscellaneous Works*. 30 vols. Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1870.
- Simonsuuri, Kirsti. *Homer's Original Genius: Eighteenth Century Notions of the Early Greek Epic*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979.
- Simpson, Erik. *Literary Minstrelsy 1770-1830*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008.
- Sonnini de Manoncourt, Charles-Nicolas-Sigisbert. *Voyage en Grèce et en Turquie*. Trans. 2 vols. London: T. W. Longman and O. Rees, 1801.
- Southey, Robert. *The Poetical Works of Robert Southey*. Ed. Tim Fulford and Daniel Roberts. 7 vols. London: Pickering and Chatto, 2004.
- St. Clair, William. *Lord Elgin and the Marbles*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1983.
- . *That Greece Might Still Be Free: The Philhellenes in the War of Independence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1972.
- Stabler, Jane. *Byron, Poetics and History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Stafford, Fiona. "The *Edinburgh Review* and the Representation of Scotland." In *British Romanticism and the Edinburgh Review*, ed. Massimiliano Demata and Duncan Wu. New York: Palgrave, 2002. 33-57.

- The Stanford History of Philosophy*. 2007. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/history/>
- Stauffer, Andrew. *Anger, Revolution, and Romanticism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Sutherland, John. *The Life of Walter Scott: A Critical Biography*. Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1995.
- Thompson, Carl. *The Suffering Traveller and the Romantic Imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Thornton, Thomas. *The Present State of Turkey*. London: Mawman, 1807.
- Translations chiefly from the Greek Anthology*. London: Richard Phillips, 1806.
- Trumpener, Katie. *Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.
- Waterfield, Robin. *Athens: From Ancient Ideal to Modern City*. New York: Basic Books, 2004.
- Watson, Roderick. "Dialectics of 'Voice' and 'Place': Literature in Scots and English from 1700." In *Scotland: A Concise Cultural History*, ed. P. H. Scott. Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing Co., 1993. 99-125.
- Wohlgemut, Esther. *Romantic Cosmopolitanism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- Wordsworth, William. *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth, The Later Years*. Ed. Ernest de Selincourt. 3 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939.
- . *The Prose Works of William Wordsworth*. Ed. W. J. B. Owen and Jane Worthington Smyser. 3 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974.
- Wright, Rodwell Waller. *Horæ Ionicae*. London: Longman, 1809.