The Byronic Myth in Brazil: Cultural Perspectives on Lord Byron's Image in Brazilian Romanticism

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THE BYRONIC MYTH IN BRAZIL: CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON LORD
BYRON’S IMAGE IN BRAZILIAN ROMANTICISM

by

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ABSTRACT

THE BYRONIC MYTH IN BRAZIL: CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON LORD BYRON'S IMAGE IN BRAZILIAN ROMANTICISM

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Byron’s reception in one of the nineteenth century’s largest and most culturally significant post-colonial outposts, Brazil, has been virtually ignored in English studies. The implications of Lord Byron’s influence in Brazil are extensive since he was overwhelmingly popular among poets but also subversive to the nationalist aims of Brazilian Romanticism. Nearly all of the well known Brazilian Romantics were not only influenced by him, but translated him. Their notion of what it meant to be “Byronic,” however, differed from the ideas in the Europe. The Brazilian Byronic hero was more extreme, macabre, and sentimental, lonelier, darker, and deadlier. Byron had various cult followings in Brazil that established rites and ceremonies, and performed Manfred-like rituals. Brazilian Romantic culture had such a marked effect on translations of Byron’s work and perceptions of the poet that it provides an exciting context for considering the interplay of social energies between text, author, and culture.
The following chapters trace characteristics Byron’s influence and are organized according to a dual methodology. First, they follow the evolution of Byron’s influence in Brazil: starting with its European beginnings, tracing the arrival of Byron’s image in Brazil, exploring the explosion of his influence evidenced in Brazilian literature, and considering the cultural obsession that reproduced his image ritualistically in the lives of Brazilian Romantics. Second, the chapters loosely map out several aspects of his celebrity image, or several ways of viewing Byron, including Byron as the rogue debauchee; Byron as the cosmopolitan; Byron as the eccentric, disillusioned poet; and Byron as the satanic Romantic.

For Brazil, and much of Europe too, Lord Byron was the embodiment of Romanticism. The way Brazilian Romantics saw Byron, therefore, reflected what they thought English Romanticism to be. Especially in a contemporary critical climate that continues to respond to Jerome McGann’s *The Romantic Ideology*, a Brazilian notion of English Romanticism, which turns out to be so polar to the contemporary English idea of its own just-past Romantic era further disrupts the idea of stable periodization and a universally codified Romantic movement.
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Introduction:
The Social Energy of Lord Byron’s Celebrity Image

For decades now, Byronists have studied the poet’s influence in various European and non-European countries, illustrated in part by the growth and diversity of the International Byron Society. Surprisingly, however, Byron’s reception in one of the nineteenth century’s largest and most culturally significant post-colonial outposts, Brazil, has been virtually ignored in English studies—a significant omission considering how influential Byron became during Brazil’s Romantic period (1836-1887). The Brazilian critical perspective on Byron can be summed up in the words of R. Magalhães Junior, who writes: “No other influence was stronger in Brazil during the life of Álvares de Azevedo [the key second generation Romantic] than that of Lord Byron. Our Historians customarily call the type of epidemic that dominated Brazilian letters: The Byronic Malady [or O Mal Byronico]” (39). In Brazilian literary studies, “O Mal Byronico” has become a descriptive catch-phrase associated with the second generation of Brazilian Romantics. Numerous Brazilian translations of Byron’s works and hundreds of other allusions to his life and works from this period demonstrate his widespread influence in Brazil. Beyond his influence on the literature of Brazil, however, Byron is most famous for his effect on the individual lives of many Brazilian Byronists.

One startling example of this influence is in the life of Tibúrcio António Craveiro, the first published Brazilian translator of Byron. After fleeing to England for political reasons in 1823, where he was apparently exposed to Byromania, he returned to Brazil and was hired as a professor of rhetoric in the Rio de Janeiro academy of Pedro II. Eventually he traveled to Portugal for health related reasons (“air”) and fell in love tragically with a woman of higher class. His sickness worsened and he eventually died, but accounts differ over the final cause. Brazilian author Pires de Almeida, along with
relating the facts that appear in several dictionaries of biography, reports a mysterious story about the legendary cause of Craveiro’s “Byronic” death, which he claims to get from Craveiro’s own account. According to Almeida, Craveiro was an epitome of Byron’s Manfred, a tortured, dark, figure one could not help trembling to see. He “passed the days habitually in contemplation of horror” (qtd. in Barbosa 102). His home was popularly referred to as the “cavern of blood” because of the various Indian heads he had suspended from the ceiling and on the walls; and his study, at the academy of Pedro II, was in perfect accordance with the “funerary gallery of his apartment.” He studied only works “whose subjects were tortures, earthquakes, disasters, great epidemics, sinister sicknesses, cemeteries and war hospitals, causes célèbres [or celebrated causes], black magic, cabalism, documentation of witchcraft, scripts written on human skin, [and] pacts with the devil” (Almeida 136).¹ He is even rumored to have used a miniature guillotine in his office to sharpen the pen he used while translating Byron.

In association with this dark course of study, Craveiro decided to orchestrate the suicide of a young, newly married student who lived close by. He became close friends with the student, was allowed into the man and his wife’s confidence, and then began to turn all of his friends against him. According to his account, through diverse strategies, Craveiro tormented the man such that he stopped eating and drinking, became a recluse from society and a “furious madman”; and finally, as Craveiro describes, “justly or unjustly, what does it matter!—to escape his torments he found refuge in death; and threw himself through the window of the room he occupied on the second floor” (Almeida 140). Despite his macabre victory, Craveiro began to be harrowed up by his crime, became sick, traveled to Portugal, and eventually died. Almeida explains that Craveiro packed up his entire “arsenal of tortures” to take with him to the Açores, and left behind, on the desk of his study, his “exquisite translation of Byron’s poem Lara” (140).²
Initiating three decades of Byronic lore, Craveiro’s story illustrates not only the intensity but also the macabre flavor of Byron’s influence in Brazil, which this thesis will investigate. When Byron wrote *Manfred, Lara, or Oscar d’Alva*, he likely never imagined some obscure Brazilian poet would emulate his darker characters to such a degree. Brazilian literary history has re-told Craveiro’s story and other similar, though perhaps less intense, stories as casebook examples of the Byronic. Byron had various cult followings in Brazil that established rites and ceremonies and performed Manfred-like rituals, skull cup and all. But what can these stories tell us about Byron? Clearly the legends associated with Brazil’s “Byronic School” will do little to dispel the enigma surrounding Byron’s actual life, complicated by the burning of his memoirs. However, by examining the translations of Byron, literary and critical references to Byron in other works, and the anecdotal accounts of his Brazilian following, this thesis will illustrate the potency of Byron’s image as a culturally transcendent force in nineteenth-century literature.

The Brazilian Romantics’ notion of what it meant to be “Byronic” differed from the ideas in the European continent and Britain. Brazil’s Byronic hero was more extreme, macabre, and sentimental, lonelier, darker, and deadlier. Besides exploring Byron’s influence on Brazil’s Romantic period, a second focus of this thesis is to consider Brazil’s influence on Byron’s image, and hence the qualities of Byron’s celebrity image that allowed it to become a powerful vehicle for his texts across the Atlantic. Brazilian Romantic culture had such a marked effect on translations of Byron’s work and Brazilian perceptions of the poet himself that it provides an exciting context for considering the powerful interplay between text, author, and culture.
Current Situation

In relation to other current Byron scholarship, this project fills a gap in international Byron scholarship and contributes a fresh perspective and application of a new historicist theoretical approach to the exchanges of power associated with celebrity authorship. For years the International Byron Society has been interested in tracing the paths of Byron’s fame and influence throughout the world. Its members have published articles on Byron and nearly every European country, but they have also published on countries outside of Europe that Byron never visited, like Russia and Poland. The International Byron Society represents a confederacy of thirty-nine countries’ Byron societies, revealing a cross-cultural interest in Byron in some perhaps unexpected places, including India, Israel, Mexico, and Lebanon. However, while many countries that have scarce literary relationships to Byron are part of the society, Brazil is not. Brazilian Romantic poets may be argued to have been more influenced by Byron than any other country’s poets, but nothing has been published in English on Byron’s influence in Brazil, and very little has been published in Portuguese.

In fact, while there are a few short articles published and some explanatory references to Byron in major anthologies, two major twentieth-century works represent the entire Brazilian literary reflection on Byron. The first major work, *A Escola Byroniana no Brasil*, comes from a series of newspaper articles published in the *Jornal do Comércio* by Pires de Almeida between 1904 and 1905. Including the story of Tibúrcio Craveiro and his translation of *Lara*, *A Escola* was largely a work of creative nonfiction. Though Almeida does transcribe many of the translations of Byron from the previous half-century, his commentary on the poems and his story-telling have caused some critical skepticism, principally from the second major Brazilio-Byronic critic, Onédia Célia de Carvalo Barbosa. In his *Byron no Brasil: Traduções* (1975), Barbosa performs a
textual evaluation and analysis of many translations of Byron, considering the form, style, and themes of the original poems, and then comparing them with the texts translated into Portuguese.

Both authors’ perspectives are invaluable to this study since *A Escola* presents a perspective on Byron’s fabled celebrity image and *Traduções* presents a strict textual perspective on his works. The goal of this thesis is to analyze the negotiation between the two and the culture that empowers them. Neither work is comprehensive, as Barbosa writes, “This book is not yet that so anticipated work about the influence of Byron in Brazilian Romanticism. . . . It stands, however, as a preliminary study, that intends to start the snowball rolling and open the way for a more complete study of the influence properly stated” (Barbosa 28).³ While the scope of this thesis is far too narrow to be exhaustive, like Barbosa’s research into the translations, it can prepare the way for more comprehensive work in English.

Theoretical Approach

The evidence of Byron’s influence in Brazil (and in Portugal as a precursor) sets the stage for a theoretical examination of the function of Byron’s image in relationship to the popularity of his works. An analysis of the relationship between Byron’s fame, the popularity of his works, and the fans that worshiped him, is ultimately about the exchange of power among culture, literature, and person. As Leo Braudy writes in *The Frenzy of Renown*, “In great part the history of fame is the history of the changing ways by which individuals have sought to bring themselves to the attention of others and, not incidentally, have thereby gained power over them” (3). Fame is about power—a power revealed in influence. In his very first publication, *Hours of Idleness*, Byron demonstrates his desire for personal fame. In “A Fragment” Byron speculates on the nature of his future renown:
No lengthen’d scroll, no praise-encumber’d stone;
My epitaph shall be my name alone;
If that with honour fail to crown my clay,
Oh may no other fame my deeds repay!

That, only that, shall single out the spot;
By that remember’d, or with that forgot. (1.7–12)

By publishing *Hours of Idleness*, Byron begins to court the fame by which he hopes to be remembered. Henry Brougham, of the *Edinburgh Review*, however, accused Byron of using his name—his aristocratic title—to garnish public interest for a collection of poems without “one thought, either in a little degree different from the ideas of former writers, or differently expressed” (qtd. in Christensen 21). From the very outset of his poetic career, Byron’s name, even as an initially small reservoir of influence, plays an important role in the popularization of his texts.4

By the time Byron’s texts invaded the Continent, and the Americas, Byron’s personal fame was much more influential. In the forward to Gordon Thomas’s *Lord Byron’s Iberian Pilgrimage*, Portuguese critic Edgard Santos Mattos writes, “The fascination produced by the Bohemian lives of the English Romantic poets of the past century, especially in Latin nations and minds, has always amazed even the most steadfast admirers of those poets.” Lord Byron and his compatriots “managed perhaps more by the events of their daily lives than by their literary works to capture and to retain the astonished admiration of generation after generation” (preface, Thomas ix). In the Portuguese speaking world especially, first in Portugal and then Brazil, Mattos’s statement proves true. Whether reacting to Byron’s personal visit to Portugal or the ubiquitous repetition of his image in Brazil, translations of his works and references to his character printed in both Portugal and Brazil use their notions of Byron’s personal life and character as an alembic for his works.
The type of fascination over Byron’s person evidenced in Brazil was also well documented throughout Europe, and critics from Byron’s own time, and just thereafter, commented on the success of his publications that seemed directly related to the mania surrounding Byron’s image. David Masson, for instance, in the *North British Review* of 1853, critiques two young poets and in the process establishes a theoretical perspective on the quality of poets generally by comparing Byron’s vogue readership with Spenser’s literary staying power:

> Why is Spenser the favourite poet of poets, rather than a popular favourite like Byron? For the same reason that a Court is crowded during a trial for life or death, but attended only by barristers during the trial of an intricate civil case. The subject chosen by a poetical writer [...] is a kind of allegory of the whole state of his mental being at the moment; but some writers are not moved to allegorize so easily as others, and it is a question with readers what states of being they care most to see allegorized. (n.p.)

Masson’s statement illustrates two key aspects of Byron’s popularity for nineteenth-century readers, which soundly apply in Brazil: 1) they considered Lord Byron’s personal character to be heavily encoded into his works; and 2) his particular character was what the people “care[d] most to see allegorized.” Several modern critics have considered the textual establishment of the “Byronic hero” to be a manipulation by Byron of his own popular image—“a kind of aesthetic stratagem,” “trying out of selves,” and “testing of [his] reading audience” (Heinzelman 137). Whether reflecting his actual self or a simulation, however, as Frances Wilson writes in *Byromania*, Byron’s “imagined presence in the poems was responsible for their tremendous value” (6). Byron’s celebrity image was fueled by his texts, and his texts were fueled by his celebrity image in what seems like a reciprocally symbiotic power scheme.
Despite Byron’s arguably intentional manipulation of his own popular image, the source of celebrity popularity is not the text or the author, but the public, and publics wield the conjurer’s power over the celebrity image, deciding whether to summon and how to construe the subject. As Wilson writes, “The ‘Byronic’ became public property and Byron found that his identity was no longer synonymous with his image” (6). Hence, Lord Byron’s popular image and its reception varied greatly among different European societies, who read his character and his texts differently. The Portuguese’s reaction to Byron’s personal visit in 1809 was so adverse that his works could get no hold, while Byron’s travels in Greece and Italy supercharged his reception in print. Especially when considering Byron’s fame outside of England, the life-giving (and taking) influence Byron’s image had on the reception of his texts makes it necessary for critics to consider the empowering function of his image along with any examination of the popularity or cultural transcendence of his texts.

A project based on examining the balance and transfer of power between an author, text, and culture sounds like an exercise in cultural materialism or new historicism; and Stephen Grenblatt’s notion of “social energy” proves a useful approach to help ground the theoretical clues in the upcoming chapters. In his first chapter of *Shakespearian Negotiations*, “The Circulation of Social Energy,” Greenblatt explains that “Energia” is the force of language to “stir the mind” (6). More specifically, according to Greenblatt, Renaissance literature contains “social energy” that results from negotiation and exchange between various ideologies, systems, and forms of representation. This energy can only be measured in terms of readers’ or audience’s continuing pleasure and interest, which exist because the original social energy a text embodies changes over time as it disowns some of the negotiations that inspired it and appropriates others from later eras. Therefore, the original energy of the text is a kind of momentum that allows it to cross borders of culture and time. Greenblatt writes:
The ‘life’ that literary works seem to possess long after both the death of the author and the death of the culture for which the author wrote is the historical consequence, however transformed and refashioned, of the social energy initially encoded in those works. . . . Whereas most collective expressions moved from their original setting to a new place or time are dead on arrival, the social energy encoded in certain works of art continues to generate the illusion of life for centuries. (6-7)

As Greenblatt’s prime example, Shakespeare captures a power that has appealed to audiences and readers through the centuries, though often for different reasons in different contexts. His permanence results from the “satisfying intensity” of the “traces” of life he captures through “the circulation of social energies” his works embody (1). Byron’s works are, of course, not as popular today as Shakespeare’s, but Byron has also undeniably “generate[d] the illusion of life for centuries.” The question for Byron scholars, however, is how? Byron has been alternately included and left out of Romantic canons by critics, many of whom would argue that his texts do not stand the test of time. T. S. Eliot famously berated Byron: “Of Byron one can say, as of no other English poet of his eminence, that he added nothing to the language, that he discovered nothing in the sounds, and developed nothing in the meaning, of individual words. I cannot think of any poet of his distinction who might so easily have been an accomplished foreigner writing English” (qtd. in Manning 109). T. S. Eliot’s aesthetics, initiating the trends of formalism, look inwardly at the text as the means and end of literary quality and avoid reference to culture or authorship.

Even if critics’ scope includes biography, many authors’ personas make little difference to the cultural transference of their works, especially those who published anonymously or under pseudonym or those whose works are enormously derivative or collaborative. Critics interested in the function of a text in society can also easily discount
the function of the author. For example, according to Greenblatt, Shakespeare’s “moment of inscription” is a patently collaborative “social moment” because first, he “does not conceal his indebtedness to literary sources” and second, “the theater manifestly addresses its audience as a collectivity” (Shakespeare 5). Furthermore, Greenblatt says all authors “depend upon collective genres, narrative patterns, and linguistic conventions” (5). Therefore, there is no “permanent source of literary power” in the genius of the author (Shakespeare), and “there is no escape from contingency” for the reader of cultural traces (3). Biographical criticism can be easily disregarded as an effacement of “the traces of social circulation” in favor of an “enchanted impression of aesthetic autonomy” in the author (Shakespeare 5). Though the focus of this thesis is admittedly not Byron’s text, it also does not imply any “permanent literary power” or “aesthetic autonomy” in Byron’s genius as an author. However, as in the case of Lord Byron’s influence in Brazil (and Portugal), the author’s persona may be itself the artifact of social exchange, the “text” that gives his/her work the “social energy” required for cultural transcendence and staying power.

Byron’s influence in Brazil and Portugal provide some new contexts for Greenblatt’s notion of “social energy.” First, as alluded to, while Greenblatt focuses on the social energy contained in the text, Lord Byron’s “textual” influence outside of England can be argued to have been more propelled by his personal infamy than any of his writings. Second, while Greenblatt focuses on the transcendence of a text through the centuries, Byron’s work bridges the physical borderlands in contemporary European, eastern, and American societies. The cultural momentum that allows Shakespeare’s text to slowly evolve with the times can be juxtaposed with Lord Byron’s text, which has been interpreted in dramatically different ways in synchronous yet relatively disparate cultures.
Generally speaking, twentieth-century criticism on Byron, while recognizing the “Byronic hero” as an important aspect of Byron’s texts, considers Byron’s fame as a function of his printed works. Over the past forty years, many critics’ close examinations of Byron’s works have exposed numerous insights into the quality of his poetry. However, criticism that takes Byron’s works as a focal point for discovering the secrets of his popularity may give the mistaken idea that in his own day Byron’s texts, and their social energy, carried his fame, instead of his fame carrying his texts—or rather, instead of both working reciprocally.

The publication of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* in England thrust Byron into the public spotlight almost immediately, far beyond the scope of *Hours of Idleness*, as he notes in his famous line, “I awoke one morning and found myself famous” (Moore xiv). Especially in England, his works played an unmistakably central role in creating and maintaining his fame. Outside of England, however, Byron’s popularity spread more independently of his texts, in part simply because of language barriers. Foreign publishers that imported, reprinted, or translated Byron’s texts already had an English precedent to follow. Almost of necessity, then, Byron’s fame had to spread abroad before his texts could. His celebrity image—based on his presentation of himself through his travels, his scandalous life, his famous political activism, and the “Byronic hero” image he had begun to create in England—carried his fame abroad and enlivened his texts for foreign audiences. In order to “understand the negotiations” and “exchanges” that empower texts that survive the ages, in the case of Byron’s popularity outside of England, the powerful negotiations first to be considered relate to the establishment of Byron’s personal infamy in those countries. The second exchange, and perhaps most interesting one, is the consequential and reciprocal exchange of popular energy between Byron the person and Byron the text.
Considering Byron’s biography in relation to both the historical/cultural milieu and the literature is not a new move in Romanticism studies. According to Robert Gleckner, scholarship on Byron before the 1960s focused mainly on bibliographic and biographic issues, and during the 1960s Jerome McGann and other key Romantic critics emerged with a more “biographical-historical criticism” (2). McGann, in “The Book of Byron and the Book of a World,” explores the autobiographical elements and conscious manipulations of Byron’s text that promoted Byron’s public image. Kurt Heinzelman, in “Byron’s Poetry of Politics: The Economic Basis of the ‘Poetical Character’,” emphasizes the changing methods and themes in Byron’s writing that evidence the social and economic contexts affecting his notion of his own celebrity image. Both essays represent current scholarship on Byron, which admits the necessity of including reference to Byron’s character, popularity, and charisma in criticism. Both McGann and Heinzelman’s works, however, look to Byron’s literary work as the focal point of their investigations of his popularity. Heinzelman is interested in how Byron’s text demonstrates Byron’s ideas about socioeconomics and authorship, and McGann is interested in how Byron’s texts demonstrate and affect his conscious manipulations of his own image. The use of biography here serves the purpose of explaining the literary texts.

Especially in terms of his international popularity, however, dislocating Byron’s printed works as the center pin of his power allows critics to examine the various social negotiations and exchanges involved in the rise of Byron’s fragmented celebrity image and its effects on his works. As mentioned earlier, Greenblatt’s notion of the “negotiations” of “social energy” in and around a text already set up such an investigation, because instead of considering the transference of power between a culture and a text as a generator-to-outlet type of conduit, a “negotiation” or exchange of energy implies a system of power with two generators, or multiple generators linked,
synergistically building and feeding off each other. Considering the cultural forces, Byron’s image, and his text as equal variables in what Katrina Bachinger has already called “Byronic Negotiations” gives critics an elaborate perspective on the exchanges involved in celebrity authorship and pop-cultural transcendence. Refashioning the popularity of Byron’s text as an outgrowth of his personal popularity is a move, however, that Byron’s text almost requires, and McGann implies.

One of McGann’s key arguments is of Byron’s own awareness of and struggle against the cultural and material ideologies and conditions he sees influencing his text: “The problem lies in the ways that culture—that is to say ideology, that is to say false consciousness—enlists works of imagination to its causes. Culture is always seeking to turn poetic tales into forms of worship” (Byron 8). Further, considering the insurmountable influences of ideology and economy on nascent individuality and “free thought,” “how does one live in such a world and with such a disillusioned view of it, being in it?” According to McGann, “Byron’s verse poses that question over and over again” (Byron 11). With Byron, perhaps more than any other nineteenth-century author, his works have been appropriated and turned into forms of worship. As much as his texts were manipulated and construed, his image was the most translatable and transferable text of all. Byron’s image became mythic in its proportions and applications, a form of cultural exchange more potent than the works of any other Romantic. In a statement that reflects this phenomenon, Leo Braudy writes, “The fame of others, their distinguishing marks, becomes a common coin of human exchange—code words more forceful (and easier to express) than mutual political or religious beliefs for establishing intimacy” (4). Researching Byron’s influence in Brazil provides a smorgasbord of evidence of how Byron’s celebrity image became an adjustable vehicle of “social energy,” a “form of worship,” and a “coin of human exchange,” which ultimately transformed his works into a reflection of Brazil’s own darker Romanticism.
Furthermore, as McGann notes, Byron’s understanding and critique of the ideological and cultural forces playing out in all texts make the cultural traces embedded in Byron’s own work, and in his spectacular life, particularly interesting, since he is aware of them. An analysis of the influence of Byron’s image becomes a necessary part of any cultural or historical analysis of his work, not only because his personal life was so culturally powerful, but because much of the social or political potency of his works and his representations of himself were intentionally manipulative, or at least annoyingly socially collaborative to Byron’s own view, and his texts often revolve around the dilemmas of fame and authorship.

Trajectory

The following chapters trace characteristics of the influence of Byron’s image and are organized according to a dual methodology. First, the chapters follow the evolution of Byron’s influence in Brazil: starting with its European beginnings, tracing the arrival of Byron’s image in Brazil, exploring the explosion of his influence evidenced in Brazilian literature, and considering the cultural obsession that reproduced his image ritualistically in the lives of Brazilian Romantics. Second, the chapters loosely map out several aspects of his celebrity image, or several ways of viewing Byron, including Byron as the rogue debauchee; Byron as the cosmopolitan; Byron as the eccentric, disillusioned poet; and Byron as the satanic Romantic.

The scope of these chapters focuses primarily on Byron in Brazil but also initially on Portugal, as a reflection on Byron’s image in Brazil’s mother country. Besides exploring Byron’s account of the Portuguese in *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*, the first chapter explores the impact of Byron in person, through his personal visit to Portugal and the negative effect his resulting infamy had on his works’ reception there. Examining Byron in Portugal is an important step in an analysis of his influence in Brazil because by
the time Byron gained popularity there, Brazil was newly independent of Portuguese rule
and both looking to and away from Europe for political, social, and Romantic models.
The Portuguese reaction to Byron also provides an ideal paradigm for the powerful
influence of his image over his texts, which would be repeated in Brazil in similar form
but with a different end.

The second chapter considers Byronisms arrival in Brazil and its influence on the
beginnings of Brazilian Romanticism. Though Byron was widely imitated in Brazil and
his influence in Europe affected Brazil’s first Romantics, Byron’s popularity in Brazil
reflected an underlying schism in the nascent Brazilian Romantic ideology. For Brazil,
his image as a cosmopolitan, not to mention as the epitome of European Romanticism,
marked him as the symbol of the European literary and cultural hegemony from which
they were trying to distinguish themselves.

Byron’s cosmopolitan image is a complicated matter since he demonstrates both
nationalist and cosmopolitan politics in his writings. In fact, many of the characteristics
that have typified the “Byronic hero” or Byron’s image to various audiences have been
simplifications of themes on which Byron purposefully never committed himself. Byron’s
image in Brazil reflected a cosmopolitanism they projected onto Byron. Furthermore, his
image in Brazil became more emphatic, sentimental, troubled, disillusioned, morose,
and macabre—more Romantic, more Byronic. The third chapter catalogs and examines
some of the translations of Byron’s works into Portuguese and other references to his
poetry that demonstrate these trends. Analyzing the selections of Byron’s works that
Brazilian Romantics chose to translate and the stylistic and thematic modifications their
translations effected illustrates not only the international reaches of Byron’s fame, but
the mythic scope of Byron’s image.

Though Brazil is an extreme example of how Byron’s image can be customized to
fit a particular culture, countries throughout Europe liked or disliked Byron for differing
reasons they each chose to emphasize. What makes Brazil unique is how intensely some
Brazilian Romantics fashioned their own lives in the image of Byron. The fourth chapter
considers accounts of the “Byronic school” of Brazilian poets and the significance of their
ritualistic obsession with Byron. Brazilian Byronists demonstrate better than perhaps
any other literary following what it means to turn “poetic tales into forms of worship.” As
with Tiburcio Craveiro, whose story began this chapter, for many Brazilian Byronists,
imitating Byron’s image became a religion, which included macabre ceremonies and
performances. Embodied in the Byronic rituals, the image of Byron’s darker
Romanticism functioned as a liminal space in the formation of Brazil’s national
literature.

Clearly, a comprehensive analysis of Byron’s influence in Brazil would require a
much longer work than a master’s thesis should be. Unfortunately, few accounts of
Byron’s influence on Brazil or Brazilian translations of his works are available in
American libraries. While this work as a whole considers the scholarship of various
Brazilian critics on Byron, many of the translations and accounts referenced come from
Barbosa’s Byron no Brasil and Almeida’s A Escola Byroniana no Brazil, essentially the
only two Brazilian works on Byron available in American libraries. An exhaustive study
of the translations, accounts, and other references to Byron in Brazilian libraries would
surely uncover insights this thesis does not approach.

As a final consideration on the significance of Byron influence in Brazil to current
scholarship in Romanticism, the conclusion to this thesis suggests some of the
ramifications implied by Brazilian Romantics’ notion of Byron. For Brazil, and much of
Europe too, Lord Byron was the embodiment of Romanticism. The way Brazilian
Romantics saw Byron, therefore, reflected what they thought English Romanticism to be.
Especially in a contemporary critical climate that continues to respond to Jerome
McGann’s The Romantic Ideology, a Brazilian notion of English Romanticism, which
turns out to be so polar to the contemporary English idea of its own just-past Romantic era further disrupts the idea of stable periodization and a universally codified Romantic movement.
Chapter One:

‘The Injustice of the Noble Lord’: The Reaction of Portuguese Romanticism to Byron’s Celebrity Image

In a letter to Frances Hodgson from Lisbon, dated July 16, 1809, Byron writes:

I am very happy here, because I loves oranges, and talk bad Latin to the monks, who understand it, as it is like their own,—and I goes into society (with my pocket-pistols), and I swims the Tagus all across at once, and I rides on an ass or a mule, and swears Portuguese, and have got a diarrhea and bites from the mosquitoes. But what of that? Comfort must not be expected by folks that go a pleasuring. (Marchand 215)

Byron’s visit to Portugal in 1809 marked his first step on foreign soil and the beginning of the tour that would result in *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* and make him an international celebrity. As this quote demonstrates, before Byron published his seminal poem *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*, he was already creating a name and an image for himself through his travels.

In considering the international social power of Byron’s celebrity image, and specifically his influences on Brazilian Romanticism, the most engaging place to start such an inquiry is actually on the continent, in Portugal. Portugal filtered the literary output of Europe to Brazil until Brazil’s independence in 1822, and Byron’s personal visit and literary reception in Portugal significantly influenced his reception in Brazil. Besides establishing a European historical context for the movement of Byronism to Brazil, exploring Byron’s influence in Portugal has its own critical merits because of the nearly universal and prevailing rejection of Byronism in Portugal. While the Brazilian reaction to Byron was already influenced by various European notions of the Byronic, the Portuguese reaction to Byron relates directly to Byron’s actions during his visit to
Portugal. Furthermore, the Portuguese reaction to Byron is a good place to begin an examination of his influence in Brazil because it demonstrates how the social energy embodied in the Byron’s image can be conjured for good or bad, depending on the culture and the circumstances in which his image enters the society.

As significant a point of departure as Portugal was for Byron’s literary and personal notoriety, the resonance of his image among the Portuguese has been surprisingly stifled for nearly two hundred years. With the exception of only a few Portuguese Romantics, most Portuguese writers and critics responded to Byron with distain and open animosity. Very little of Byron’s work has been translated into Portuguese in Portugal, and at least during Byron’s life only the small part of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* that relates to Portugal was relatively well known. In both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in fact, nearly all of the references to Byron in Portuguese literature and criticism are in response to canto one of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*, which the Portuguese felt was unforgivably scathing in its assessment of them. As Alberto Telles writes, Byron’s appraisal of the Portuguese is a “torrent of defamation that the noble and proud lord let run in mixture with great praise” (Telles viii). Though Byron praised the scenery, Portuguese and English critics since have remained bewildered why he reacted so harshly against the Portuguese people. A secondary, and perhaps more interesting question, as it relates to Byron’s popular image, is how did Byron manage in nineteen stanzas and fifteen days to almost permanently alienate Portugal from the European phenomenon of Byromania? He wrote critically of many places, but no other country reacted with such intense and long lasting defiance. Though Brazil’s mother country, Portugal reacted completely differently to Byron. Interestingly, however, their reaction to Byron, though negative, focused on and manipulated his image in similar ways as the Brazilian Romantics did.
A modern historical perspective on some of the broader contexts and social forces affecting Byron’s first tour and the composition of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*, including the history of English-Portuguese relations, the politics of the peninsular wars, and the turbulent personal life of Lord Byron, contributes to a better understanding of Byron’s reaction to the Portuguese and their reaction to him. However, while most studies of Byron’s visit to the Iberian Peninsula analyze these various contexts to try to establish the truth about what Byron actually did or what he actually thought of the Portuguese, this chapter’s primary goal is to consider Byron from the perspective of the Portuguese and thereby examine the scope of the impression Byron made on them as an illustration of the mythmaking power of Byronism. Furthermore, establishing an exact cause for Byron’s distain of the Portuguese is a nigh impossible task, demonstrated by the number and variations among Portuguese and English accounts of Byron’s visit. Enough mystery surrounds Byron’s actions in Portugal, as is common with Byron generally, that all accounts are speculative. On the other hand, for the purposes of exploring Byron’s popular image, it is the speculative, often fictionalized and exaggerated accounts that demonstrate the social potency and mutability of Byron’s celebrity image. The proliferation of differing and often imaginative accounts in both Brazil and Portugal make them ideal scenes to map out the possible trajectories of Byron’s image. Because the Portuguese criticism of Byron relies on references to only a few personal actions as justification for dismissing all of his writing, it reveals a unique relationship between Byron’s personal and literary influence. While the Brazilian Romantics focused on aspects of Byron’s image that appealed to them, and magnified them, the Portuguese focused on negative aspects, namely his libertinism and promiscuousness, and magnified them in order to diffuse Byron’s critique of them in *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*. The Portuguese references to Byron—exaggerated, inconsistent, and plainly biased—exemplify the power of Byron’s personal infamy as a social tool and the relationship of
*Childe Harold* to the establishment of that infamy, but also the relationship of his infamy to the reception of *Childe Harold* and all his other writing.

**Childe Harold in Portugal**

The stanzas of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* that relate to Portugal (roughly stanzas 14-33 of Canto I), along with Byron’s letters from Lisbon and Gibraltar, establish clearly two things: Byron loved the land, the natural attractions of Sintra and Mafra, but he hated the Portuguese people. Byron’s mixed sentiments are captured by Childe Harold’s injurious question, “Poor paltry slaves! Yet born ’midst noblest scenes— / Why, Nature, waste thy wonders on such men” (*CHP* 1.18.234-35). Taken together, Byron’s praises of the natural wonders of Portugal measure up to any depiction of Romantic nature and seem rather Wordsworthian in flavor. However, Byron mixes his praises with biting critique in a mode that is purely Byronic, charging the Portuguese people with filthiness, ingratitude, murderousness, lawlessness, cowardice and ill breeding. In his letter to his mother from Gibraltar, Byron notes of Lisbon that “except the view from the Tagus which is beautiful, and some fine churches & convents, it contains little but filthy streets & more filthy inhabitants” (Marchand 218). In a letter to John Hanson, Byron calls “Gibraltar the dirtiest most detestable spot in existence, Lisbon nearly as bad” (qtd. in Marchand 218). Then, in the account most familiar to the Portuguese, Byron calls Lisbon “unsightly” in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and continues:

For hut and palace show like filthily:
The dingy denizens are reared in dirt;
Ne personage of high or mean degree
Doth care for cleanness of surtout or shirt,
Though shent with Egypt's plague, unkempt, unwashed, unhurt.

(*1.17.273-277*)
Byron’s critique of Portuguese hygiene, beyond critiquing their appearance, implies a universal character flaw in the people, whom Byron assumes are dirty because of laziness. Furthermore, the poorly maintained palaces reflect a break with the glorious Portugal of the past for a new era of indolence.

Several aspects of Byron’s critique reveal that he was not yet too far removed from England politically and ideologically. Byron chides the Portuguese for not appearing grateful to the English, who had provided so much aid to Portugal against France. Charging them with thanklessness, he calls them “A nation swoln with ignorance and pride, / Who lick yet loath the hand that waves the sword / To save them from the wrath of Gaul’s unsparing lord” (CHP 1.16. 222-24). Also, evidencing his latent religiosity, he attacks the Catholic Church on several fronts, including derisive references to the inquisition, ascetic religious observances, and the gaudiness of the church’s opulence. While viewing the famous convent at Mafra, he notes, “But here the Babylonian whore hath built / A dome where flaunts she in such glorious sheen, / That men forget the blood which she hath spilt, / And bow the knee to Pomp that loves to varnish guilt” (CHP 1.20.258-60). In Byron’s references to the English/Portuguese relations and the Catholic Church, he associates ignorance and animal subservience with the Portuguese in general, who “lick yet loath the hand” of the English and naively “bow the knee” to the spectacle of Catholicism.

Perhaps the most offensive charge, however, that Byron makes against the Portuguese concerns the crosses he found along many paths in Sintra, which he mistakenly determined to be markers of the location of murders, as he writes:

These are memorials frail of murderous wrath:
For wheresoe’er the shrieking victim hath
Pour’d forth his blood beneath the assassin’s knife
Some hand erects a cross of mouldering lath;
And grove and glen with thousand such are rife
Throughout this purple land, where law secures not life.

(CHP 1.21.264-69)

It is not difficult to imagine how a Portuguese audience would feel about a hot-headed foreigner misrepresenting evidence of their religious devotion as evidence of lawlessness and general disrespect for life—not to mention hedonism and barbarism. Byron apparently foresaw that this passage would be contested because he provided an explanatory note in the first edition: “It is a well known fact that in the year 1809 the assassinations in the streets of Lisbon and its vicinity were not confined by the Portuguese to their countrymen; but that English men were daily butchered” (CHP 1.21.269 note).

Finally, sealing the offence, Byron contrasts the Portuguese with the Spanish: “Well doth the Spanish hind the difference know / ’Twixt him and Lusian slave, the lowest of the low” (CHP 1.34.376-377). Besides this explicit remark that concludes his assessment of Portugal, Byron goes on to call each Spanish peasant proud “as the noblest duke.” He praises the Spanish for their courage against the French, their good treatment of the English, and even the cleanliness of the city of Cadiz, which he says puts London to shame. Though Byron did visit Spain immediately after Portugal, for an already incensed Portuguese audience such a blatant and direct comparison of Portugal with its longest rival could only add insult to injury, as Alberto Telles, one of few Portuguese critics to try to redeem Byron for the Portuguese, understates: “This mode of speaking of a foreigner does not please the national pride much” (52).

Comparing Byron’s remarks on Portugal to his remarks on Spain further calls into question Byron’s reasons for writing so negatively about Portugal, especially since in 1809 both countries were quite similar in terms of their politics, their economies, and their religion. Byron, however, in a note to stanza thirty-three, defends his account as empirical: “As I found the Portuguese, so I
have characterised them” (*CHP* 1.33.422 note). In a letter to John Hanson, he also writes, “The Spaniards are far superior to the Portuguese” (qtd. in Moser 134). Whatever the circumstances, therefore, that turned Byron against the Portuguese, he believed, or at least certainly pretended, he was dealing as justly with them in *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* as they deserved.

Historical and Contextual Background

As mentioned earlier, it is impractical to try to isolate a direct cause of Byron’s ire with the Portuguese, especially because any number of social, economic, or religious issues could easily have contributed to the bad relationship. Examining some of the background issues in Byron’s life and Portuguese/English relations contemporary to *CHP*, however, helps determine to what extent Byron’s report is representative of the actual state of things in Portugal, but, of more interest here, also helps establish the context influencing the Portuguese reaction to Byronism.

First, Byron’s own emotional state likely had a great effect on the way he perceived Portugal. As the first canto of *CHP* suggests, Byron was not in the best of spirits when leaving England or arriving in Lisbon.10 Stanza 6 reads,

He felt the fullness of Satiety:
Then loathed he in his native land to dwell,
Which seemed to him more lone than Eremite’s sad cell. (*CHP* 1.6.79-81)

And further, in his “Good night” to his native land, Byron writes,

And now I’m in the world alone,
Upon the wide, wide sea:
But why should I for others groan,
When none will sigh for me? (*CHP* 1.227-230)
The feelings of disenchantment and general distaste for all things English demonstrated in *CHP* are echoed in Byron’s letters with a little more specificity. In a letter to his mother from Falmouth, dated June 22, 1809, Byron laments his financial position and expresses no desire to remain in England:

“As to money matters, I am ruined—at least till Rochdale is sold; and if that does not turn out well, I shall enter into the Austrian or Russian service—perhaps the Turkish, if I like their manners. The world is all before me, and I leave England without regret, and without a wish to revisit any thing it contains, except *yourself*, and your present residence.

(qtd. in Prothero 225)

Expecting to have to join a foreign military and procure his own means, Byron was beset with various concerns that could easily contribute to his testiness. He was already disillusioned with England, as he writes to Hodgson from Falmouth, “I leave England without regret—I shall return to it without pleasure” (qtd. in Prothero 230). According to Byron’s mentor, Robert Charles Dallas, Byron commonly released his temperament directly into his writing: “Resentment, anger, hatred held full sway over him, and his gratification at that time was in overcharging his pen with gall that flowed in every direction” (qtd. in Macaulay 173).

For Portuguese critics, accounts of Byron’s distemper provide some evidence for the injustice of Byron’s account. Although Byron did return to England, and his distemper was not permanent, critics looking to exonerate the Portuguese easily transform Byron’s initial petulance into something more integral. Rose Macaulay, in *They Went to Portugal* (1946), considers dozens of famous English visitors from the perspective of the Portuguese, and she notes that alongside the more common explanations of Byron’s negative review “is the natural ill humor, ill manners and callow prejudice of a vulgar adolescent in a temper with life” (174). Not only does she present
his bad temper as “natural” to him and part of his adolescence, according to Macaulay, during Byron’s visit he was even worse than normal: “Byron was in Portugal at a bad moment . . . he conceived for the Portuguese one of his black rages, and spat at them in *Childe Harold* (and elsewhere) malevolent, contemptuous sneers” (168). Conceptualizing Byron as a sneering, malevolent character that tends toward “black rages” is an easy way to write off his negative assessment of Portugal, especially if it can be characterized as just one of many such rages.

Portuguese critic João Pinto de Carvalho, in his *Lisboa de Outrora* (1938), provides a similar description of Byron’s character, but also calls Byron reckless and lawless to help explain some of Byron’s actions in Portugal. He notes, “The inclinations of his heredity and the emotions of his sensibility propelled him in his exhaustive unruliness” (129). Furthermore, “Lord Byron observed the Portuguese through his distaining skepticism, and from his injured spleen” (136). Though perhaps not as harsh as Macaulay, Carvalho also relates Byron’s negative review to his emotional state, and he goes as far as to suggest that Byron’s “spleen” and “skepticism” are so fundamental to his character that they are directly related to both his Romantic sensibility and his blood heritage. Of the chameleon character traits associated with Byronism, the Portuguese latched on to an image of a contemptuously ranting and raving rogue Byron, who came from a long line of bad tempered ancestors.

The fact that Byron came from England also influenced both Byron’s expectations and the Portuguese reaction to his arrival. England’s negotiations with the French during the Treaty of Sintra had made the Portuguese a little less than hospitable to visits from insolent English gents. Different from Macaulay and Carvalho above, Alberto Telles associates Byron’s distemper with his unexpectedly bad reception in Portugal: “The help we had borrowed from England in the two recent campaigns [against French invasion] had excessively puffed Lord Byron’s pride” (Telles i). He apparently was not received in
a manner commensurate to his estimation of himself. A former BYU professor, Gordon Thomas, writes, “Byron would not comprehend this Portuguese attitude toward Englishmen, including himself. He apparently expected to be greeted in Lisbon as a liberating hero. . . Byron resented the mood of the city’s inhabitants” (12). As noted earlier, Byron recorded that English men were, in fact, being assassinated in the streets of Lisbon, which he took as proof of the Portuguese’s brazen disrespect.

Byron demonstrates some confusion as to why Englishmen were being assassinated, though he mentions in *CHP* the shame and folly of the Treaty of Sintra, which had been the final straw for many Portuguese, turning them against the English. Britain had been supporting the Portuguese in the Peninsular War against France and many Englishmen considered the Portuguese unworthy of help for religious reasons.

However, after the Treaty of Sintra the Portuguese felt betrayed because, as Thomas notes, “although the French had been totally defeated at Vimeiro, they were granted free passage on English ships back to France . . . they were allowed to keep their arms and all their plunder, even including such Portuguese national treasures as the St. Jerome Bible; and there was no provision against future French invasions” (11). Byron reflects extensively on the “shame” Sintra represented for the British, and says,

> And ever since that martial Synod met,  
> Britannia sickens, Cintra! at thy name;  
> And folks in office at the mention fret,  
> And fain would blush, if blush they could, for shame.  
> How will Posterity the deed proclaim!  
> Will not our own and fellow-nations sneer,  
> To view these champions cheated of their fame. (*CHP* 1.26.351-357)
However, Byron does not seem to recognize the effect of Sintra on the Portuguese’ view of England because, as noted above, one of his major complaints is their ingratitude (CHP 1.16.267-269).

Historical documents corroborate Byron’s account in this matter. The Portuguese were, generally speaking, ungrateful, feeling little to be grateful for. A proclamation against the English distributed in Porto and several other Portuguese cities in 1825 reads, “Our mortal enemies had heard from the mouth of our country, that Portugal was independent, and that her Children had already made the world dread, when the English people still had not passed beyond an order of savages!” The author furthermore chides the English for their “pride” in thinking themselves “so superior” to the Portuguese when “it is to them that they owe their own power and independence.”

History itself could document “scenes quite representative of the falseness and ingratitude of the English government and people, this monster who not content in having drunk our prosperity, wants still our blood, and to devour our national cadaver” (Proclamação 121). At least during Byron’s life, the Portuguese perspective on the British resembled the British perspective on them. Both felt they deserved more acquiescence from the other. Therefore, the Portuguese rejection of Byron’s work likely reflected their political perspectives on England as much as Byron’s account of them reflected English perspectives on Portugal.

Though many tensions emerged during the Napoleonic wars, the Portuguese already had a long, strained economic association with England that many Portuguese had been kicking against for some time. In a tract published in Spain 1762 and later translated into Portuguese in 1808, the anonymous author writes,

What has, however, most destroyed this state in our century, was the blind confidence that we had in an ambitious nation, envious of greatness, and power, that offers at first a hand for relief, and that oppresses
afterward with an infinity of arms. [. . .] England took entire advantage of the gold mines in Brazil; and Portugal was no more than a deliverer of its own riches. This state finds itself full of opulent English, who possess all of the riches of the kingdom, and no propriety remains for the Portuguese. (“Profecia” 45)

As a result of the economic decline in Portugal that many blamed on the English, by the nineteenth century the Portuguese notion of Britain’s international policy had solidified. Though the Portuguese-English alliance was the first formal European alliance, and it lasted well through the nineteenth century, the Portuguese generally held that it was always an economically one-sided relationship. Gomes Freire D’Andrade, in his 1883 treatise, translated The English Domination in Portugal: What it is and of what has the alliance with England served us, recounts the history of Portuguese/English relations as far back as the crusades, arguing on all counts that “the English alliance never brought Portugal more than toil, ruin, conflicts with other potentates, embarrassment and unhappiness, and that England vilifies us before Europe, making our country pass as one of their colonies” (D’Andrade 5). The inequality of the long-standing alliance between England and Portugal that was, as D’Andrade suggests, quasi-colonial, existed long before Byron’s visit and long after, and therefore influenced not only the way he was received in person but the future reception of his works.

By attacking Portugal for its dirtiness, disorder, poverty, and weakness, Byron was really committing an unpardonable sin in the eyes of the Portuguese, who felt that it was the English who had sapped them of their wealth and brought lawlessness and cowardice to their country. Alan K. Manchester, in his study on British Preeminence in Brazil, begins by analyzing the history of Luso-English relations and catalogues the various treaties that throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries favored the English more and more. Concerning one of the first major treaties between Portugal and
England, signed by Charles I in 1642, Manchester writes, “One searches in vain for an economic clause in behalf of the Portuguese. All they obtained was recognition of independence and England’s friendship, which was not a very stable commodity in 1642. . . . By the treaty of 1654 Portugal had become the virtual commercial vassal of England” (4, 16). Throughout the eighteenth century the commercial relationship between the two countries remained practically the same: English merchants had more guaranteed liberties in the Portuguese empire than the Portuguese themselves. Especially, then, when Portugal’s economy was in decline, English critiques must have seemed particularly aggravating. When Byron visited Lisbon, the Portuguese were particularly disgruntled because of Sintra, but their mixed feelings toward England certainly did not begin or end there.

Byron was by no means the only Englishman to offend the Portuguese in print. Many respectable Britons had written similarly distressing accounts of Portugal, including Robert Southey, 21 William Beckford, and James Murphey (Herculano 172). As D’Arcos writes, “While the English Romantics looked admiringly at the vanished glories of Portugal’s heroic past, they were scathing about its present state of penury and disorder” (qtd. in Moser, Byron 36). Alexandre Herculano, in fact, alongside his rebuttal to Byron’s critique, denounces all English tourist reviewers of Portugal as “condemnable retrogrades” and notes that “in England there is not one single fool that does not make a tourist book, and no arch-fool that does not make it about Portugal: these books and the sermons constitute the sum of their literature” 22 (89, 91). Herculano was not the only Portuguese critic to associate CHP with travel literature. In the first recorded Portuguese response to CHP, an anonymous author in the Investigador Português notes that “an absurd prejudice against the Portuguese character is deeply rooted in England,” and “there is a mixture of an obstinate, absurd prejudice against the Portuguese with a blind enthusiasm for the Spaniards (which disregards the light of reason).” Furthermore, “this
“preposterous prejudice” derives “from absurd books” mostly written by libelous travelers (Moser et al. 62). The Portuguese association of Byron’s poem with low-brow, unreliable, travel writing clearly demonstrates their low estimation of each, but it is also an anxious rhetorical tactic for defusing Byron’s caustic review by associating him personally with poor writers. Labeling all literature that assesses Portugal as “absurd books,” however, can only last as long as either the author’s obscurity or infamy. As Byron became more famous, calling him a poor writer could not longer explain his critiques.

The travelers who produced negative reviews were only a fraction of the English presence in Portugal, which included merchants, dignitaries, military, and a slew of pleasure-, health-, and adventure-seekers. The influence of these English residents in Portugal helps explain some of the Portuguese’ animosity that likely contributed to Byron’s experience. Robert Southey, during his visit to Portugal in 1796, noted, “The English here unite the spirit of commerce with the frivolous amusements of high life,” and furthermore, “the society of this place is very irksome. . . I cannot play with a lady’s fan and talk nonsense to her; and this is all the men here are capable of doing” (qtd. in Macaulay 145). Whereas Southey’s early accounts of Portugal resemble Byron’s, his opinions of English society in Portugal also reflect the Portuguese attitude toward the English, to which Byron became subject (perhaps deservedly). Portugal had become not only a destination for the actual rich, like William Beckford, but a popular retreat for the auspiciously upwardly mobile. According to Macaulay, “Lisbon at the turn of the century, and up to the French occupation which drove the English out, had reached its height as a resort of the English beau monde” (154). Therefore, along with the other political, economic, literary, and personal reasons the Portuguese might not like Byron, the general English community in Portugal already did not agree well with them.
Byron’s Celebrity Image in Portugal

Taking into account the historical context and Byron’s personal situation at the time he visited Lisbon, it is not difficult to envision *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* as a natural outgrowth of a brazen, troubled young man’s quick visit to a volatile, unfriendly, and impoverished country. Furthermore, the Portuguese’ negative reaction to Byron’s works is easily an understandable effect of his negative review of them. Altogether, the production and reception of *CHP* in Portugal seems like a textbook New Historicist case: various aspects of the context affect the text’s production; the text reacts and responds to the context; and the published text produces new negotiated effects on the social environment. Byron’s personal influence while he was in Portugal, however, also influenced the way his text was received. Perhaps because many of the things he wrote about Portugal were true or difficult to contest, most Portuguese responses to *CHP* focus more, or at least equally, on Byron’s character, his melancholy and libertinism, and his actions in Portugal than they do on the text. Byron became such a popular figure in Europe that in many ways his celebrity image overshadowed his works. He was, however, not yet famous when he visited Portugal, and though many accounts of him mix his later notoriety with anecdotal accounts of his actions in Lisbon, there is also evidence that some of his actions turned the Portuguese against him before he printed anything about them. The Portuguese critics’ focus on Byron’s character and actions demonstrates the potency of his celebrity image, which for the Portuguese was powerful enough to serve as a distraction from the real issues raised in *CHP*.

Byron in many ways must have fit the Portuguese’ stereotype of the English. As his letters evidence, his representations of them in *CHP* were reflections of his attitude while he was present, and the Portuguese, who were paying attention, were turned off by Byron, especially disgusted by his licentious manner and his general demeanor towards
them. Besides openly disliking Lisbon, the people, their religion, and their government, Byron acted with as much impudence in Portugal as anywhere. From his letter to Frances Hodgson from Lisbon, quoted at the beginning of this chapter, Byron seems to have been enjoying himself heartily in Portugal, including not only swimming the Tagus, visiting convents, and eating oranges, but also harassing monks, wielding his pistols in society, and swearing in Portuguese. Byron appears to have been brazenly gallivanting around Lisbon, with little care for appearances. He notes that with two Portuguese profanities and a phrase that means “Get an ass” he can easily deal with all the “pertinacious” Portuguese, and is, therefore, “universally understood to be a person of degree and a master of languages” (Marchand 215).

Byron’s promiscuity also became well known on his entire tour, as he “flirted and dallied with women of diverse nationalities” (Graham 2). In his first letter to his mother, from Gibraltar, he takes time to describe in detail the “two Spanish unmarried ladies” he lodged with, which apparently flattered his manliness (Marchand 219). Though he does not say anything about the Portuguese women, several Portuguese accounts, to be examined hereafter, indicate that he was just as much a libertine in Portugal. Macaulay, in fact, suggests that Byron may have disliked the Portuguese in part because their women rejected him (178). Independent of whether or not he was accommodated, the Portuguese public viewed him as a libertine and a haughty rogue.

Again, it is difficult to extract exactly how Byron acted from third-party accounts because of the popular blending of Byron with his later characters, but in terms of analyzing the Portuguese reaction to Byronism, exaggerations are as pertinent as the facts. From the first Portuguese reaction in print to CHP, the Portuguese associate Childe Harold with Byron when evaluating Byron’s character. The first rebuttal to CHP appeared on April 6, 1812, in the London-based, politically radical, Portuguese journal O Investigador Portuguez, and the anonymous author immediately identifies Byron with
the character Childe Harold, saying, “the Poet goes on to portray the Hero or Pilgrim, who is probably Lord Byron himself” (qtd. in Moser et al. 63). Associating Byron with Harold fits the author’s design because he immediately notes Harold’s licentiousness, attempting to undermine Byron’s ethos. After his translation of the second stanza, the author turns his critique of Childe Harold and Byron into a general critique of England, noting, “I stop here because this description actually becomes any young man living in those countries where parental control soon slackens, mainly in England where there are plenty of opportunities of indulging in vice” (qtd. in Moser et al. 63). Furthermore, though the author’s claims about Byron’s character are speculative, and in some cases juvenile,27 he guarantees the accuracy of his evaluation of Byron’s character: “Childe Harold characterized the Portuguese as he did not find them—we have characterized Childe Harold as he surely is. . . . Would to God that he had only pointed out true defects or vices we could remedy, instead of needlessly piling up lies and insults about us” (qtd. in Moser et al. 72).

Interestingly, the Portuguese association of Byron with his character, meant to undermine his critique of them, actually made it intractable. According to Peter Graham, Childe Harold was “ostensibly distinct from Byron,” and Byron’s narrators “embod[ied] values and attitudes . . . closer to what Byron would like his readers to imagine his own attitudes to be” (29-30). Even his narrators, however, as static characters, embodied intransient opinions that Byron himself often departed from in time. Throughout the publication process of CHP, Byron struggled against the popular belief that he and Harold were the same. In a letter to Hobhouse introducing the fourth canto, he finally gave in to the public:

I had become weary of drawing a line which every one seemed determined not to perceive[. . . . ] It was in vain that I asserted, and imagined that I had drawn a distinction between the author and the pilgrim; and the very
anxiety to preserve this difference, and disappointment at finding it unavailing, so far crushed my efforts in the composition that I determined to abandon it altogether—and have done so. (CHP IV.122)

Though Byron later purposefully embedded tantalizing allusions to his scandalous personal life in his creative works, Byron’s visit to Portugal is unique because if there were any misdeeds or any bait for scandal in his own visit to Portugal, he omitted it from Childe Harold’s visit. Furthermore, as Jerome McGann notes in his reading of CHP, the narrator in CHP changes through the course of the poem as the “poet comes forward in propria persona [. . .] living and moving before us” (35). According to McGann, the narrator’s self-discovery makes up the “content, message and form” of the poem and “the narrator gradually accedes to a prophetic office, but in the meantime he ‘enlightens’ us not as an oracle, but as an exemplum” (Reading 40). If the narrator of CHP can be compared to Byron himself, then, the narrator of canto four would be a much more accurate model, and the Portuguese Harold would be the worst possible model.

Even if the narrator in CHP does represent accurately how Byron felt about Portugal as late as 1812, Byron’s own attitudes were alterable, and by the time he had produced the second edition, his views of Portugal had begun to change. In a note to stanza 33 of the first canto of Childe Harold, Byron writes of the Portuguese, “That they are since improved, at least in courage, is evident.” Even before his visit, Byron demonstrated admiration for Portugal and its literature in his “Stanzas to a Lady, With the Poems of Camões,” and he was a well known admirer of Lord Strangford’s translation of the Portuguese epic poem Os Lusíadas. However, Childe Harold’s perspective on the Portuguese proved more static than Byron likely intended, as did the association between Harold and himself, and so Byron’s disgust with the Portuguese, which existed in his real life for a short time, became a permanent aspect of the
Portuguese’s Byronic man, complicating the reception of his text for the Portuguese ever since.

Portuguese notions of Byron’s character, then, developed both before and after the publication of *CHP*. Furthermore, no matter how *CHP* affected Byron’s image in Portugal, he was already sufficiently infamous to stifle his reception there—and at a time when his works energized the rest of Europe. According to Jerome McGann, *Childe Harold* as a book is in direct response to the injustices Byron witnessed in Europe. It responds to “the wider context of the European political theatre” and “involves the question of personal and political freedom” (*Book* 268). Considering the political situation in Portugal during the first half of the nineteenth century, Byron’s work should have been socially kairotic for the Portuguese; but to the Portuguese, Byron was the epitome of English brashness and vice. They resented his personal manner first, and later, his description of them, though few of them ever read it. F. de Mello Moser demonstrates the combined effect of Byron’s visit with his writing, saying, “Byron could not be accepted for quite some time: for the nationalist politicians of the Romantic-Liberal period, he had offended the country; to the more conservative, not to say puritan-minded, he was of too scandalous a reputation to be accepted” (136). The poem offended Portugal’s national pride and Byron’s personality offended their sensibilities.

São Carlos and the Portuguese Rejection of Byron

Since the publication of *CHP*, critics have picked apart the content of the poem and examined the cultural context of its publication in an attempt to explain its unprecedented popularity. As Nicholas Mason notes in his outstanding article on Byron and nineteenth-century advertising, “In recent decades . . . critics have become increasingly skeptical of the idea that the text sold itself and have begun to explore the material factors that helped it become a best-seller,” including the work of Peter J.
Manning, Jerome Christensen, and Andrew Elfenbein (414-15). Considering the frantic sell-out of the first edition of *CHP*, Mason writes, “The real story of *Childe Harold I and II* is not so much one of a text speaking to its age as one of a marketing-savvy publisher and a poet with a flair for self-promotion converging at an ideal moment in literary and advertising history” (425).

The poem’s merit alone could not have inspired such a frenzy of buyers so fast—five-hundred copies sold in three days. Therefore, Murray’s advertising attempts and the circulation of Byron’s public image played an undeniable role in the poem’s initial success in England. Byron’s sales in England after the initial publication of *CHP*, however, reflect an amalgamation of the potency of his celebrity image, the poignancy of his works’ contemporaneity, and his literary notoriety, created through advertising and earlier publications. Byron’s image was powerful, but, especially after *CHP*, the familiarity of his works and the strength of his poetic genius make it difficult to isolate the social power of his image from the other forces that contributed to his success.

Byron’s rejection in Portugal represents a special case in which at least some of the contextual forces affecting Byron’s success in England are not present. Particularly, there was no advertising for Byron in Portugal prior to the publication of *CHP*, or before his visit, and none of his prior works had been translated. He had no literary fame. Furthermore, though it seems obvious that the Portuguese were significantly influenced by the content of the poem, most responses to Byron ignore the details of the poem and focus on Byron’s popular image. Portuguese responses to *CHP*, in fact, identify a particular event in Byron’s visit as the moment of dissatisfaction that turned Byron against them and them against Byron.

Despite Byron’s juvenile moodiness and the problematic English-Portuguese relations, both of which emerge in the verse of canto one, the incident fixed upon by the Portuguese as the explanation for Byron’s appraisal appears essentially outside the
poem. Though accounts differ, one evening on his way to the São Carlos Theater, Byron was accosted by several men. In a note to stanza twenty-one, Byron refers to the incident as further evidence of the Portuguese lawlessness and insolence toward the English:

I was once stopped in the way to the theatre at eight o’clock in the evening, when the streets were not more empty than they generally are at that hour, opposite to an open shop, and in a carriage with a friend: had we not fortunately been armed, I have not the least doubt that we should have ‘adorned a tale’ instead of telling one. (CHP 1.21.269 note)

Most Portuguese responses to Byron cite a version of this mysterious, violent encounter, which certainly seems would contribute to Byron’s negative feelings about the Portuguese.29 Interestingly, though Byron’s account seems injurious to the Portuguese, the São Carlos incident has proven to be the focal point of Byron’s infamy in Portugal ever since. Though some Portuguese recount the incident because it helps explain Byron’s negative assessment of them, most Portuguese used the story to illustrate Byron’s faulty character and exculpate their own.

The popular account holds that Byron’s unpleasant encounter outside São Carlos was a result of his promiscuity. In his 1879 work, *Lord Byron em Portugal*, Alberto Telles sums up the story: “It is generally believed that this notable humorist was spanked, one night, upon leaving the S. Carlos. How and why does not appear easy for me to guess. It is believed, however, that it was through the zealousness of a serious husband” (Telles 51).30 Earlier and later references to the account of an incensed husband attacking Byron “for making advances to his wife” include João de Lemos’s *Cancioneiro* (1859, 243), D. G. Dalgado’s *Lord Byron’s Pilgrimage to Portugal critically examined* (1919), Fernandes Costa’s *Almanaque Bertrand* (1921, 227), and Constantino dos Santos’s note in A. Sergio’s *Sketch of the History of Portugal* (n. d.) (Macaulay 168). According to F. de Mello Moser, past president of the Portuguese Byron society, the
Lisbon press reported Byron’s encounter as the justifiable result of his flirtations with a married woman. He uses as an example an excerpt from a poem written by João de Lemos, later included in Lemos’s famous three-volume *Cancioneiro*:

Of our manner and wits you complained
Because husbands were on the look-out
So that virtue was safe and not stained,
Whereas you were beaten about. (trans. in Moser 136)³¹

By focusing on Byron’s libertine character in the accounts, the Portuguese make the violence of the attack justifiable, and even a demonstration of manliness. Furthermore, for Portuguese authors trying to isolate a reason for Byron’s critique without damaging their national pride, Byron getting beat up because of his own licentiousness, and then unfairly hating the Portuguese, is a fairly satisfactory explanation.³²

On another level, and in parallel fashion, the Portuguese version of the São Carlos account works to justify the Portuguese against Byron’s entire account by showing how circumstances that are really exonerative will be vilified by a wicked author. The reprehensibility of Byron’s actions provides evidence that his writing is equally bad—the tree and the fruit. Lemos challenges Byron on the connection between São Carlos and his entire representation of the Portuguese:

Why do you lie in this way? Why do you
Cast to the winds of the earth our fame as such?
Vengeance?! And are these vengeances of a Lord?!
What blame does Portugal have in your vices?! (243) ³³

Then, after he refers to the São Carlos encounter already quoted above, Lemos continues:

Is it for this that our people are slaves?!
But what would be the mode you would like to see?
Husbands would be perhaps less brave? 

Women would be perhaps more liberal? (243).  

At least for João de Lemos, Byron’s libertinism is evidence enough to discount his critique. Even Alberto Telles, however, whose goal is to reclaim Byron for the Portuguese, writes, “If perhaps—which is not good to think—some time the elevation of this great, but arrogant and disdainful, genius taxes our enthusiasm, there is the traditional account of São Carlos to console. We laugh and close the book. This suffices” (viii). Despite all of the other possible influences on Byron’s composition and explanations of his caustic review, the São Carlos account is the only one that sufficiently exculpates the Portuguese, but it relies on Byron’s personality being licentious and promiscuous, not to mention “arrogant” and “disdainful.” In fact, from the Portuguese perspective, Byron’s own account of the incident proves to be a ploy to misdirect the reader and obscure Byron’s wantonness, as Telles writes, “Lord Byron tried to color this failing in the note to stanza XXI of Childe Harold about the assassinations in Lisbon” (Telles 52).  

There are several competing versions of the São Carlos events that surface in Portuguese literature, but the account of the brave husband beating Byron is understandably the most prevalent because it is most flattering to the Portuguese self-image. Though often only contested or repeated as a matter of speculation in studies on Byron’s life or works, it is still the version that most often appears in English as well. Even though some accounts do not allude to Byron’s libertinism, and are therefore not as potent, the second most common account performs a similar function of discrediting Byron’s reputation or tainting his image to clear the Portuguese. João Carvalho (Tinop), after cataloguing all the accounts of the attack known to him, writes:  

Although proof is lacking, the tradition which holds that Byron was cudgeled by a quarrelsome coachman is plausible if we take into account
the impudence of the coachmen nowadays, and also the presumable drunkenness on such an occasion, of the petulant poet, for whom drunkenness represented a duty.\(^{39}\) (Hooker 139)

Noting that the coachmen of that day were generally uncouth reflects negatively upon Portugal, but the extenuating rumor that Byron himself was likely inebriated balances the blame. In this case, Byron is at least equally responsible for being accosted as the Portuguese coachman is for the offence, making Byron’s larger criticisms of the Portuguese unjustified. After all, it is not fair to blame others for what happens while one is drunk. Again, whether drinking, rabble rousing, or eyeing the ladies, Byron fits into the Portuguese stereotype of English insolence. Both of the most widely known versions of São Carlos helped publicize the poet’s negative popular image in Portugal and utilized the negative impression he had left as a scapegoat to make his criticisms innocuous.

A few other accounts do not deprecate Byron’s character so overtly, but they continue to use the attack as an explanation for Byron’s critiques.\(^{40}\) The number of accounts alone is significant because they represent published notice of Byron in Portugal, which has always been rare. The number of references in Portuguese literature to Byron being accosted on the streets of Lisbon is far greater than all translations of Byron’s verse into Portuguese in Portugal. Byron’s actions while in Portugal were more interesting to the Portuguese than any or all of his literary works. The Portuguese focused and still focus on Byron’s popular image as a primary indicator of his worth, or worthlessness as the case may be.

Aside from Byron’s personal visit to Portugal and the image he created for himself there by drinking, swearing, gallivanting with pistols, and seducing married women, many other factors contributed to Byron’s rejection in Portugal, several of which have been considered already, like the tensions between the English and Portuguese governments and religions. Even though the Portuguese seem to downplay the negative
effects of *CHP*, Byron’s critique of them must account for a large portion of the Portuguese’ dislike of Byron. How much influence, then, did Byron’s image really have in Portugal before he published *CHP*? First, as mentioned, the large number of accounts of his visit compared to the sparse number of translations of his works suggests that in terms of social energy, his image had more selling power. Second, the continuation of Byron’s failure to achieve a Portuguese audience for nearly two centuries demonstrates the seriousness of the offence the Portuguese took, a severity that, despite Byron’s burning critiques, seems disproportionate to the content of the poem.

Several recent Portuguese critics have noticed the seeming discrepancy between what Byron wrote and how the Portuguese responded. Luís de Sousa Rebelo, for instance, in his comparison of “Rushdie, Byron and Eliot,” notes,

> Today the majority are acquainted with the Lusian resentment against the poet, who judged us depreciatingly. Many rivers of ink have already flowed over the subject with the patriotic objective of polishing the national luster. The truth, however, is that the judgments he emitted about England were much more aggressive and violent. And that should suffice to placate the ardor of our wounds.⁴¹ (92)

Byron critiqued many other countries harshly in writing, in fact, but none responded as defiantly as Portugal. Almeida Garrett, a Portuguese Romantic; Alberto Telles, a Victorian era critic; and D. G. Dalgado,⁴² a Modernist, all tried to recover Byron for the Portuguese, but their efforts did not take, as evidenced by the most recent Byronic movement in Portugal. In 1977, with the beginning of the Byron Society in Portugal, British educated F. de Mello Moser published *Byron Portugal 1977*, in which he considers several ways in which Portugal might finally be ready to accept Byron scholarship. Moser notes “how strangely absent [Byron] had been for so many years from [the Portuguese] curriculum” (*Byron* 13). D’Arcos, a contemporary Byron scholar
with Moser, notes that Byron’s lines in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* “still wound what remains of our national pride like a red-hot blade” (Moser, *Byron* 30). Since Moser’s optimistic foray, little if anything has been published on Byron in Portugal. The few works published in English about Byron’s influence in Portugal have also not been geared to a Portuguese audience in any way. Though Byron’s critique was scathing in many regards, it was also balanced with high praise, making the Portuguese reaction to it seem excessive.

Besides the impressive longevity of the Portuguese dislike for Byron, closer to Byron’s own day, the Portuguese resisted his poetry through the most volatile political times of their history, when the politics of Byron’s poetry were best suited to gain their favor. The Peninsular War (1807-10) and the Royal Family’s departure to Brazil (1807-21) inspired various political groups to espouse liberal political ideas about democracy, which were intensified by the loss of Brazil (1822), the 1820 Revolution, and several counter revolutions (Moser 132). According to Trueblood, “More than any other major Romantic poet, Byron’s political poetry . . . reflects the revolutionary upheaval of the peoples all over the Continent seeking political freedom and national identity” (201). For many liberal groups in other countries, Byron’s political writings became a mantra, like the Decembrists in Russia (Diakonova and Vacuro 146), but for the Portuguese the social energies Byron’s works could have embodied were nullified by his personal offence followed by his mixed review. Moser writes, “One cannot help thinking what an inspiring symbol Byron could easily have become among the Liberal party in general but for the fact that he had aroused the resentment of many Portuguese patriots against him” (132). Again, the intensely negative reaction of the Portuguese to Byron, despite his works’ powerful relevance to them, illustrates the potency of the negative impression he left on them during his visit.
The influence of Byron’s visit to Portugal is also apparent in his treatment during Portugal’s own Romantic period, which began in 1825. According to Diakonova and Vacuro, in Russia several Romantic critics saw Byron as a “genius who had wantonly broken all literary conventions and a powerful personality of stormy passions and tragic fate” (145). In Brazil nearly every major Romantic wrote on and translated Byron, but in Portugal, though a few liberal poets favored Byron’s politics and style, reference to his scandalous image and his offensive visit resurfaced with any printed notice of him. Alexandre Herculano, one of three major figures in Portuguese Romanticism, remained hostile to Byron and wrote pejoratively about the São Carlos incident on several occasions (Moser 135). One other major Portuguese Romantic poet, Almeida Garrett, admitted in a letter to a friend that the “style” of his key work, Camões, was “molded on that of Byron and Scott” (qtd. in Moser 138), but the main influence of Byron on Garrett, like Herculano, comes from Byron’s image and not his text. Garrett’s most direct references to Byron in Camões refer not to Byron’s style, but to his heroic and tragic death. Garrett’s perspective on Byron provides an interesting contrast to the other Portuguese Romantics because he focuses on Byron’s heroic, liberal, cosmopolitan image while the rest of Portugal envisions a libertine, melancholy, patently English Byron. Like the rest of the Portuguese audience of CHP, however, Garrett also associates Harold’s critiques with Byron’s image. In a reference to Byron’s poem in Camões, Garrett tries to defuse the Portuguese animosity toward Byron’s texts by encouraging the Portuguese to forgive Byron:

The description of the arrival in Lisbon, etc., in Byron’s splendid poem Childe Harold is worth looking up. The Portuguese reader will find there something not very flattering to our national self-respect: but bear it patiently, for the injustice of the noble lord is not, after all, so very great. (qtd. in Moser 139)
Though he emphasizes the poetry, Garrett implies that Lord Byron’s personal act of defaming Portugal must be forgiven in order to accept his work. By referring to Byron’s death and his “injustice” to the Portuguese, Garrett also focuses on Lord Byron’s persona before his work, associating Childe Harold’s calumny of the Portuguese with the living voice of Byron. Garrett does not note the São Carlos incident, but by calling Byron’s offense “not, after all, so very great” Garrett’s reference further supports the idea that Byron’s image played a large part in his rejection in Portugal.

Finally, Byron’s widespread notoriety in Portugal, despite the fact that very few of his works were ever translated or published in Portugal, demonstrates the potency of his visit and the Byronic image it helped engender. Though Herculano and Garrett were familiar with many of Byron’s works, the average reader was not familiar with Byron’s text in the least. Byron was so shunned after his visit that most Portuguese that ever read Byron read Benjamin de la Roche’s 1837 French translation, further evidence that his critiques in CHP were not the main cause, or at least the recognized cause, of his rejection. No one in Portugal bothered translating more than a few short excerpts of his works.\textsuperscript{44} Evidenced in the number and tone of the São Carlos accounts, however, Byron’s Portuguese’ image apparently provided the Portuguese with enough ammo to indefinitely seal Byron’s fate in Portugal. Edgard Santos Mattos writes, “In Portugal there may be those among literary people who do not know \textit{Don Juan} or \textit{Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage}, but there is no one even among the unlearned who has not heard of Byron’s being confronted (if he really was!) by the violence of an outraged husband outside the Teatro São Carlos” (Thomas ix). The seemingly hyperbolic reaction of the Portuguese to CHP and their continuing resistance to his works, then, is further evidence that Byron’s influence in Portugal was significantly based on the impression he left in person in 1809.

For the Portuguese, Byron’s text is an extension of his personality, and the Portuguese considered his text only in connection with the man—whom they disliked.
One of the requirements of Byron’s reinstatement in Portugal, according to Moser, is a departure from the original Portuguese image of Byron for an understanding of the actual Byron: “Byron gains in depth, as well as in present-day appeal, when we replace the nineteenth-century daemonic man and myth by an objective study of the man” (Byron 17). Besides demonstrating the importance of Byron’s image for the Portuguese, and Byron’s nineteenth-century audience in general, Moser’s challenge to the Portuguese to relinquish the myth of Byron for the “man” represents the predominant twentieth-century perspective on Byron studies.45 However, it is precisely the “daemonic man” that the Portuguese repudiated so strongly, the celebrity image of Byron, that carried Byron’s cultural potency in Brazil. As much as any of the other Portuguese references to Byron, the fact that F. de Mello Moser, past president of the Byron Society of Portugal, considered Byron’s mythic image the stymie to Portuguese acceptance of him, and not Byron’s critique in Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage, demonstrates the extent of his visit’s effect and the power his image had over his works. The powerful, necessary negotiation between his text and his fame determined Byron’s success or failure in both the European continent and in the Americas.
José de Alencar, in his *How and Why I Am A Novelist (Como e Porque Sou Romancista)*, explains the general Byronic fervor of his days as a student at the São Paulo Academy:

In 1845 the temptation to be a writer returned to me: but this year was consecrated to a mania that propagated itself as *Byronization*.[or to *Byronize*]. Every student with any imagination wanted to be a Byron, and had as an inexorable destiny to copy or translate the English bard. . . . Thus I never produced any quick pieces, in which I created the hero or even the author, since I diverted myself by writing them with the name of Byron, Hugo, or Lamartine. . . . It was a desecration to the illustrious poets to attribute to them verses of my confection. . . . What intimate satisfaction did I not have, when a student . . . reread with enthusiasm one of these poesies, seduced with out doubt by the name of the pseudo-author.46
As Alencar notes, 1845 was a monumental year for Byron in Brazil, but two decades after Byron’s death seems a bit late for Byron to catch on in Brazil. Portugal’s unremitting rejection of Byron explains, in part, why his influence seems to have arrived so late in Brazil, since Brazil was a colony of Portugal until 1822. The postcolonial relationship between Brazil and Portugal thereafter makes the explosion of interest in Byron simultaneously an act of rebellion against Portugal and a move toward European modernity. In fact, Brazil’s Romantic period does not officially begin until 1836, but since Byron’s image had become even more pervasive in the decades after his death than it was during his life, the Byronic hero easily became the icon of Romanticism for emergent Brazilian poets in the 1830s, ’40s, and ’50s.

Besides alluding to the Byronic movement that took over Brazilian Romanticism during his day, Alencar’s confession demonstrates a tendency illustrative of many would-be Brazilian Romantics to imitate Byron’s image to the extent of stifling their own creativity. Also captured in the catch phrase “O Mal Byronico” (“The Byronic Malady”), Byron was both incredibly inspirational and yet in many ways problematic to Brazilian Romantics. Though most Brazilian critics refer to “O Mal Byronico” as a movement in Brazilian Romanticism that demonstrates overblown Byronic sensibilities—disillusionment, attraction to death, tendency toward drunkenness, anti-social behavior, and extreme sentimentality and despondency—, the problems that the popularization of Byron’s image meant for Brazilian Romanticism extend beyond his individual influence on a few young poets. By the time his influence arrived in Brazil, Byron had become the quintessential image of European Romanticism. Through his travels, politics, and especially his death, Byron had also become famous as a cosmopolitan. Though few would consider Byron anything but destabilizing to European tradition, for Brazil, Byron embodied a hegemonic European literary tradition and a generally cosmopolitan world.
view that was subversive to the nationalistic aims of their nascent Brazilian Romanticism.

Byron’s influence in Brazil was so powerful and controversial that he has been referenced in nearly every critical text and anthology of Brazilian literature at the heart of Brazilian Romanticism and the beginning of Brazil’s national literature. Besides examining Byron’s rise to popularity in Brazil and the scope of his influence, this chapter presents some new considerations of ways in which Byron’s image embodies the underlying conflict between nationalism and cosmopolitanism in Brazilian Romanticism. Specifically, in a newly-independent Brazil, the dominance and pervasiveness of Lord Byron’s image as a cosmopolitan and a Romantic ironically represent the promise of failure in Romantic poetic inspiration, the continuing European intellectual imperialism embedded in Brazilian literature, and the disguised presence of English power checking the fledging nation.

Byron the Cosmopolitan?

In the dedication to Don Juan, Byron expresses his cosmopolitan mentality, charging the Lake Poets with an insular world view, as he says, “which makes me wish you’d change your lakes for ocean” (Dedication 5, 40, 374). In an era dominated by emerging nationalism, Byron was known throughout Europe and has been known since as “one of Romanticism’s last world citizens” (Daly part IV). His adventures throughout Europe and the wide circulation of his works made him more influential on the Continent than in Britain (Russell 746), and his open disillusionment with Britain, permanent exile, and death on a foreign battlefield only seem to further separate Byron from the growing nineteenth-century Nationalist fervor. The famous Russian Romantic Aleksandr Pushkin, for example, when he foreswore Byron did it as part of an intentional move away from cosmopolitanism toward Russian nationalism. As Monika Greenleaf
notes, to become a “politically responsible national writer; not a deracinated, familyless, cosmopolitan,” as many considered Byron to be (384). Byron’s internationally set works, like Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage and Don Juan, only further reinforce his supposed cosmopolitanism.

As usual, however, Byron muddies the waters, differentiating himself and his major characters from the popular eighteenth-century notion of cosmopolitanism, with a measure of dandyism. His epigraph in the beginning of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage from Le Cosmopolite, “The universe is a kind of book, one only reads the first page when one hasn’t traveled out of one's own country,” rather than introducing a work that follows in the enlightenment cosmopolitan tradition, actually serves as an ironic starting point for a poem more about the character Childe Harold, his eccentricities and individuality, than any idealized, universalizing world consciousness. Furthermore, being an expatriate does not preclude Byron’s ability to develop patently nationalistic themes and ideas in his works or demonstrate them in his life. According to Bertrand Russell, “Byron was a protagonist” of the “principle of nationality,” which was “the most vigorous of revolutionary principles” and favored by most Romantics (Russell 683, 678). His political activism, especially in Italy and Greece, further establishes Byron as a nationalist.

At least two recent studies of Byron’s political ideology and world view respond to this apparent contradiction and focus on the negotiation between nationalism and cosmopolitanism in his life and works. Peter Graham argues that even though Byron speaks as an expatriate, he mixes cosmopolitanism with patriotism throughout Don Juan. Expanding upon Graham’s essay, Kirsten Daly notes that “Unlike his cosmopolitan predecessors, Byron situates himself as a nationalized subject and distances himself from the ideal of an Olympian perspective by openly acknowledging his affiliation to Britain—where, however, the affinity is subject to considerable ironisation” (part IV). According
to Daly, Byron presents cosmopolitanism as an “implied model” which he negotiates “through the perspective of irony,” which “allows him to uphold Enlightenment values whilst also signaling his historical distance from them” (190). As a result of his ironic voice, Byron is able to distance himself from both ideologies, and instead of representing nationalism or cosmopolitanism, Byron embodies the conflict and negotiation between them. This, in part, explains why Byron might be closely associated with the debate between these ideologies.

On the other hand, despite what modern critics may determine in retrospect about Byron’s politics from reading his writings, the more one-sided notions of his contemporaries, like Pushkin, better reflect his popular image. The fact that, according to Daly and Graham, Byron’s worldview toyed with both Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism, only opens him up as a vehicle for either ideology. In Brazil Cosmopolitanism was a major source of cultural tension, negotiation, and hence “social energy”; and Byron, mythologized as he was, became associated with cosmopolitanism, therefore becoming current, controversial, and significant at the heart of Brazilian Romanticism.

The beginnings of Brazilian Romanticism correspond, within a decade, to Brazil’s independence from Portugal and are, therefore, fueled with nationalistic fervor. The reaction against cosmopolitanism in the first generation of Brazilian Romantics is part of a natural reaction against European intellectual colonization and representative of a general trend in postcolonial countries. According to Brandt Corstius, cosmopolitanism was a “primarily European affair” and indicated “that a literature took part in an international literary fashion” (386). Especially for emerging postcolonial nations, cosmopolitanism “could easily become a danger to the originality of the literature concerned,” and writers in North and South America closely associated their originality with the essence of their new nationalism (386). Lawrence Bell, in “American Literary
Emergence as a Postcolonial Phenomenon,” demonstrates how North America reacted against cosmopolitanism, noting that the “American Renaissance” was largely a reaction to foreign control and a foray into literary autonomy (412). In an effort to establish a distinct sense of nationhood through a “national literature,” Romantic anticolonial nationalists, according to Pollock, emphasized “a family of ideas all of which, in the end, connected identities to imaginations of place: home, boundary, territory, and roots,” all in an effort to break away from multiple facets of European hegemony (578-79).

The trend toward “literary autonomy” and away from “European hegemony” cannot, however, be said to be universal or comprehensive in postcolonial nations. There are always those who side with tradition. If all Brazilian poets agreed on the same poetics, politics, and cultural heritage, there would be no social energy underlying the advent of their national literature. Many of the second generation of Brazilian Romantics almost rebelliously embraced the European themes, modes, and styles the first generation had struggled to escape. One would expect, however, that the Romantics advocating a return to European modes would turn to Pope, Johnson, Addison, and so forth, not Byron. Demonstrating one of the various transformations Byron underwent in Brazil, however, Byron’s image became the embodiment of all things European.

The ideological division between Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism underlying Brazilian Romanticism and its relationship to Byron’s image is best exemplified in the work of Álvares de Azevedo, who was the foremost Brazilian Byronist, the most famous Romantic of the second generation, and also the most notably influenced by European ideas. Corrêa de Oliveira, one of Azevedo’s colleagues, illustrates Azevedo’s cosmopolitan perspective and Byron’s part in it: “His poetry, embellished in the aromas of the Byronic school, was not inspired from our home fires. The harmonies of our skies, the aromas of our soil did not offer his burning soul more than an almost lifeless spectacle; they were as if pale marvels, before which the poet would not bend.” Far from being an anomaly,
Azevedo was the most prominent figure of an entire movement of cosmopolitan Brazilian Romantics self titled the “Escola Byroniana,” who consciously imitated Byron’s cosmopolitan image. They were keen on all things European and gathered in a lodge they referred to as “The English House.” Besides idealizing Byron as a cosmopolitan and striving after the kind of modernity his image represented to them, Brazilian Byronists turned him into the icon of their Romanticism, even their muse. In the end, however, even the “Byronic School” did not exhibit a consistently cosmopolitan poetics. How could they, after all, look to Europe and to Byron as their inspiration when European Romanticism dismantles its own heritage and Byron writes in Don Juan, “My muse despises reference”? (14, 54, 430). As Gerome McGann notes, Byron’s text constantly examines and critiques “the ways that culture—that is to say ideology, that is to say false consciousness—enlists works of imagination to its causes” (Byron 8). But turning “poetic tales into forms of worship” is exactly what happened to Byron’s image in Brazil. The extent to which many second-generation Romantics idolized Byron demonstrates the connection between the intense social energy his image had gained in Brazil and the ideological schizophrenia that placed him fittingly as its symbolic figurehead.

Byron as Myth and Muse

Álvares de Azevedo was the Brazilian Romantic most influenced by Lord Byron, and his long “Byronic” poem, O Conde Lopo, demonstrates Byron’s central position in Brazilian Romanticism and his exaggerated status as a Brazilian Byronic idol. In Europe during Byron’s own life he realized that his image had become a commodity over which he not longer had control. Two decades after his death, across the Atlantic, and in Portuguese, there were even fewer restraints to keep Byron’s image from growing to literally mythic proportions. In an “Invocation” before canto III, Azevedo conjures Byron as his muse:
I

Soul of fire, heart of flames,
Alma de fogo, coração de lavas,
Mysterious Britain with ardent dreams
Misterioso Bretão de ardentes sonhos
You shall be my muse—high poet
Minha musa serás—poeta altivo
Of the tempestuous Albion,
Das brumas de Albion, fronte acendida
    forehead resplendent
In turbid fervor!—to thee therefore,
Em turbido ferver!—a ti portanto,
Errant troubadour of soul disconsolate,
Errante trovador d’alma sombria,
Of my poem the delirious verses.
Do meu poema os delirantes versos.

II

Thou wert a poet, Byron! The howling wave
Fôste poeta, Byron! A aonda uivando
Calmed thee to reverie—and the wind song
Embalo-te o cismar—e ao som dos ventos
From the sylvan fibers of thy harp
Das selváticas fibras de tua harpa
Freed a roar amongst lamentation.
Exalou-se o rugir entre lamentos!

III

Of enormous inspiration thy ardent voice
De infrene inspiração a voz ardente
As the gallop of the Ukrainian coarser
Como o galope do corcel da Ucrânia
In feverish torrents that inundate the breast
Em corrente febril que alaga o peito
Whose heart is not stolen away—to read thee?
A quem não rouba o coração—ao ler-te?
Thou wert Aristotle in the flow of thy verse,
Fôste Arisoto no correr dos versos,
Thou wert Dante in thy tenebrous song,
Fôste Dante no canto tenebroso,
Camões in thy love and Tasso in thy tenderness, Camões no amor e Tasso na doçura,
Thou wert a poet Byron!
Fôste poeta Byron!
IV

To thee my song thence—singer of the wounds  A ti meu canto pois—cantor das mágoas
Of profound agony!—to thee my hymns, De profunda agonia!—a ti meus hinos,
Poet of torment—soul slumbering Poeta da tormenta—alma dormida
To the sound of the roaring of the beasts of the ocean,
Sublime bard of stormy Britain! Bardo sublime das Britâncias brumas!

Though acting as if to laud Byron’s poetry, the main focus of Azevedo’s encomium is the image of Byron as a Romantic poet. Azevedo does not refer to any of Byron’s works or even say anything definite about his style or what makes his poems good. The emphasis in Azevedo’s verse is on Byron’s physical and intellectual characteristics, his “soul disconsolate,” “heart of flames,” “enormous inspiration,” “ardent voice,” and “resplendent forehead.” He paints a clear picture of Byron as the prophet/bard—“singer of the wounds,” “Britain with ardent dreams,” “poet of torment” who sings a “wind song” from “sylvan fibers of thy harp” and steals away the hearts of all those who read. He aligns Byron with all the great famous poets of past eras, whose fame also, by the nineteenth-century, played an important role in their continuing popularity. Beyond the many European works that incorporated Byron as a fictionalized character, Azevedo turns Byron into a muse—figuratively if not also literally, a form of worship.

Azevedo’s representation of Byron in O Conde Lopo symbolizes the larger Byronic cultural movement during his day, which looked to Byron’s text only as a vehicle for the Byronic Romantic image they already emulated. Many Brazilian Romantics sought to imitate Byron’s literary style, but more often and energetically they mimicked
his lifestyle, or the Byronic lifestyle as they saw it. Imitating Byron’s image, however, was a far-reaching trend, as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow noted, “Minds that could not understand his beauties could imitate his great and glaring defects. Souls that could not fathom his depths, could grasp the straw and bubbles that floated upon the surface, until at length, every city, town and village had its little Byron” (Rutherford 18). The commodification of Byron’s image implied in this duplication was common throughout Europe. Like his many other imitators, the Brazilian Romantics made no distinction between the Byronic hero and Byron the man in their duplications, but they went far beyond dressing like Byron, acting disillusioned, and writing sentimental rubbish (which they might attribute, as Alancar did, to Byron himself). As in Azevedo’s encomium, the Brazilian Byronic culture endowed Byron’s image with saint-like attributes (“heart of flames” and “resplendent forehead”) and conducted Manfredesque macabre rituals in the name of Byron, taking their cues from Byron’s more gothic works and rumors from his own life. The extreme and often anti-social behavior of the Byronic School easily helped mark Byron as a negative social influence. Perhaps more significantly, this exaggerated adoration of Byron’s image represented a subversive counter-voice in Brazil’s developing national literature that reeked of European cosmopolitanism.

In 1866, little more than a decade after Azevedo’s life ended, Machado de Assis, besides being Brazil’s major novelist, was also an important poet and critic of the third generation of Romantics. He coined the catch phrase “O Mal Byronico” or “The Byronic Malady,” as a description of Byron’s influence in the prior decade:

There was a day in which Brazilian poetry became infected by the Byronic malady; great was the seduction of juvenile imaginations by the English poet; everything converged toward this dominating influence: the originality, his moral sickness, the profusion of his genius, the romance of
his life, the Italian nights, the adventures in England, the Guiccioli affairs, and even his death. \(^{50}\) (qtd. in Magalhães Junior 39)

Assis’s statement, while reflecting Byron’s “dominating influence” in Brazilian letters, demonstrates a similar trend in Brazil as was the case in Portugal, where Byron’s personal life accounted for as much as or more of his fame than his actual works. Byron’s “originality” and his “genius” are the only Byronic influences Assis lists that are patently literary. “The Byronic Malady” did affect the subject, tone, style, and most apparently, the characters portrayed in Brazilian Romantic poetry. However, “juvenile imaginations” were transfixed by the romance of Byron’s life, his affairs, and his heroic death; therefore, even the influences Byron had on Brazilian literature come more from the legends of his personal life than from his writings (as if the two could be separated).

Furthermore, Byronism was far more than a stylistic innovation in Brazilian poetry. His influence extended far beyond the literary imagination referred to by Assis to a moral and practical following in which not only the poetry, but also the poets became “sick.”

The “Byronic School” or “escola Byroniana,”\(^{51}\) inspired legends of secret societies, macabre cemetery rituals, poetic drunkenness, and moral libertinism, often referred to collectively as “Byronic Orgies” or “Orgias Byronicas.” Despite the questionable authenticity of many of the more horrific accounts, Brazilian literary scholars agree that the lifestyle and mood of second-generation poets broke dramatically with the prior generations. According to Douglas Tufano, they turned to their own interior selves for inspiration, rather than society. Their verses demonstrated extreme pessimism and disenchantment with life, focusing on “death, loneliness, tedium, sadness, and melancholy.” Characteristically they were young and died young, and their poetry was often “artificial and full of exaggerated sentimentalism, and demonstrated little artistic work” (82). Álveres de Azevedo is generally considered to have initiated the second generation,\(^{52}\) and he was the poet most influenced by the “Byronic Philosophy” or
“Filosofia Byroniano.” Hence, the attributes that categorize him and the other “Ultra-Romantic” poets have been associated specifically with Byron’s persona. Cilaine Alves writes, “Here, the romanticism of melancholy and macabre aspect, as we see, took up the person of Byron as an example of literary life to be followed”53 (118). Already distorted in Europe, the “Byronic Philosophy” in Brazil was so far removed from the real Byron that it could be said—as McDayter notes of Polidori’s *The Vampyre*—“the original has ceased to be important at all; what are now in circulation as the ‘real’ are imitations of already inauthentic imitations, which is to say, simulacra” (McDayter 55). Therefore, in Brazil Byron was molded, mythologized, into the form of second-generation Brazilian Romantics’ notion of European Romanticism—a triple-step from the real Byron and an embodiment of a hegemony Byron’s text purposefully eludes.

European Cultural Hegemony in Brazil

As mentioned earlier, part of Byron’s “social energy” in Brazil had to do with the fact that he represented European Cosmopolitanism in Brazil, a counter trend in the larger move toward Brazilian Nationalism. This ideological debate underlies the beginnings of Brazilian Romanticism, as does Byron, but much of its potency results from Brazil’s relatively new independence from Portugal and all the cultural movements/negotiations that entailed.

In November of 1807, as a result of the French army’s approach on Lisbon, the Prince Regent of Portugal, Dom João, fled to Brazil, taking with him over 15,000 courtiers, the national library, and the royal treasury. First landing in the north, in Bahia, Dom João finally arrived at his new capital, Rio de Janeiro, in early March, just three months after leaving Europe. Despite the speedy transition of the Portuguese throne to Brazil, Romanticism, at least a clearly Brazilian Romanticism, would take three more decades before surfacing in Brazil. Though it may be problematic to assume politics and
culture follow the same trajectory, ironically, just as Dom Jõao descended to Brazil bringing all things Portuguese with him, and yet tried to maintain the political semblance of a naturalized Emperor (Smith 39-40), European Romanticism arrived in Brazil bringing all of its characteristic ideologies and traditions, which the European Romantic movement certainly had by 1836, and yet, it also masqueraded in Brazil under the guise of originality.

Antônio Cândido writes that the Romantic period in Brazil concerned itself with giving Brazil “a literature equivalent to the Europeans, that expressed in an adequate manner its own reality, or, as it called itself, a ‘national literature’” (11). It was permeated with the desire to create “an independent, diverse literature, not just [any] literature.” “At the time, with Classicism seeming a manifestation of the colonial past, literary nationalism [was] the search for new models, neither classical nor Portuguese, which gave a sentiment of liberation relative to the mother country” (Cândido 12). Notions of breaking free from Portugal and Europe’s literary tradition and establishing a deliberately Brazilian literary history and source of inspiration were embedded in the first Brazilian pre-Romantic tendencies and remained a palpable focus throughout the nineteenth century.

Brazil’s new separatist literary ideology, which began to mature naturally after their political separation from Portugal, embodied, ironically, already established European ideologies, which can be traced through various European influences. The foundations, in fact, of the Brazilian Romantics’ literary pseudo-independence are laid in Paris, not Brazil. Between 1833 and 1836 a group of young Brazilians moved to Paris to study and in the process became influenced by European Romantic ideas. They included many of the first generation of Brazilian Romantics: Domingos José Gonçalves de Magalães, Manuel de Araújo Porto-Alegre, Francisco de Sales Torres Homem, João Manuel Pereira da Silva, and Cândido de Azevedo Coutinho. As a result of their
encounters with the exiled Portuguese Romantic Garrett and already pre-Romantic Franco-Brazilian Ferdinand Denis, the group produced two installments of the *Niterói, Revista Brasiliense de Ciências, Letras, e Artes*, (*Brazilian Journal of Sciences, Letters, and Arts*), which carried as its epigraph “Tudo pelo Brasil, e para o Brasil” (“Everything on behalf of Brazil and for Brazil”). The Brazilian Romantic ideology set forth in the *Niterói* was a monumental step in Brazil developing its own literature. According to António Cândido, Magalhães and Pereira da Silva established in the *Niterói* “the point of departure for the theory of literary Nationalism,” and Porto-Alegre, with his extremely Garrett-influenced poem “Voz da Natureza” (“The Voice of Nature”), published “the first poem decidedly romantic published in [Brazilian] literature”\(^5\)\(^6\) (Cândido 14).

The fact that “Voz da Natureza” was published first in Paris and Magalhães, who would initiate the Romantic period in Brazil with the publication of his *Suspiros Poéticos e Saudades*, also had his pre-Romantic beginnings there underlines the European beginnings of the Brazilian Romanticism. Tracing all of the foreign influences embedded in any postcolonial literature is nigh impossible, since, as Brazil demonstrates, even the impetus to establish a “national literature” is often a reaction to the removal of colonial restraints. In the case of Brazil and Romanticism, even the Romantic notion of having a liberated and original national literature is a concept borrowed from post-Franco-revolutionary Europe and embodied in the fame of Byron’s heroic death. Even in the impetus for a national identity and literature, the first Brazilian Romantics can not help but appropriate aspects of the European Byronic image into their new system.

Though the beginnings of Brazilian Romanticism occur in France, Byron’s influence on the first Brazilian Romantics is still noteworthy, even if it is a mediated and diluted influence. Cândido writes that Denis and the *Niterói* group were most influenced critically by Chateaubriand, Madame de Staël, Schlegel, Sismonde de Sismondi, and Garrett (285). Madame de Staël was a well known admirer of Byron. In fact, though not
of her contrivance, the first trace of Byron in the student publication of the Academy of São Paulo, *O Amigo das Letras*, is a line from Don Juan misattributed to Madame de Staël: “Man’s love is of man’s life a thing apart; / ‘Tis woman’s whole existence” (qtd. in Barboza, “Imprensa” 186).

Portuguese Romantic Almeida Garrett’s influence on the Brazilian Romantics was also a source of the Byronic since Garrett one of the only Portuguese Romantics to laud Byron, admitting that his greatest epic work, *Camões*, was “molded on that of Byron and Scott” (qtd. in Moser 138). Besides the direct connections of Garrett and Madame de Staël with the early Romantics, Byron was extremely en vogue in France through the 1820s and ’30s and after. Nearly every notable French Romantic wrote about Byron, including Hugo, Chateaubriand, and Lamartine (Phillips 7, 9, 11). Complete translations of Byron’s works were widely available, especially Amédeé Pichot’s six-volume translation of Byron’s complete works, published in 1835, just prior to the Romantic coming of age of the *Niterói* group. One of the first translations of Byron into Portuguese, in fact, is in the second number of the *Niterói*. J. M. Pereira da Silva, in an article on Greece, translates lines 91, 92, 101, and 102 of *The Giaour*, attributing them to Byron in a footnote (Barboza, *Byron*, 50). Though not of monumental impact, Byron’s lines from *The Giaour* place him as an underlying influence at the very beginning of Brazilian Romanticism.  

**Brazilian Nationalist Ideology versus Cosmopolitan Aesthetics**

Brazil gained its independence from Portugal soon after Dom João returned with 4,000 of his courtiers to Portugal. He left his son, Pedro, as prince regent, and when the Portuguese court tried to re-establish Brazil as a colony, Pedro declared its independence on September 7, 1822. After Brazil gained its independence from Portugal in 1822, Brazil’s political and social situation as a postcolonial nation had a destabilizing effect on
its emerging Romantic ideology, as Brazil was simultaneously trying to come to terms with itself as an autonomous country and also conceive of itself in terms of the world of European modernity. The excitement over Brazilian political independence naturally spilled over into the Romantic aesthetics, and in an explanatory paragraph after his “O Papagaio do Orinoco,” published in 1859, one of the initial Brazilian Romantics, Pôrto-Alegre, reiterates a call for a new Brazilian poetry, saying:

The state of poets is sad . . . that versify as if they were in Europe as representatives of Lamartine and Victor Hugo. The liberty, of which they so much rejoice, is not real, because it exists in thought: the egotistical poet is an imitator, is a slave, and does not merit this name [poet], if he does not speak to humanity from his country” (qtd. in Ramos 17)58

But despite the original Brazilian Romantic mantra that calls for a literature independent of European influence, Cândido writes of the unavoidable dependence that continued through Brazilian Romanticism on European texts and ideas. Again, Byron figures here not as a liberator, but as a central image in the European tradition:

Our Romanticism is a transfiguration of a reality poorly known and irresistibly attracted to the European models that invited with the magic of countries from which our intellectual culture radiates. Because of this on the side of nationalism, there is a mirage of Europe in our romanticism: the stormy North, Spain, above all Italy, the vestibule of the Byronic orient. Poems and more poems full of disfigured images of Verona, Florence, Rome, Naples, Venice, vistas from Shakespeare, Byron, Musset, Dumas. (16)59

Not only are many Brazilian Romantic poems laced with European scenes, themes, and styles, but poets, especially lesser known ones, tended to imitate and plagiarize well known Europeans. Brazilian critic Jose Brito Broca notes that the European
influence “came naturally” because of “the celebrities of the epoch, of whom we suffered the influence and whose models we followed, in some cases, in a servile manner. Byron, Lamartine, Ossian, Victor Hugo, Chateaubriand, Musset, Vigny, Goethe Ugo Foscolo, etc.” (100). In *Byron no Brasil: Traduções*, Onedia Barboza notes several instances in which Byron’s works were translated and not cited. For instance, in 1861, Paulo Antônio do Vale e Baltazar da Silva Carneiro published *Saudades e Consolações*, and under one of the poems, entitled “Rome,” Byron’s name is given as the author, though only a small part of the poem comes from Pereira da Silva’s translation of Canto IV of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*. Later nearly the entire text of “Farewell! If Ever Fondest Prayer” is included without attribution (61). In 1862, in *Obras/Literárias e Politicas*, by J. M. Pereira da Silva, a chapter on Byron includes several verses attributed to the *Hebrew Melodies*, even though the poems do not relate to the actual *Melodies* and seem to be made of original verse mixed with lines taken at random from parts of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*, including “To Inez” (Barboza, *Byron* 62).

Besides borrowing actual verses, simply integrating the names of important European authors into their works became an important mode of accreditation for young Brazilian bohemians. Quoted at the beginning of this chapter, José de Alencar, in his *Como e Porque Sou Romancista*, confesses that he “diverted [himself] by writing [his poems] with the name of Byron, Hugo, or Lamartine” (qtd. in Magalhães Junior 40). This example demonstrates the cultural value of European references in Brazil and the continuing social value of a cosmopolitan perspective. The first real libraries were not established in Brazil until after the Portuguese court came to Rio, and the founding of the Academy in São Paulo did not occur until Dom Pedro created it by law in 1827. Further evidenced by the *Niterói* group, Gonçalves Dias, and many other Brazilian Romantics who went to Europe to study, Europe remained the center of intellectual
prestige and literature and Byron the European figure to imitate, despite Brazilian
nationalist rhetoric.

Therefore, using epigraphs from French, German or English authors to introduce
one’s work, as most Brazilian Romantics did, became a form of, or at least a
representation of the appropriation of the European Romantic tradition in Brazil. Nearly
all of the major Brazilian Romantics either reference Byron in the text of their poems or
in epigraphs, especially second generation Romantics like Gonçalves Dias, Álvares de
Azevedo, Fagundes Varela, and Castro Alves (see appendix). This prevalence of
references to Byron is significant because it demonstrates his overwhelming prestige.
However, as a reminder of Portugal’s stifling influence on Brazil’s literary creativity and
the arrival of Byron’s poetry there, a large number of prefatory references in these poets’
works also cite French authors—Victor Hugo, Lamartine, Chateaubriand, Musset, and
George Sand—not Portuguese. World-conscious Brazilians looked to France as the
epitome of modernity and as their indicator of literary quality. In fact, most prefatory
quotations attributed to Shakespeare or Ossian are in French, which suggests, at least,
how important French Byromania was to Byron’s popularity in Brazil. Coming through
France, as it did, adds another level of simulation on Byron’s image before it arrived in
Brazil.

The French seeds of European Romanticism existed in Brazilian print as early as
the first generation of students in the São Paulo Academy, which began matriculation in
1828. Madame de Staël, Chateaubriand, and Lamartine were all printed in one form or
another (Barboza, “Imprensa” 185). Azevedo read Byron in the original English, as did
Pinheiro Guimarães, both of whom also translated him; but according to Broca, the other
Romantic poets generally read Byron in the French translations of Amedée Pichot.
Goethe was also read in the French, and interest in the French poets Lamartine, Vigny,
and Musset was widespread among even the general reading public as a result of translations into Portuguese as early as 1819 (Broca 101).

Even though Brazil was especially wary of all things Portuguese, contemporary Portuguese poets, especially Garrett, Heculano, and Jõao de Lemos, were still widely read in Brazil (Broca 102). The Portuguese were also still paying attention to the literary accomplishments in Brazil. Herculano, for instance, wrote a prefatory tribute and criticism titled “The Literary Future of Portugal and of Brazil” (“Futuro Literário de Portugal e do Brasil”), in response to Gonçalves Dias’s Primeiros Cantos. Exhibiting a sense of subordination, at least to Herculano himself, Dias responds to the preface, writing, “Even to merit the criticism of A. Herculano, I already consider as a great honor for me; a simple mention of my first volume, annotated with his name, I certainly desired, but to expect it, would be excessive vanity on my part” (qtd. in Rocha 43). Despite the awkwardness of their political relationship, Brazilians were still influenced by Portuguese literature, again complicating the notion that their literature was ideally national.

As discussed in the first chapter, the Portuguese, with the exception of Garrett, who was in exile, disliked Byron profoundly as a result both of his visit there during his first European tour and the British government’s interactions with the Portuguese during the Napoleonic wars. Therefore, until Brazil gained its independence and began looking to France as the center of the modern world, Byron was unheard of. In fact, in Brazil the first student journal of any kind was not in press until 1830, three years after the Academy was created in São Paulo, and even then, as Barboza writes, “the directors and collaborators of the journal did not appear to have become conscious yet that a literary revolution had taken place in Europe” (“Imprensa” 185). For the most part, the student journal O Amigo das Letras consisted of translations of eighteenth-century European authors, of the English including Johnson, Addison, Steele, and Pope.
(Barboza, “Imprensa” 184-85). It seems odd that Brazil could be so out of touch with the intellectual revolutions already three decades old in Europe. Their apparent isolation as a result of Portugal’s colonization, however, only further underscores the reason Brazilian nationalists would be wary of immediately opening up and adopting European ideologies. In terms of Byron being heard of in Brazil, the fact that he offended the Portuguese seriously retarded the Byronic movement in Brazil.

The earliest recorded publication of Byron in Brazil, however, is Tibúrcio Craveiro’s translation of Lara, which, purportedly translated in 1832, was not published completely until 1837 (Barboza, Byron 51). Though Tibúrcio translated directly from English, and therefore produced a fairly accurate translation, many of the translations of Byron done by other Brazilian poets and academics extremely diluted or exaggerated the originals. Furthermore, as Barboza discusses in Byron no Brasil: Traduções, a majority of the translations show evidences of an intermediary French translation, further exemplifying the European cosmopolitanism that permeated Byron’s influence in Brazil. Similar to Brazilian Romanticism, the Brazilian Byron was first a French Byron, and therefore, the Brazilian version of the Byronic image, exemplified in references, translation, and legend, is by no means a native Brazilian Byron.

If the potency of Byron’s image as an inspirational force in Brazilian Romanticism represents the Brazilian poets’ cosmopolitan inklings, the prevalent indications of French influences on Byron’s image in Brazil only further demonstrate Brazil’s reliance on European literary traditions, ideologies, and even pop-culture, despite their misgivings. Brazil’s love/hate relationship with Byron evidences the simultaneous impetuses to imitate and separate from European influences that both animate Brazilian Romanticism and complicate the notion that an independent postcolonial national literature can genuinely establish a Romantic identity.
Cosmopolitan Negotiations

The tension between Cosmopolitan and Nationalism in Brazilian Romanticism did not clearly divide Brazilian Romantics into two camps. Had it done so, Byron’s influence would have been more directly associated with only the “cosmopolitan” group. But Byron’s influence, though not as potent for some as others, was universally felt. To some extent each Brazilian Romantic had to negotiate the issue of how much to look to Europe for inspiration, modes, styles, and subjects, and how much to look to Brazil, its nature, its people and subjects. As already established, Byron figured at the heart of that negotiation. His figurative proximity, in fact, to such a culturally important question, is part of the reason his fame was so electrifying.

For example, even the key Brazilian Byronist, Álvares de Azevedo, did not demonstrate a consistently cosmopolitan poetics. Azevedo’s adulation of Byron as his muse in *O Conde Lopo*, representative of the apex of Byronic influence in Brazil, and also the cosmopolitan movement, reflects his own vacillation between sources of inspiration. In another part of his work, Azevedo locates an interior, more Romantic source for his inspiration:

But I will not ask your forgiveness withal:

If you do not like this dark song
Think not that I buried myself in long study
To engorge your souls with another harmony!

If my verse varies and ideas change
It is thus that the fantasy descended . . .

But criticism, no . . . I mock it . . .

I prefer inspiration from the beautiful night!\(^6\) (qtd. in Alves 103)
Like the European Romantics and the first generation of Brazilian Romantics, Azevedo prized original poetic imagination. In fact, as part of the maxim of the secret “Epicurean Society” or “Sociedade Epicuréia,” of which he was a founding member, he believed in the “originality of genius” (“originalidade do gênio”; Alves 102). In generally Coleridgian fashion, the poet should write without the help of literary or other influences to hamper his creative genius.

As Cilaine Alves writes, however, Azevedo was very well versed, a “boy prodigy” (“menino prodígio”), graduating with a baccalaureate in letters at seventeen in Rio de Janeiro and then matriculating in the São Paulo academy of law. His first published poetry, the first part of his *Lira Dos Vinte Anos*, demonstrates his voracious literary appetite for the European literary canon, with allusions and prefatory references to authors including Bocage, Lamartine, Sand, Hugo, Cowper, Shakespeare, Ossian, Goethe, Dumas, Musset, Vigney, Moore, Shelley, and many others. In both literal and figurative ways, then, Azevedo’s muse is schizophrenic, both claiming and denying a European lineage as inspiration, both claiming and denying Byron. But the image of Byron is a perfect metaphor to embody this negotiation, as Jerome Christiansen writes, “‘Byron’ [referring to the “cultural phenomenon” not the man] diagnosed and publicized the need that it answered: the need for a hegemonic metaphor that would resolve conflicts embedded in questions of national, sexual, and social identity that were as yet unspeakable” (xx). Azevedo’s own bifurcated poetics, as an extension of an originally disjointed Brazilian literary and political identity, fittingly looks to Byron’s Romantic image as the social vehicle, the “hegemonic metaphor” empowered by this type of cosmopolitan negotiation.

Though Byron’s cosmopolitan image was representative of what many Brazilian Romantics considered to be a stifling European influence, in practice, those that adhered to the “Byronic Philosophy” never really epitomized the Byronic image they worshiped.
In fact, not even Byron could live up to his own mythologized image. Therefore, while Byron embodies the social energy resultant of the culturally defining negotiations from which Brazil established its literary identity, Brazil was never really in danger of losing its literary identity to European literary imperialism. The cosmopolitan movement and its associated Byronic frenzy became so prevalent among young poets, especially at the Academy of Sao Paulo, that Byronic simulation became a fad true Byronists could only lament. So many folkloric accounts of Byronic followers have emerged that few Brazilian critics believe any to be absolutely historically accurate. As Cilaine Alves notes, the accounts “evidence an exaggerated and, albeit, a suspect preoccupation of the poets of the time in idealizing bohemian situations, which denounces more of an interest in fabricating an unconventional life than concretely living one” (104). For instance, one of Byron’s first translators, José Pinheiro Guimarães, produced a theory of poetic inspiration that relied upon drunkenness as its motivating principle. He was, however, not given to drink himself, and so resolved to attempt a sort of vicarious inspiration by getting his friends quite drunk (Alves 104).

In fact, it is difficult to tell how much of the Byronic vogue was based on sincere adulation. According to Brito Broca, the melancholy and sadness that was so characteristic of the Byronists was, in many respects, a fabrication, and they never really achieved true Byronic melancholy:

Bewailing impossible loves, imponderable pains, the fatality of death, in a tone frequently prognostic, gives us the impression that they were sad, somber creatures. To judge by this lachrymose poetry, full of agonies, we are brought to imagine, at the same time, that life in that epoch did not offer solutions [or outlets] to the inquietude of these juvenile poets. But it seems that in the majority of cases we are dealing with a kind of artificial sadness, extracted more from books than reality. They reproduced the
despondencies of Byron, Musset, Espronceda, without arriving at truly feeling them.\textsuperscript{67} (117)

In many instances then, scholars of Brazilian Romanticism are forced to consider the dynamics and implications of Romantic imitation, or masques in connection with Byron’s influence in Brazil rather than serious identity crises among the young Romantics. According to Broca, even the famous third-generation Romantic Castro Alves likely never even read all of the authors he cited in his poems (113). Brazilian literature did bring its own newness to its Romanticism, adding the traditions, religion, customs, institutions, history, and nature of Brazil. Though not accomplishing a purely Brazilian Romantic, free of European influences, it did significantly alter the European romanticism it imitated, clearly making its mark on the image of Byron as a cosmopolitan and a Romantic. Since Byron is such a prevalent and translatable nineteenth century image, the ways in which Brazil modified the Byronic to fit its Romantic fancy, illustrate both the uniqueness of Brazilian Romanticism and also the social energies embodied in the Byronic image that allowed Byron to go native in Brazil.
Chapter Three:
Brazilian Romanticism’s Remodeling of Byron’s Image

And War, Which for a moment was no more, E a Guerra, que um momento
s’extinguira,

Did glut himself again:—a meal was bought De novo se fartava. So’ com sangue
With blood, and each sate sullenly apart Comprava-se o alimento, e após à parte
Gorging himself in gloom: no Love was left: Cada um se sentava taciturno,
All earth was but one thought—and that was Death. P’ra fartar-se nas trevas infinitas!
Immediate and inglorious; and the pang Já não havia amor! . . . O mundo inteiro
Of famine fed upon all entrails—men Era um só pensamento, e o pensamento
Died, and their bones were tombless as their flesh. Era a morte sem glória e sem detença!
( Lord Byron, “Darkness,” ln. 38-45) O estertor da fome apascentava-se
Nas entranhas . . . Ossada carne pútrida
Ressupino, insepulto era o cadáver.
(Castro Alves, “As Trevas,” ln. 45-55)

Fig. 1: Castro Alves (Arquivo da Academia Brasileira)

Castro Alves (1847–1871) was a key figure in the third generation of Brazilian Romantics and a known Byronist. He had to have his left foot amputated because he was shot in a hunting accident and died of tuberculosis at the age of twenty-four. Besides being generally dashing (fig. 1), walking with a limp, and dying young, he also resembled Byron in that he wrote mostly in “a passionate-lyrical mode, mixed with the sensuality of an authentic child of the tropics, and a social and humanitarian mode, in
which he achieves moments of resplendent epic eloquence”68 (Biographia para. 5). Alves’
genuine concern for the liberty of all people and hatred of injustice won him the
designation “Cantor dos Escravos” or “Poet of the Slaves.” It makes sense, then, that
Alves would be interested in Byron, since so much of Byron’s work is in the same vein.
However, rather than translating some of Byron’s political texts, Alves translated two of
the darkest, most macabre, pieces Byron wrote: “Darkness” and “The Dream.” He also
translated Byron’s “Lines Inscribed upon a Cup Formed from a Skull” and turned it into
a much darker and more serious work than Byron intended.

Besides turning “Lines” into a much more morbid poem, in his translation of
“Darkness,” Alves adds seventeen lines, which have the effect of turning the already dark
poem even more morose. “Each sate sullenly apart / Gorging himself in gloom” becomes
“Each one sat himself taciturn, / To gorge himself in the infinite darkness!” (“Darkness”
ln. 40-41, “As Trevas” ln. 49-50). The “gloom” becomes “darkness” and the darkness
becomes “infinite,” and the men seem to purposefully isolate themselves in search of
darkness in Alves’ version. In the final lines, Byron’s “bones were tombless as their
flesh” becomes “skeletons or putrid flesh / resupinate, the cadavers were without
sepulcher” (“Darkness” ln. 44-45, “As Trevas” ln. 54-55). Alves adds skeletons and
cadavers, putrification and resupination of human flesh, and a dose of the emphatic,
with fifteen exclamation points throughout the poem where Byron used none. In his
choice to translate a darker, more emphatic, more sensationalized and sublime version of
Byron in 1869, Alves reinforced the popular image of Byron that had developed in Brazil
during the previous generations of Romantics—an image that coincided with their idea
of European Romanticism. As with Alves, examining the selections of Byron’s works that
the other Brazilian Romantics chose to translate and the stylistic and thematic
modifications their translations effected can help illustrate not only the international
reaches of Byron’s fame, but the specific aspects of Byron’s celebrity image that inspired Brazilian Romantics.

As discussed in the last chapter, Byron’s presence in Brazilian Romanticism played a subversive role in the larger negotiation of Brazil’s national literary identity. In many respects, Byron’s image in Brazil was the alter-ego of mainstream Brazilian Romanticism, whereas in Europe he was the ego proper. According to Brazilian critic, Cilaine Alves, the “Byronic School” consisted of those who had “adopted Byronism as a legitimate tendency . . . in opposition to the nationalist literature in vogue” (Alves 127). Despite Byron’s profound influence on the second and third generations of Romantic poets in Brazil, the projections of Byron’s image they produced reflected their perception of an “other” Romanticism. As a result, the selections made to publish certain of Byron’s works in Brazil and the modifications made in those translations to Byron’s image reflect powerful social energies that lurked below the surface of Brazil’s literary foundations.

Though Byron’s mythic image had the capacity to represent mainstream Brazilian Romanticism, authors like Castro Alves fixated upon his darker side and magnified it through their own writings, translations, and references, to match the shadowy reflection of their own alter-Romanticism and their notion of European Romanticism.

In translating Byron’s works, therefore, most of his Brazilian translators and imitators took more pains to make Byron’s poetry adhere to their own exaggerated and customized idea of the Byronic than they did to represent the original style or meaning. Such translations of Byron’s works and instances of his influence in Brazil are numerous, and, in fact, outnumber translations of his works into Portuguese in Europe ten to one. Translations of any literary work are telling of the translator’s ideologies and notions of aesthetics and their perceptions of the author’s intent. The liberal modifications to many translations of Byron in Brazil show what the translators thought Byron intended with the poems and hence the way they imagined Byron before they began their translations.
As mentioned earlier, since Byron’s European fame carried his influence to Brazil, Brazilian poets and translators did already have a notion of the Byronic before they approached his works through translation. Besides the actual translations of Byron’s works, Byron makes cameo appearances, as it were, in countless references, epigraphs, and popular legends of poets who ascribed to the “philosophia Byroniana.” Considering the mass of places where Byron appears in Brazilian literature, the context he appears in, and the company he often appears with provides insights into how Byron fit into the larger picture of European influence in Brazil and how Brazil formed its version of the European Romantic canon. The authors translated alongside Byron, the references to Byron in epigraphs, the number of his various works published in Brazil, and the meaningful alterations in those translations, therefore, evidence not only the permutations of Byron’s image in Brazil, but the power of that image as a cultural metaphor—a metaphor that embodied Brazil’s trans-Atlantic view of European Romanticism.

Byron in Brazilian Print

From the time of Byron’s death, editions of his works were widely available in Brazil in both French and English. Spanish and German translations were also occasionally available, but Brazilian Romantics had access to Byron’s complete works. Since Byron’s repertoire is so varied in terms of themes, styles, and genres, the choices Brazilian Romantics made in selecting works to translate and publish represent the aspects of Byronism that were the most representative of their notion of the Byronic. In his study of Byron’s translations in Brazil, Barbosa records thirty-five Brazilian translators of Byron whose published translations he could still find in Brazilian libraries as late as 1975. He also notes, “Beyond this, we have indications of numerous other authors that had also dedicated themselves to converting [into Portuguese] the English
poet, but whose works were not possible for us to find” (45). Furthermore, Barbosa records twenty-one other translators of Byron of whose translations there is printed evidence, but the actual documents could not be found in Brazilian libraries. The impetus among Brazilian Romantics to translate Byron was impressively extensive, with more than fifty translators, and most of the major figures of Brazilian Romanticism not only read and referenced but also translated Byron.

Translations of Byron’s work were often translated as part of a larger volume including, in most cases, the translator’s own verse. In many cases translations of other European poets’ work was published together with Byron’s, and the selection of poets who were published alongside Byron provides a good idea of which authors comprised the Brazilian Romantics’ European canon. Some of the most prominent authors published with Byron include Victor Hugo, Lope da Vega, Heine, Racine, Geibel, Pope, Schiller, C. H. Millevoye, André Chenier, Ossian, Lamartine, Labhoulaye, Kerner, Vigny, Mordret, Musset, Pouchkine, Thomas Moore, Dante, Shakespeare, Longfellow, Uhland, Baudelaire, Heine, Sadler, Shelley, and Sheridan. The earliest translation of Byron alongside another author is not until 1860, however, with A. C. Soido’s translation of *The Corsair*, which is accompanied by a translation of Victor Hugo’s “Para os Pobres” (Barbosa 61–62). Besides illustrating the Brazilian Romantics tastes, this canon represents an after-the-fact take on both general European Romanticism and British Romanticism. Compared with the Wordsworthian/Coleridgian mode that Britain used to define its Romanticism in the second half of the nineteenth century, this Brazilian list of key Romantics turns the traditional English canon upside down. Byron clearly figures as the most important English Romantic, as he continues to be translated in Brazil throughout the nineteenth century; Shelly appears in only a few translations; but Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Keats never appear, at least in works that feature Byron.
Only considering the authors translated alongside Byron does not provide a completely accurate reflection of what the Brazil’s European Romantic canon might look like because it gives an unfair preference to poetry. The traditional notion of English Romanticism has also, arguably, distorted the predominance of poetry over other contemporary genres. During Brazil’s Romantic period, prose fiction was very popular, and Walter Scott’s influence in Brazil should not be ignored. Translations of European fiction into Portuguese played an essential role in the rise of the novel in Brazil. According to Antônio Cândido, the significant influence of European prose in Brazil “is proven in the quantity of translations and abundance of publications of serials in the journals, not only in Rio, but in the entire country.” (107). Between 1830 and 1854 over one hundred novels were published serially. Besides serial publications, many European works were translated as volumes, including most of Scott’s romances, translated by Caetano Lopes de Moura (Cândido 107–108). In terms of number of pages published, therefore, Walter Scott’s presence in Brazil dwarfed most other Romantics, including Byron. Despite his prolific writings, Scott did not inspire a cultural movement the way Byron did. Scott’s ability to interest but not inspire, in fact, is further evidence of the role Byron’s celebrity image played in the spread of his works’ popularity. Scott’s works include many of the same themes that attracted Brazilian Romantics, but Scott himself did not become an idolized Romantic icon the way Byron did.

Besides the number of translations made of various European Romantics, references in Brazilian poets’ original works and their epigraphs provide further evidence of the European works that influenced them and reflected their view of European Romanticism. In Ramos’s anthology of the complete poetic works of the major Brazilian Romantics, *Grandes Poetas Românticos do Brasil*, references to Byron in both the content of the poems and in epigraphs appear more than any other English poet. Again, he was clearly the most important English Romantic. He is followed by Shakespeare,
Ossian, Thomas Moore, Cowper, Shelley, and Crabbe. Wordworth, Coleridge, and Keats do not appear. How little these members of the “Big Six” British Romantics influenced Brazilian Romanticism is further demonstrated by a lack of treatment in Brazilian scholarly works. In Antônio Cândido’s Formação da Literatura Brasileira, generally held to be the most scholarly study of Brazilian literature, Byron is referenced over twenty times (375); Shelley is referred to six times (382); Wordsworth is referred to four times (three of which are in lists and once in a quote by Álvares de Azevedo in which he is compared as a negative example to Byron) (383); Keats is mentioned twice (378); and Coleridge is never mentioned.

With his publication of The Romantic Ideology in 1983, Jerome McGann invited Romantic scholars to re-consider Byron’s place in Romantic critical discourse. Twentieth-century studies on Romanticism before McGann had written Byron outside of the main ideology of Romanticism as a satirical, subversive voice—a Romantic alter-ego to natural Romanticism. Though Byron does play an admittedly subversive role in Brazilian Romanticism, as discussed in the last chapter, the primary Brazilian notion of European Romanticism has always revolved around Byron. The key male Romantics who have garnished the critical focus in America and Britain as monumental influences in the development of Romanticism had no voice in Brazil. Furthermore, during Brazil’s Romantic period, Byron’s image as the embodiment of European Romanticism was more influential, carried more “social energy,” than even Shakespeare.

Byronic Translations

The intent of this chapter is not to give the idea that Brazilian Romantics knew more about English Romanticism than England did itself or that their canon is a more accurate canon than the one British scholars have developed through the years. In fact, as discussed in the last chapter, many cultural and political factors influenced the way
Brazilian Romantics viewed Europe, making their determinations of European Romanticism inherently biased. Byron’s image had become so mythic in its proportions and so alterable, that even though in theory he was the icon of European Romanticism, in practice that icon was formed after the likeness of Brazil’s own alter-Romanticism. Brazil’s perspective on European and English Romanticism can, however, raise questions about our own methods of canon formation and periodization. Some implications of Byron’s influence in Brazil on the way we view Romanticism and evaluate key Romantics are discussed in detail in the conclusion to this thesis. The translations themselves, however, provide a vivid picture of the ways Byron’s image as a Romantic developed in Brazil. The large number of translations allows an extra degree of scrutiny because most of the works translated were translated more than once. The most popular were translated several times. Therefore, the frequency of the works’ translations can also reflect the Brazilian notion of the Byronic. The following table lists the translations of Byron in Brazil that I found either published or documented in American libraries. A more ambitious project could make use of Brazilian libraries, but considering the number of translations referenced in this project, additional translations would likely follow the same trends evidenced here. The translations are listed in chronological order by their first translation date and are organized according to their titles in English to help compare the numbers of times each work was translated. In instances where the original date of publication was not available, I have provided a reference to where notice of the work can be located.
### Table of Translations

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<td>“Farewell! If Ever Fondest Prayer”</td>
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<td>1861</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Lachin y Gair”</td>
<td>José Inácio Gomes Ferreira</td>
<td>1863</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Lines Inscribed upon a Cup Formed from a Skull”</td>
<td>Antônio de Castro Alves</td>
<td>1869</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Darkness”</td>
<td>Antônio de Castro Alves</td>
<td>1869</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Ode From the French,” “From the French,” “On the Star of The”</td>
<td>Alberto Krass (Guilherme de Castro Alves)</td>
<td>1870</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Legion of Honour,&quot; &quot;Napoleon's Farewell,&quot; &quot;Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Manfred</em></td>
<td>Antônio Franco da Costa Meireles</td>
<td>(1870)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Also by Carolina von Koseritz (1885); Francisca Isidora Gonçalves (no date); João Antônio de Barros Júnior (no date, in Almeida 26)</td>
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<td><em>Cain</em></td>
<td>Antônio Franco da Costa Meireles</td>
<td>(1870)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Antônio Augusto de Quiroga (selections, no date, in Almeida 26)</td>
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<td><em>Heaven and Earth</em></td>
<td>Antônio Franco da Costa Meireles</td>
<td>(1870)</td>
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<td>Also by Inácio Manuel Álvares de Azevedo Júnior (no date, in Almeida 26)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;The Bride of Abydos&quot; (Canto I, para. 1)</td>
<td>Gentil Homem de Almeida Braga (Flávio Reimar)</td>
<td>(1872)</td>
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<td>Also by Joaquim Dias da Rocha Júnior (1881); João Batista Retueira Costa (no date)</td>
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<td>&quot;From the Portuguese—Tu Mi Chamas&quot;</td>
<td>João Cardoso de Meneses e Sousa</td>
<td>(1902)</td>
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<td>&quot;To Thyrza&quot;</td>
<td>João Cardoso de Meneses e Sousa</td>
<td>(1911)</td>
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<td>&quot;On the Death of a Young Lady&quot;</td>
<td>João Cardoso de Meneses e Sousa</td>
<td>(1911)</td>
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<td>&quot;On This Day I Complete My Thirty-Sixth Year&quot;</td>
<td>João Cardoso de Meneses e Sousa</td>
<td>(1911)</td>
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<td>Title</td>
<td>Translator</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Prisoner of Chillon</em></td>
<td>Antônio de Castro Alves</td>
<td>(no date)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“The Prophecy of Dante”</td>
<td>Inácio Manuel Alves de Azevedo Júnior</td>
<td>(no date)</td>
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<td>Also by Ferreira Dias</td>
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<td>(no date)</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Marino Faliero</em></td>
<td>Juvenal Péricles de Melo Carramenhos</td>
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<td>Also by Gentil Homem de Almeida Braga</td>
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<td>(no date)</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Siege of Corinth</em></td>
<td>Juvenal Péricles de Melo Carramenhos</td>
<td>(no date)</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Two Foscari</em></td>
<td>Almeida Areias</td>
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In terms of omissions and inclusions, the Brazilian translators have obviously avoided Byron’s satire. Practically none of *Don Juan* or Byron’s other satirical work was translated. The only translations of *Don Juan*, in fact, are a prayer in Canto III (8 lines) and a song in Canto XVI (6 lines), neither of which reflects the general tone or themes of the poem. Barbosa notes that compared to other aspects of Byron’s popular image, “the author of the brilliant *Beppo*, *The Vision of Judgement*, and *Don Juan* [Byron’s more satirical works] did not have the same resonance” (265). One of the reasons for their avoidance of Byron’s satire may have been simply a matter of translation difficulty. Despite claims that Byron was generally easy to translate, at least one anonymous translator (signed “X. Y.”) notes that he translates Byron into prose because “the verses of Byron cannot be translated into verse” (qtd. in Barbosa 18). *Don Juan* has a more colloquial feel than most of Byron’s narrative poetry, making it harder to translate; and Byron’s allusions would have also been difficult to translate and hard for Brazilian
readers to relate to. Brazilian translators may also have avoided Byron’s satire because of its political nature. Even though Byron was in favor of South American liberty and autonomy from Europe, and even though he lived in self-imposed exile from England, the sentiment in Brazil throughout the nineteenth century was against British politics, and Byron was still a Briton. With all the political movements in Brazil related to its independence from Portugal, most Brazilian Romantics would have felt at home with Byron’s political philosophy. However, as Castro Alves demonstrates with his choice of translating Byron’s “Darkness” and “Lines Inscribed upon a Cup Formed from a Skull,” Byron’s revolutionary political poetry that was so kairotic in Europe did not penetrate the bastion of anti-British political prejudice in Brazil. Then, of course, the final reason for avoiding Byron’s satire relates to the Brazilian Romantics’ notion of Byronism, which apparently did not include a satiric mode. The fact that Brazilians ignore Byron’s satire is also significant because it again opposes the traditional British/American critical notion of Byron’s role in Romanticism as a subversive or satirical “other.”

The selections made, just in terms of number of translations, reveal a Brazilian preference for *Childe Harold* and Byron’s narrative poems. Parts of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* were translated at least sixteen times, with two complete translations by Francisco Gumarães and Francisco Otaviano. Canto IV was translated twice apart from the complete translations, but the selections most translated all come from Canto I, including the song “To Inez” (9 translations), “Childe Harold’s Good Night” (5 translations), and the first stanzas of the canto (4 translations). Why the focus on “To Inez”? With the exception of the first two paragraphs of *Parisina*, “To Inez” is translated more than any other selection. Barbosa writes, “We find no less than eight Brazilian translations of ‘To Inez’ (not counting Pinheiro Guimarães’s that is included in his complete translation of *Childe Harold*), that prove eloquently the attraction that this little Romantic manifesto exercised over our poets” (137). Barbosa suggests that “To
Inez” captures the meaning of the entire poem, and therefore makes a good representative piece to translate. Other critics, however, have not given “Inez” the symbolic importance Barbosa does. It is not by any means the crux of the poem, which Jerome McGann locates in Canto IV stanzas 148-152 with Harold’s “Caritas Romana” vision (“On Reading” 46-47).

Translating the entire text of CHP would have been a daunting task, however, and not many short selections from the poem make sense out of context. Translators may also have shied away from translating the entire poem because of its inherent ties to Europe as a location and European politics and history as a philosophical context. “To Inez” and “Childe Harold’s Good Night” serve as short, relatively universal poems within the poem that are much more accessible in terms of translation and thematic content. Not all the other sections of CHP are impossible to translate on their own, however, so both “Inez” and “Childe Harold’s Good Night” also represent sections of CHP that were the most representative “Romantic” parts of the poem. Neither is overtly political or satirical, but they represent Harold as the epitome of Romantic disillusionment: self-exiled, melancholy, mysterious, misunderstood, fearless, sorrowful, scorned, and wandering alone. “Alas!” Harold says in “To Inez,” “I cannot smile again [. . .] / And dost thou ask what secret woe / I bear, corroding Joy and Youth? [. . .] / It is not love, it is not hate / Nor low Ambition’s honours lost, [. . .] / It is that settled, ceaseless gloom / The fabled Hebrew Wanderer bore; / That will not look beyond the tomb / But cannot hope for rest before” (CHP ln. 883-917). The morose, hopeless, fundamentally victimized aspect of the Byronic hero evidenced in these lines is exactly the image of the Romantic character that second generation Romantics like Álvares de Azevedo reproduced religiously in their own works and imitated dramatically in their own lives. So the most likely reason for the disproportionate number of translations of “To Inez”
and “Good Night” is that those excerpts reflected the Brazilian’s notion of the Byronic better than any other part of the poem.

*Parisina* is a close second in number of translations to the various sections of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*, with fourteen. Most of the narrative poems were translated multiple times, including *Lara* (6, also the first work translated), *The Giaour* (3), *Oscar of Alva* (3), *The Hebrew Melodies* (9), *Mazzepa* (4), *The Corsair* (5), and *The Bride of Abydos* (3). Besides being relatively simple to translate because of their formal language, Byron purposefully infused his narrative poetry with many of the aspects of the “Byronic Hero.” McGann writes,

> He was himself largely responsible for creating the enormous popularity of the Oriental and Byronic Tales. . . . He cranked out verse between 1812 and 1815 to various formulas and audience expectations. In this activity he was not so much a poet as he was a pander and whore to public tastes. It passes without saying that those tastes were corrupt. (The non-malicious version of this general view is that Byron invented the myth of himself as The Romantic Poet, thereby creating a new structure of authorship which answered to the changing conditions that were rapidly transforming the English literary institution.). (*Byron* 36)

The Brazilian Romantics' expressed interest in the “Oriental and Byronic Tales” speaks to the fact that their primary interest in Byron’s works was Byron himself, or the myth of Byron at any rate. Barbosa notes, “For the majority of our translators, the poem of Byron revolves around the Romantic figure of his hero and in his lamenting cantos. The beautiful countries traveled, the picturesque descriptions, the preoccupation with Europe and with history, the attitude of the poet in relation to nature, didn’t seem to interest them much” (262). So, an examination of the works selected for translation and the number of translations each work underwent demonstrates that, generally speaking,
the Brazilian Romantics focused on the “Byronic Hero” and deemphasized the satirical, political, historical, and natural aspects of Byronism.

Re-writing Byron

The translations themselves, when compared with their originals, can reveal a great deal about the Brazilian Romantics’ notions of Byronism and European Romanticism. Furthermore, through translation, Brazilian Romantics had the opportunity to both consume and vicariously produce the European poetry that reflected their own often repressed Romantic tendencies. Often translation gives the illusion of a general scholarly distance between the themes, style, and tone of a piece and the translator, who ideally reproduces the original accurately enough to not be associated with the work’s quality. But even choosing to translate marks a desire in the translator to participate intimately in the creation of a text. For this reason, the number of Brazilian Romantics who translated and published Byron is significant. Unlike Scott, who was translated largely by one translator, over fifty translators of Byron were published and dozens of others are rumored to have produced translations. The widespread impetus to imitate Byron through translation, along with the selections translator’s made in deciding what to translate and the modifications their translations produced in the texts, mark the translations as a form of wish-fulfillment appeasing a repressed, less socially acceptable Brazilian Romantic ideology.

Though a few translators were especially faithful to the original work, most had no qualms in completely altering Byron’s originals in order to better accomplish what they thought was Byron’s goal. For example, Francisco Otaviano was especially liberal in the order and inclusion of stanzas. In his translation of “To M. S. G.,” Otaviano completely replaces stanza 5 with his own verse, and in his “Childe Harold’s Good Night,” he divides and combines several stanzas. In the end, stanza 10 is entirely
omitted. (see Barbosa 131–133). Most translators struggled with the meters and rhyme schemes that could not be translated directly over into Portuguese. Gumarães’s translation of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*, for instance, uses generally ten or eleven lines to translate the nine original in the Spenserian form.

Then, in many cases, translators were more comfortable translating from French than English, which was not a problem since French versions of Byron’s complete works were widely available in Brazil. Unfortunately, the French versions many translators used already distorted the original meaning and form significantly, which only intensified the departure from the original in the Brazilian versions. Ofir Aguiar, in “Mediação do Francês em Traduções do Inglês” (“Mediation of the French in Translations from the English”), examines Brazilian translations of Ossian’s “The Song of Selma,” Byron’s “Lines Inscribed upon a Cup Formed from a Skull,” and Oscar Wilde’s “The Ballad of Reading Gaol” to demonstrate the pervasive mediatory influence of the French in most translations of English writers into Portuguese. In all three instances the French translations clearly modify the originals and the Brazilian versions reproduce the errors and nuances that the French introduce. Barbosa takes great pains to demonstrate the detrimental effects of the French influence by often comparing the English originals with the French translations and the Portuguese translations. One particularly poorly translated example is Eleutério de Sousa’s translation of Byron’s “The First Kiss of Love.” The fourth stanza in English reads,

> I hate you, ye cold compositions of art,
>
> Though prudes may condemn me, and bigots reprove;
>
> I court the effusions that spring from the heart,
>
> Which throbs, with delight, to the first kiss of love.

The already modified French version of Louis Barré, from which the Portuguese is translated, reads,
Froides compositions de l’art, je vous exècre! Que les prudes me condamnent, que les bigots me dévouent à l’enfer; j’aime les simples effusions d’un coeur qui bat de plaisir au premier baiser d’amour.

And the even further modified Portuguese version reads,

Composições frias de arte, eu vos detesto, embora astuciosa devoção me condene e vote-me aos infernos! Aos vossos encantos, se os há, prefiro as simples efusões de um coração que palpita de gozo ao primeirí beijo de amor! (qtd. in Barboza, Byron 196-97)

Compositions of cold art, I detest thee though astute devotion condemns me and votes me to hell! To thy charms, if there are any, I prefer the simple effusions of a heart that palpitates of enjoyment to the first kiss of love!

In both translations the translators tend to add emphasis to the already emphatic poem. Each new translation adds another exclamation point.

Beyond adding adjectives and emphasis, many French translations add other significant content that is reproduced in Brazilian translation. João Cardoso de Meneses’s translation of Oscar of Alva, is based on Amédée Pichot’s French version, and all the mistakes Pichot makes are only multiplied by Meneses. Barbosa records the French, English, and Portuguese versions of one stanza in which Pichot adds a castle and clouds to the scene in the French version, and Meneses foregrounds the foreign elements by placing them at the end of the lines in the Portuguese version (Barbosa 148).

Of the three main French translations used by translators, Louis Barré’s is the most unfaithful, with Amédée Pichot’s only slightly better, and Benjamin de Laroche’s, perhaps, the best (Barbosa 189). Barré’s, however, seems to be the most widely used.
The height of alteration for Brazilian translators was either absolute plagiarism or publishing an original work under one of Byron’s titles, both of which imply a complete co-opting of Byron’s image in Brazil. Similar to José de Alencar, who signed Byron’s name on his own poetry, Brazilian Romantics that put their own names on Byron’s work or published their own verses imbedded in his works used the “social energy” embodied in Byron’s fame, his popular image, to give to their own works or their own names the power to fascinate. These would-be poets borrowing Byron’s energy in such a mimetic way illustrate again the subversive function Byron played in Brazil. Masquerading as Byron, they could publish content they would otherwise not or get a readership they otherwise would not have. Alencar, after signing Byron’s name on his own mediocre poetry noted, “What intimate satisfaction did I not have, when a student . . . reread with enthusiasm one of these poesies, seduced with out doubt by the name of the pseudo-author” (qtd. in Magalhães Junior 40). While in some ways liberating (perhaps in a Freudian sense), this type of subordination to Byron’s image disfigured true Brazilian Romanticism in similar ways Brazilian Romanticism disfigured Byron, giving it aspects that were not natural to it.

Examples of such appropriations and egregious modifications are prevalent throughout Brazilian translations of Byron. In 1855 an anonymous author published what he claimed to be a translation of “Jeptha’s Daughter,” one of Byron’s Hebrew Melodies, but when compared with the original, it is apparent that the so-called translation is not even an adaptation or imitation. It is a completely different composition from start to finish (see Barbosa 184). This type of complete appropriation is difficult to track, especially since the poems no longer approximate Byron’s. On the other hand, a more identifiable practice, exemplified especially by Fransisco Otaviano, was to alter the form of the translation to better fit the translator’s idea of the Byronic and to add words to clarify the meaning or accentuate the emotion. Changing the form or
rearranging and adding words usually altered the meaning of the poem significantly and made the translator’s ideologies a significant part of the composition. Barbosa notes that though Francisco Otaviano was

one of the most famous poet-translators in Brazil, upon analyzing his versions of Byron we come to see that, at least in relation to this poet, he is scandalously unfaithful. His translations are, in general, a mixture of translation and adaptation very free, in which the original text appears largely disfigured, according to the imperatives of his literary sensibility, which was much more Romantic, as we see, than Byron’s. (130)

Alterations in style and meter can completely change the mood of the poem and the meaning, almost as much as adding words. For example, in Otaviano’s “To Inez,” he changes the meter to an Alexandrine form that slows the poem down and, according to Barbosa, gives it a “tragic rhythm that we don’t find in the original” (139). Also, Álvares de Azevedo’s translation of the first paragraph of Parisina makes the meter much more musical and rhythmic, a characteristic of his own poetry (162). A. C. Soido’s translation of The Corsair ends up adding 746 lines to the original, which Barbosa blames on the “his imagination being even more ardent than that of the author” (181). In Soido’s translation, Byron’s text becomes much more emphatic, sentimental, sublime, and morose. For example, “the guilty” becomes “a troop of bandits,” “the rushing deep” becomes “thundering shocks of the angry waves,” and “him” becomes “tortured cadaver,” and so on (qtd. in Barbosa 181).72

Results of the alterations include de-politicizing the work, sexualizing the work, and, in general making the poems more intense—more macabre, more emotional, more sentimental, or more shocking. For example, Otaviano’s additions to Byron’s verse make “Childe Harold’s Good Night” much more melodramatic and sentimental. “My father” becomes “my old father”; “a mother” becomes “my poor mother” (and he adds a “sad
tars” to her face); “did not much complain” becomes “with all the anguish of the extreme moment”; “but thinking on an absent wife” becomes “but leave my wife and my little children”; and “what answer will she make” becomes “what will she tell them the poor abandoned one?” (qtd. in Barbosa 137). Even without adding lines, translators can alter the poem’s meaning by picking words they think are more in line with the true meaning of Romanticism. In Azevedo’s lines from *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*, he translates “revel” as “crime,” “companie” as “orgies,” and “Wassailers of high and low degree” as “orgies of all kinds” (qtd. in Barbosa 166). Azevedo was apparently caught up in the “roving” Byronism. In terms of avoiding political issues, in Gumarães’s *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*, he works over the section on Portugal to make it less scathing. He also adds an additional note to the poem: “The Sr. Alexandre Herculano protested brilliantly, in *Pároco da Aldeia*, against the criminal severity with which Byron judged the Portuguese” (qtd. in Barbosa 125).

Though Brazil was independent of Portugal it still relied on Portuguese political benevolence; and therefore printing a faithful translation of Byron’s scathing critique of the Portuguese would have been unwise.

The feature of Byronism most radically altered and magnified through Brazilian translation is the focus on the macabre, evidenced in the Castro Alves translation examined at the beginning of this chapter. Of all the aspects of the Byronic, death, darkness, cadavers, cemeteries, and tombs were the most representative of Byron’s image and European Romanticism for Brazilian Romantics. In Fransisco Otaviano’s translation of “To M. S. G.,” he turns the original line in stanza 8, “I bid thee now a last farewell,” to “The pain will be short, soon I shall die!” (qtd. in Barbosa 132). Azevedo also transforms the first paragraph of *Parisina* into a much more somber piece. Where Byron “alludes to the decline of the day,” for Azevedo it becomes its death (Barbosa 163). Fagundes Varela’s version of “To Inez” is perhaps the most exaggerated example of the Brazilian infusion of the macabre into Byronism. By inserting “death,” “kill,” “funeral,”
“Satan,” “tomb,” and “cold flesh” into his drastically altered rendition of “Inez,” Varela refers to death in nearly every stanza (qtd. in Barbosa 200), whereas in the original Byron refers to death only once.

Along with “As Trevas,” Castro Alves’s translation of “Lines Inscribed upon a Cup Formed from a Skull” is also representative of the Brazilian perspective on Byronism. By the time Alves arrived in São Paulo, at least two generations of Byronists had been through the Academy of São Paulo, which was a center of Byronism. Legends of Byronic midnight rituals were still common. Alves’s choice to translate “Lines” reflects the Brazilian misinterpretation of Byron’s mood when he wrote the poem. The “Byronic School” in Brazil read the poem and stories of Byron and his compatriots drinking from the cup absolutely seriously—deathly seriously in fact. As a result, all of the playfulness of the original is replaced with a tone of “seriousness” that “has an element of tragic eloquence absent from the original” (Barbosa 213–215). Further evidence of the Brazilian Romantic’s fascination with death is seen in the fact that Euthanasia was more popular in Brazil than anywhere else, being translated three times.

The Brazilian Romantics focus on Byron’s darker side is reflected in the catch phrase “O Mal Byronico” or “The Byronic Malady.” Followers of the “Byronic philosophy” took on a morbid aspect in their imitations of Byron and their reflections of European Romanticism that was disproportionate to the relative quantity of gothic poetry in Europe. Even much of Byron’s more gothic works could not be classified as cemetery poetry per se. However, illustrating both the mutability of Byron’s mythic image and the intense power cultural forces wield over both literary works and cultural metaphors like Byron, Brazil’s “Romantismo negro” or “black Romanticism” assimilated Byron’s image to represent its face, in many ways obfuscating the purchase many second-generation Romantics had in their own taboo Romanticism.
The movement toward the macabre in Brazilian Romanticism generally begins after 1845s, coinciding with the trajectory of Byron's fame in Brazil, but lasts through the century. All of the references to Byron in Brazilian scholarship note the tone of death that was associated with him in Brazil. Recent Brazilian scholars, like Barbosa, recognize that the macabre aspect was a Brazilian contribution to Byronism: “Principally after the translations of Francisco Otaviano and João Cardoso, begins the acclimatization of the English poet to our Romanticism[. . . .] Through the translations, the English poet suffers a complete metamorphosis” (271).

In many ways Byron’s image took on the aspect of the second-generation Brazilian Romantics, most of whom died young and remained mysteriously troubled all the time they were alive. Since Byron’s image did change in Brazil, or at least he was seen differently in Brazil, the difference between the ways Brazilian Romantics and British and American scholars have read Byron problematizes the notion that Byron’s celebrity image can be demystified. The scope of his impact in Brazil also calls into question whether his image ought to be demystified, since it is precisely the variableness and mythic nature of his image that allowed him to represent such an influential part of Brazilian Romanticism and other Romanticisms around the world. F. de Mello Moser’s call for Portuguese scholars to “replace the nineteenth-century daemonic man and myth by an objective study of the man” may help Portugal begin to appreciate Byron. But the translations of Byron’s works and other references to him in Brazilian literature demonstrate that it was his “daemonic myth” that made him appealing to Brazilian Romantics and a functional, though subversive part of their evolving Romanticism (Byron 17). Scholarly endeavors to unmask Byron in biography in many ways reveal more of their investment in their own biases and ideologies than they do Byron’s true character. Similarly, the Brazilian Byronists intentions were not to transmogrify Byron into their own image but rather to imitate him as dramatically as possible, but in doing
so they revealed a patently Brazilian perspective on the European Romantic edifice—which had the roving, disillusioned, melancholy, and macabre image of Byron as its keystone.
Chapter Four:

Byron and the Theatre of the Dead: Ritualization of the Byronic in Brazil

In the introduction to *Sardanapalus*, one of his most popular plays, Byron emphasizes that his play is not meant to be taken to the stage: “In publishing the following Tragedies I have only to repeat, that they were not composed with the most remote view to the stage. On the attempt made by the managers in a former instance, the public opinion has been already expressed” (preface, para 1). Lord Byron had written his first play, *Manfred*, seven years earlier, in 1816, but his most serious foray into drama began with the publication of *Sardanapalus, a Tragedy, The Two Foscari, a Tragedy*, and *Cain, a Mystery*, on December 19, 1821. As he writes in a letter to Murray, he had given himself over to writing drama that summer as part of a “self-denying ordinance to dramatize, like the Greeks . . . striking passages of history” (*Letters* 323). But, as with other plays he would write, Byron wrote these three as closet dramas, meant to be read, not performed. Along with *Manfred*, which Byron subtitles “A Dramatic Poem” to keep it off the stage, his other dramatic works include *Marino Faliero, Heaven and Earth, The Deformed Transformed*, and *Werner*. Interestingly, despite Byron’s stated intentions, *Manfred* and *Sardanapalus* have been the most often produced of all his dramas.

According to E. H. Coleridge, *Sardanapalus* was performed first in the Theatre Royale at Brussels in January 1834, followed by productions by the Drury Lane Theatre in June of the same year, the Princess’s Theatre in June 1853, the Theatre Imperial-Lyrique in February 1867, the Theatre Royal, Manchester in March 1877, the Royal Alexandra Theatre, Liverpool, June 1877, and Booth’s Theatre, New York, also in 1877 (Coleridge, intro. para. 1–4). Byron’s exotic drama seems to have had a decent turn on stage for a play written for the drawing-room, but the most interesting production of *Sardanapalus*, overlooked by Coleridge, was adapted for the stage by Francisco José
Pinheiro Guimarães, and purportedly taken to stage on the Teatro do Rocio in 1852, in São Paulo, Brazil (Barboza 64, 169; Almeida 189). Though Brazilian Byronist Álvares de Azevedo records that the play was “judged impossible to bring to the stage” (170), Gumarães’s translation includes a transcription from the President of the Conservatório Dramático Brasileiro “granting license, in terms of the law, so that this admirable tragedy can be represented in any theatre in the court” (qtd. in Barboza 64). Pires de Almeida, in his *Escola Byroniana no Brasil*, also mentions the production, in the Teatro do Rocio, and claims to have seen Hugo’s *Hernani* performed in connection with Byron’s drama (189). The fabled Brazilian production of *Sardanapalus* pre-dates any British production.

As the production demonstrates, or at least the impetus to perform Byron’s work on the Brazilian stage shows, a significant aspect of Byron’s influence in Brazil was the performance of the Byronic or imitating Byron’s image in action. *Sardanapalus* is one of Byron’s works most easily read as a metaphor for events in his own life, with himself figuring as Sardanapalus, Annabella Milbank as Zarina, and Teresa Guiccioli as Myrrha. But, as Jerome McGann notes, *Sardanapalus* does not aim to be strictly autobiographical: “Such characters—they are typically Byronic—face in two directions, ‘referentially’ toward certain socio-historical frameworks, and ‘reflexively’ toward the poetical environments within which they are aesthetically active” (“Hero” 142). The Byron of *Sardanapalus* is a Byron in masquerade, pointing in both a real and aesthetic direction. Mixing the real and the aesthetic puts Byron in a safe “imaginary” place where he can comment on real social issues and achieve reconciliations he could not in life. According to McGann, “The play represents Zarina acting out the role of the forgiving wife. This is a role in which Byron tried, quite unsuccessfully, to cast his wife from the earliest period of their separation. . . . In the more elaborate fictional world of *Sardanapalus*, Byron—for better or worse—gets his wish” (“Hero” 143). *Sardanapalus*
becomes for Byron a liminal space where he can address the breaches in his life and act out reconciliations.

Byron as Aesthetic Performance and Social Drama

Byron’s drama already merges socio-historical forces with aesthetic paradigms, but the performance of his closet-drama in Brazil reproduces the interplay between aesthetic drama and social drama on another level. To perform *Sardanapalus* as Sardanapalus is to put on the aesthetic image of Byron imagining himself as Sardanapalus. For many young Brazilian Romantics, putting on the aesthetic image of Byron functioned in the same way writing *Sardanapalus* did for Byron. Performing Byron became an aesthetic space where they could investigate their own ideologies, work out their social crises, and move toward a Brazilian literature reconciled with itself.

As the previous chapters have illustrated, the extent and intensity of Byromania in Brazil was so potent during the 1840s, ‘50s, and ‘60s that it is difficult to find criticism in Portuguese on any second or third generation Brazilian Romantic without reference to “O Byronico” (The Byronic) or “A Escola Byroniana” (The Byronic School). Countless imitators of Byron’s verse, translators, and other Byronic aficionados actually labeled themselves “Byronistas.” As in much of Europe, being a Byronist often meant acting melancholy, dressing in the Byronic style, walking with a limp, being constantly inebriated, and so on, more than it meant actual literary output. As Pires de Almeida notes, “along with the fervent followers of the seductive school came many Byronists [. . .] that distinguished themselves more through a lawless lifestyle than by any merit in their poetical works” (199). Beyond the translations of Byron’s works and other references to him in print that manipulated his image as a Romantic author, accounts of the living performance of Byron enacted by his followers in Brazil, add another level of significance to Byron’s impact in Brazil. Besides reflecting a darker romanticism in
Brazilian literature, Byron’s image, as a cultural metaphor, became a mode of social performance that transmogrified his image at least as much as the literary modifications discussed in the last chapter.

The purpose of this chapter is not to focus on the literary output of Byron’s Brazilian translators and imitators, but to examine the “social drama” Byronism became in Brazil, to borrow a term from performance theorists Victor Turner and Richard Schechner. Cultural performance of the Byronic in Brazil went far beyond merely adopting Byron’s look and swagger. It became more, in fact, than a philosophical ideology or even a political movement. Fledgling second- and third-generation Romantics patterned their lives on Byron and literally turned the performance of the Byronic into a matter of life and death. Legends of “The Byronic School” in Brazil involve a pervading sense of the macabre, cultish side of Romanticism, which the Brazilians seem to have taken much more seriously than anyone in Europe. Furthermore, the Brazilian version of the Byronic gains ritualistic power among Brazilian Romantics as it does perhaps nowhere else. Beyond his influence on Brazilian literature, the image of Byron in social performance became a mode of reconciliation between the aesthetic and the real and a rite of passage in the establishment of an independent Brazilian literature.

Victor Turner, in *From Ritual to Theatre*, examines the relationship between aesthetic performances, particularly contemporary theatre, and “social dramas,” noting that through many forms of theatre “performances are presented which probe a community’s weaknesses, call its leaders to account, desacralize its most cherished values and beliefs, portray its characteristic conflicts and suggest remedies for them, and generally take stock of its current situation in the known world” (11). According to Turner, stage drama, and many other types of contemporary performance, can perform the function rituals have played in pre-industrialized societies, allowing us to examine our “social dramas” from a liminal space, or a play space. The aesthetic drama, then,
generally imitates the progress of “social drama,” which as a paradigm Turner divides into the following phases: “breach, crisis, redress, and either reintegration or recognition of schism” (69).

A social drama first manifests itself as the breach of a norm, the infraction of a rule of morality, law, custom or etiquette in some public arena. . . . A mounting crisis follows, a momentous juncture or turning point in the relations between components of a social field. (70)

In reaction to the crisis,

Certain adjustive and redressive mechanisms, informal and formal, are brought into operation, [including] the performance of public ritual. Such ritual involves a “sacrifice,” literal or moral, a victim as scapegoat for the group’s “sin” of redressive violence. . . . The final phase consists either in the reintegration of the disturbed social group—though, as like as not, the scope and range of its relational field will have altered; the number of its parts will be different; and their size and influence will have changed—or the social recognition of irreparable breach between the contesting parties. (70-71)

Aesthetic performance reflects the pattern of the “social drama,” but also directly influences the “social drama” by leading the participants toward the “reconciliation” or “recognition” phase. Communities take stock of themselves by re-experiencing some of their cultural crises in the liminal space of performance and then practice reconciliation by witnessing redress in action and/or participating in reconciliatory consciousness themselves simply through realizing the nature of the crisis. As a result of this interaction between performance and life, as Turner notes, “the anthropology of performance is an essential part of the anthropology of experience. In a sense, every type of cultural performance, including ritual, ceremony, carnival, theatre, and poetry, is
explanation and explication of life itself” (13). Considering the performance of Byronism in Brazil, whether on the stage, in the street, or at a cemetery, can provide a glimpse into the “social drama” embedded in Brazilian Romanticism and the relationship of Byron’s image to that drama, which had been considered in part in previous chapters. While translations of his works and references to his poetry and his life can develop a notion of his prestige and his far-reaching impact, the performance of Byronism in Brazil lays bare the underlying cultural reasons why his image was so powerful. As Turner writes, “Through the performance process itself, what is normally sealed up, inaccessible to everyday observation and reasoning, in the depth of sociocultural life, is drawn forth” (13).

The ritualizations and the performances of the Byronic tell us as much about Byron, his image, and his works, as they tell us about those who were caught up in Byromania. From a ritual perspective, Byron can be seen as both a myth or symbol and a performance. Since Annabella Milbanke first used the term “Byromania” in 1812, Byron scholarship has been known for its failure to 1) extricate Byron’s personal fame from the analysis of his works, and 2) free the “real” person, George Gordon Noel Byron, from the captivating Byronic cult image his works produced. Notable recent studies, such as Jerome Christensen’s *Byron’s Strength* and Frances Wilson’s *Byromania*, have focused on some of the critical possibilities of considering Byron’s celebrity image as an influencing force on the text’s popular reception. Wilson notes that her contributors “leave out the poems” and “focus instead on the image of the poet and on the phenomenon of ‘Byromania’” (3); and Christensen claims that his work “presents no dualism of rhetoric and form, soul and body, truth and falsehood, poet and work” (xiv). It is precisely Byron’s capacity to be an “image,” a mythic container, without stable connection to fact, form, or work—as even Byron wrote of himself, “everything by turns and nothing long”—that makes Byromania such a culturally translatable phenomenon. It
is precisely Byron’s capacity to be an “image,” a mythic container, without stable connection to fact, form, or work, as even Byron wrote of himself, “everything by turns and nothing long,” that makes Byromania culturally translatable and gives it a mythical power.

Byron as a Ritual Symbol

As a symbolic figure for Brazilian Romantics, Byron was molded and manipulated in diverse ways, as the last two chapters demonstrate. As Cilaine Alves writes, “Here, macabre and melancholy Romanticism took the person of Byron as an example of literary life to be followed. As such, Byronism became an expression of that which today we call ‘Byronic Sickness’” (118). The power Byron gained in Brazil and the aspect his image assumed at the hands of Brazilian translators and imitators is difficult to explain. As Onedia Barboza writes,

Translations indicate that there was, without any doubt, a movement of Byronism in the direction of the gothic, the macabre. But yet the translations show clearly that this Byronism is more in the imaginations of the translators than in the text of Byron. We cannot, with basis only in the translations, explain the development of the process of transformation of Byronism, to the expression of the Byronic Sickness, with its symptoms of skepticism, melancholy, misanthropy, until the point in which it passes synonymous with black Romanticism, macabre Romanticism, inspiring legends and fantasies. (270)

However, considering Byron as a ritualistic symbol helps explain both his potency and his mutability as an image. The “ritual symbol,” according to Turner, “becomes associated with human interests, purposes, ends and means, aspirations and ideals, individual or collective, whether these are explicitly formulated or have to be inferred
from the observed behavior” (22). Byron should, therefore, be examined as a kind of narcissistic Brazilian vision, reflecting back to them their own underlying interests and purposes.

An expanded definition of Turner’s “ritual” or “dynamic symbols” helps justify implying that Byron, a real nineteenth-century man, could carry this kind of ritual significance, generally associated only with tribal societies and religious mythology. Dynamic symbols do not only appear in “tribal cultures,” but also in “the ‘cultural refreshment’ genres, of poetry, drama and painting,” and they “have the character of dynamic semantic systems, gaining and losing meaning—and meaning in a social context always has emotional and volitional dimensions—as they ‘travel through’ a single rite or work of art, let alone through centuries of performance, and are aimed at producing effects on the psychological states and behavior of those exposed to them” (Turner 22). These symbols, which Turner calls “open-ended,” “are essentially involved in multiple variability, the variability of the essentially living conscious, emotional, and volitional creatures who employ them” and may “move through the scenario of a specific ritual performance and reappear in other kinds of ritual, or even transfer from one genre to another” (Turner 22-23). Considering Byron as a celebrity image and a dynamic symbol, in Turner’s terms, and not necessarily as a static, biographically isolatable person, gives some insight into how the image of Byron and the meaning embodied in that image can be interpreted and employed in such radically diverse ways from one culture to another, and from one time to another.

In Brazilian Romanticism, in fact, many poets and critics associated different ideas with Byron and they all demonstrated different levels of dedication to the Byron they believed in. According to Almeida, there was a general feeling of excitement among students during the 1850s at the Academy of São Paulo School of Law over Romanticism
and Byron. However, Almeida demonstrates a certain amount of confusion in deciding just how to live the life of a poet:

To be a poet was my ideal. [. . .] But to which of the genres should I affectionate myself? To the Byronic, libertarian, wandering, inebriated, and at the same time soaring, arrogant, leaping with Manfred the nebulous heights? Raising myself in the comprehension of remorse, personified in Cain? Condescending to the constant tedium of life, like in Childe Harold? (35)

Almeida’s desire goes beyond imitation of Byron’s style and works to reflect the performative aspect of Byronism in Brazil but also the fragmented notion of what Byronism meant. Being a poet meant living the life of a poet more than necessarily writing poems; as Almeida writes, “To live just like Byron, Shelley or Musset, pass through life just like Edgar Poe, was the extent of my dream” (36). But, to “live just like Byron” encompasses many different ways of living.

Brazilian Byronists can, however, be usefully categorized into three groups: those who approached Byron only from a literary/academic perspective and remained detached from the cultish aspects of the Byronic schools; those who seriously took part in the ritualistic performance of Byronism in their lives and seem to have followed the pattern absolutely by dying tragically and young; and those who also participated in the ritual and some of the dark interpretations but eventually went on to become upstanding and important Brazilian citizens. A good comparison to these distinctions can be made with the 1989 Peter Weir film Dead Poets Society in which several prep school boys form a secret poetry-reading society that in many ways becomes a performance of the Byronic. Notably as the society evolves, some members invest themselves cavalierly or academically and remain unchanged, while for others the ritualistic meetings become an
important rite of passage that allows them to express their repressed desires, solidify their identities, and become reconciled in their relationships to society.

The meetings of the Dead Poet’s Society and the meetings of the various Byronic Schools in Brazil represent what Turner refers to as a liminal space, an important phase in Arnold van Gennep’s theory of rite of passage rituals. Turner explains Gennep’s three phases of rites of passage, which include a “separation” phase that “demarcates sacred space and time from profane or secular space and time” and “represents the detachment of the ritual subjects . . . from their previous social statuses”; a “transition” or liminal phase in which “the ritual subjects pass through a period and area of ambiguity, a sort of social limbo which has few . . . of the attributes of either the preceding or subsequent profane social statuses or cultural states”; and an “incorporation” phase which “represents the return of the subjects to their new, relatively stable, well-defined position in the total society” (24). The deviancies from societal norms recorded in accounts of the second and third generations of Brazilian Romantics are a good indication of a form of liminality, but legends of midnight séances, macabre poetry readings, and festivals in cemeteries provide case-book examples of the liminal space and the rite of passage ritual Byronism represented for some Brazilian Romantics.

One particular account reports an elaborate, midnight cemetery ritual that became especially legendary among the students at the São Paulo Academy. The author, Pires de Almeida, from all indications appears to have been a close associate with many of the key figures in the Byronic movement and a participant himself. Almeida’s story may be considered as an outright ritual—a historical occurrence—, or as an aesthetic drama in which the participants are more conscious of their theatrical roles in the performance. Either way, the legend of the cemetery ritual serves as a metacommentary on Brazilian Romanticism in the same way Turner notes of theatre: “Theatre is perhaps the most forceful, active, if you like, genre of cultural performance. . . . No society is
without some mode of metacommentary—Geertz’s illuminating phrase for a ‘story a group tells about itself’ or in the case of theatre, a play a society acts about itself—not only a reading of its experience but an interpretive reenactment of its experience” (Turner 104). *Sardanaupalus* held some meaning for the Brazilian theatre and society in the way of a metacommentary, but Lord Byron’s image, or the “dynamic symbol” of Byronism alive in Almeida’s Byronic ritual is the embodiment of the “cultural root paradigm” of Brazilian Romanticism.

Byron and the Queen of the Dead

Almeida introduces his account of the macabre festival of the “Queen of the Dead,” which he claims to have witnessed, by explaining “how serious young men had taken the romantic roles. The adventures that were the most terrible were, in truth, those that seduced them most; and it was impossible to imagine what of the inconceivable happened under the pretext of imitation of the seductive and irresistible school” (199).

Beginning his narrative, Almeida writes,

> Thus it was, at night, late night, the flasks of Cognac were burning on multiple study desks; the books stained with skepticism were those most turned to; and from there the curses against the churches and the poetic fanaticism for sensual women; and from there equally the reproductions, more or less faithful, of the festivals, the ‘black banquets,’ on the Campo Santo [cemetery]. (199)\textsuperscript{78}

The late hour of the students’ meeting, along with their choice of meeting location in the cemetery fields, away from the city, establishes the temporal and physical liminality of their ritual. Turner notes, the liminal phase is “frequently marked by the physical separation of the ritual subjects from the rest of society” (26). Furthermore, the students have rebelled against popular religion and enlightenment, referring to their skeptical
texts and cursing institutions. As Turner writes, “the novices are, in fact, temporarily undefined, beyond the normative social structure,” which “liberates them from structural obligations. It places them too in a close connection with non-social or asocial powers of life and death” (27). Therefore, the students also participate in “black banquets,” referring to the Afro-Catholic Black Mass.

Almeida does not imply that the “books stained with skepticism” are solely Byron’s works, but the students that participate in the particular ritual he records all re-name themselves after Byron’s protagonists:

We all had taken names of patrons, that were from personages from the poems and dramas of Lord Byron; and therefore, Manfred, Lara, Giaour, Marino Faliero, Beppo, Conrado, Sardanapalo, Mazeppa, Cain, etc. (202 note)

There is also a definite connection between religious skepticism and Brazilian Byronism in Almeida’s work, since he refers to an early Byronist, Father José Romão, who was known to have preached Byron from the pulpit and “written in between the lines of his breviary [book of Catholic psalms and recitations] profane citations taken from Petrarch, from Byron, and even from the atheist Shelley!” (11). 80

Considering Almeida’s entire work, A Escola Byroniana no Brasil, adds a considerable amount of context to the ritual because he records several descriptions of dark, mysterious poets and translators, and their macabre doings, as well as a detailed description of an earlier, similar, cemetery ritual carried out by one of the most influential Byronists, Álvares de Azevedo, and his compatriots. The account of the earlier ritual provides, in essence, a ritual tradition of which Almeida’s new group of initiates is only another iteration.

According to Almeida, “Nearly thirty students, under the pretext of combating the spleen produced by their vigils, concocted a macabre festival in the Cemetery of the
The students had prepared themselves with long, black robes, special scarves and hats, apparently in the Byronic fashion; and they “brought a provision of drink, sure to find, in the community charnel house, the skulls necessary to serve them as goblets” (201). After arriving at their choice tomb in the cemetery, having desecrated as many other graves as possible along the way, Almeida notes that “a crazy idea came across the mind of one of our companions.”

“What if we were to declare a Queen of the Dead?” (202)

From seven candidates of the most beautiful young women in the city, the students vote to select one, Eufrásia, to be the subject of an “interment of the greatest pomp.” In order to provide the necessary accoutrements for the funeral they ransack the cemetery and disinter an old woman to furnish a suitable coffin, as one student declares, “One, two, three! Let’s roll up our sleeves to our arm pits, Byronists of São Paulo!” (203). Another student exclaims, “I conjure you,—O fearful goblins!—dance in the round, circling empty tombs, while we turn ourselves over to profaning[. . .]. To the task! To work, hence! In memory of the fantastic nights of the Chief-lord, of the classic drunkenness and the Bacchanals in the monastery of Newstead” (203). All of this sounds particularly irreverent, which further characterizes ritual’s liminality in that it “may also include subversive and ludic (or playful) events” (Turner 27).

With the coffin then on their shoulders, the students direct themselves to Eufrásia’s apartment, but on the way they pass the Masonic lodge and follow the suggestion of one student to break in and borrow all the paraphernalia they need:

In that Masonic lodge, where the Rosecruz Cavaliers initiate themselves in the mysteries of their order [. . .], we will not lack attractive insignias, aprons and banners, spells, funeral clothing, by the dozens, the clothing of the Terrible Brother and those of the entrants of the temple, swords of steel, which cross in the form of an arch, hammers, compasses from the
constructors of Solomon’s Temple, torches, and everything else necessary for the funeral of the recruited Queen of the Dead. (205)85

When Eufrásia attends to the students’ call, she resists participating in their plans even though they “convince her that it was no more than a ceremonial prepared by her admirers to crown her Sovereign of the Kingdom of the Dead,” but one of the students “grabbed her and enveloped her completely in one of the bed sheets, and locked her in the coffin.” Almeida notes that “she wanted to scream but could not” (206).86

The students return with their load to the cemetery, all the while reciting verses from Schiller, Goethe, and Byron. One student “commenced in declaring the apostrophe of King Lear to the tempest,” and Almeida notes that “the effect of the beautiful verses from Schiller accompanied by funeral cantos, chanted as ballads, and thundering from afar, is impossible to narrate” (211). Meandering through the cemetery in procession by the light of their torches “gave their ceremony a character of peregrination to the tombs of the Spirits of which the old legends of the Elves speak, or of souls tormented, a pack of werewolves, or even a cloud of vultures” (211). However, the macabre environment did not faze the students. As Almeida writes,

This agitated us little, ourselves saturated in the literature of the celebrated Walpurgis Night of Goethe, and the invocation of Manfred in the glaciers of the Alps. Death, and all that is morbid, could that by chance frighten those who tempered their punch in boiled skulls?! Those who, in their extravagant dwellings, arranged everything with furnishings of human bones brought even while reeking and fleshy from the general deposit of the cemetery?! (211)87

At this point it is important to note how the ritual is developing in narrative fashion and including several types of performance, including recitation, song, dance, and role playing, which all become more intense as the ritual continues. Ritual is
oftentimes, as Turner notes, “a synchronization of many performative genres, and is
often ordered by dramatic structure, a plot, frequently involving an act of sacrifice or
self-sacrifice, which energizes and gives emotional coloring to the interdependent
communicative codes which express in manifold ways the meaning inherent in the
dramatic leitmotiv” (81). Furthermore, in this instance it also “involve[s] a complex
sequence of episodes in sacred space-time,” notably the cemetery, the ante-chamber, the
tomb, the Masonic lodge, and later the forest (Turner 27).

Arriving at the ante-chamber of the tomb from which they borrowed the coffin,
the students commence their macabre festivities, which begin with the marriage of the
Queen of the Dead to Satan. As Almeida notes, “It was not sufficient to have declared a
Queen of the Dead, we had to carry our impiety to the point of designating her a
bridegroom, to whom we would marry her, giving them both as a wedding bed the cavity
of the old woman’s exhumed grave” (213). Satan is then played by one of the students in
costume, who was, incidentally, already playing the part of Byron’s protagonist Lara.
Almeida writes,

It would be unnecessary to add that the matrimonial ties were celebrated
in extremis, because Eufrásia, shut up in the coffin, with her eyes frozen,
only gave, from time to time, signals of life, from the agitation of her arms
and legs. As secure as the coffin was, Satan leaped on the border of the
sepulcher, and fell full over the lid, ready to perpetrate the act. And the
banquet of the marriage celebration began scandalously, interspersed
with macabre dances and recitations characteristic of the school of poetry
and literature (213).88

While the festival continues, and “many, wrapped in funeral clothing, danced in dizzy,
morbid, circling,” the students re-named Beppo and Sardanapalo recite verse from
prominent Brazilian Byronists of an earlier school and several translations of Byron.
All of a sudden, shrieks came from the bottom of the grave: It was the valiant Satan who, with arms raised, asked us to remove him; stretched out over the sepulcher coverings, we took him by the wrists and pulled him courageously. He was pale, trembling, bewildered. Frozen, on his feet at the edge of the dark hole, with his eyes wildly searching, he vainly tried to pronounce a sentence, articulate any word that could express such surprise, such great emotion! And this horrible state lasted for some instants, until he could, re-discovering his voice exclaim:

‘She is dead!’

‘Dead!’ we repeated as a group.

‘I kissed a cadaver!’ he explained finally, releasing a convulsive gasp.

The reality was cruel: Eufrásia really was dead.

Terrified and unsure, we mutually looked at each other, reflecting on the consequences of such a crazy adventure. (217-218)

This seems like an interesting, unexpected twist for a ritual, but it is really only a natural component of a bona-fide rite of passage. The students are forced out of the liminal space by the final “act of sacrifice,” Eufrásia’s death, which suddenly transforms what they could have considered a mock ritual into the real thing. Immediately the funeral scene, the Masonic attire, the recitations, chanting, and dancing, and all their performances of the macabre Byronic link together as “the interdependent codes” that become “energize[d]” and full of “emotional coloring,” that “express in manifold ways the meaning inherent in the dramatic leitmotiv” (Turner 81).

The remainder of Almeida’s account is dedicated to illustrating the students’ remorse and their repentance from Byronism, as they abandon the city and wander in the hills to escape justice. He writes,
We judged, calmly, coldly, almost selfishly, that Romanticism and Byronism were futile theories of purposeless extravagancies; frenzies and insanities so much more seductive when practiced in comfortable student chambers, to the flames of drink, with straw cigarettes in the corner of one’s mouth, and under the protection of contingency. And thus disillusioned, we advanced, into the blasts of the tempest—and I must confess—anxious for a resting place. (224)

Almeida’s final realization represents a dramatic linking of aesthetic performance and ritual. Readers of this and other historical accounts of Byronists in Brazil struggle to distinguish which parts of the stories are fictitious and which are accurate. Determining whether the participants in such performances were in earnest or not is similarly difficult. Many accounts certainly give the impression that the Romantics who imitated Byron in their daily lives did so unaware of their own social performance. Since Byronism became a social phenomenon and simultaneously an aesthetic movement, the line between the two is easily blurred. However, the fact that accounts of midnight rituals dedicated to Byron exist alongside evidence of his literary influence underscores his importance as a mythical symbol in Brazil. The performance of Byronism in Brazil, illustrated by Almeida’s ritualized narrative, is the embodiment of the dichotomy between aesthetic and truly ritualistic liminal spaces. In the case of Byron, the aesthetic performance becomes efficacious ritual. As Turner argues, the ritual interacts with social drama for social change and cultural transcendence: “There is an interdependent, perhaps dialectic, relationship between social dramas and genres of cultural performance in perhaps all societies” because “life, after all, is as much an imitation of art as the reverse” (72).

Apart from the actual ritual act performed by the “Escola Byroniana,” the ways Brazilian Romantics imitated Byron in dress, manner, feeling, and temperament also
play a part in the ritualizing performance of his image in Brazil. In the case of the
Brazilian Byronists, “life itself [became] a mirror held up to art, and the living
perform[ed] their lives, for the protagonists of a social drama, a ‘drama of living,’ [were]
equipped by aesthetic drama with some of their most salient opinions, imageries, tropes,
and ideological perspectives” (Turner 108). The impetus to aesthetically perform
Byronism on the stage in Brazil, and the corresponding performance of Byronism in the
lives of the “Byronic School,” reflected their underlying cultural desires, conflicts, and
negotiations, which took the image of Byron as a metaphor. Brazil’s Romantic period was
an important developing period in the maturation of Brazil as a country and the birth of
its national identity and literature. Byron’s influence, in part because of the mythic
properties it had already acquired in Europe and in part because of the cultural situation
in Brazil, became the subversive yet healing force in Brazil’s cultural identity crisis, just
as he was on a smaller scale in the lives of each of the students in Almeida’s account.
Byron’s influence in Brazil illustrates, perhaps better than his influence in any other
country, the mythic power and ritualistic potential of his celebrity image.
Conclusion:

“The Very Center of Romanticism”: Byronic Romanticisms

In Don Juan Canto III, stanzas 78–86, Byron describes the banquet poet, who, with his chameleon forms and allegiances, represents Southey but also Byron himself (McGann, Byron 43). Stanza 86 reads:

In France, for instance, he would write a chanson;
In England, a six canto quarto tale;
In Spain, he’d make a ballad or romance on
The last war—much the same in Portugal;
In Germany, the Pegasus he’d prance on
Would be old Goethe’s—(see what says de Staël)
In Italy, he’d ape the “Trecentisti”;
In Greece, he’d sing some sort of hymn like this t’ye[.] (Lord Byron 509)

Byron’s satire of the banquet poet and his hypocritical aesthetics is ostensibly a critique of popular poets like Wordsworth and Southey that Byron considered had abnegated their ethical beliefs to pander to the tastes of those in power. His critique, however, reveals his own frustration over having lost control over his popular image. Though perhaps his personal political allegiances were intact, by the time Byron wrote Don Juan the ideologies with which his mythic image had become associated had long since assimilated Byron. Though he maneuvered and calculated plenty in the beginning of his career with an eye to fame, by the end his fame had outgrown him and formed into a different Byron in each Romantic sub-culture.

Byron was clearly many things to Brazil. Byron represented the literary arch-enemy of Brazil’s mother country. He influenced the very beginnings of Brazilian Romanticism through his pervasive presence in European letters through the 1830s. His
cosmopolitan image reflected the underlying conflicts and negotiations that energized Brazilian literature in its earliest stages. Byron became the figurehead for an entire counter-movement in Brazilian Romanticism, and he became the image of the other in Brazil. Finally, Brazil’s three-decade engagement with Byron acted as a liminal space in which Brazilian literature became reconciled to itself and the world. The previous chapters have attempted to capture some of the nuances and implications involved in Byron’s influence in Brazil, his social energy as a cultural metaphor, and the development and manipulation of his celebrity image implied therein. The limited scope of this project, however, has left plenty of material untouched and numerous analytical possibilities unexplored. The power and function of Byron’s mythic image in Brazil (and briefly in Portugal) that these chapters have examined highlight the social energy carrying capacity of celebrity authors, such as Byron, and the unavoidable exchange of power between text, author, and culture that empower popular works of art.

In the end, while the influence of Byron in Brazil leads to many questions about Byron’s image, his text, his life, Brazilian culture and society, and Brazil’s Romanticism, perhaps the questions that should be asked in conclusion to a thesis on Byron are questions central to English and European Romanticism’s approach to Romanticism itself. For Brazil, and much of Europe in the nineteenth century, Lord Byron’s image was the embodiment of Romanticism. Even though Brazil can be said to have seriously transmogrified that image, as nearly every country did with Byron, the way Brazilian Romantics saw Byron reflected what they thought English Romanticism to be. A mid-nineteenth century Brazilian notion of English Romanticism that turns out to be so polar to the English idea of its own Romantic era disrupts the idea of a traditional, universally definable Romanticism.

This thesis began by considering the potency of Byron’s celebrity image as a force that, at least outside of England, energized Byron’s works with Greenblatt’s “social
energy.” The Byronic hero image, in all its permutations, became the underlying cultural metaphor that carried his works throughout Europe and in Brazil. This study has been concerned mainly with the dynamic effects of Byron’s celebrity image in Portugal and Brazil; but due to the cultural transcendence Byron’s image achieved in nineteenth-century Europe and the Americas and the mythic proportions of his image, it manifests the distinctions among world Romanticisms. From Russia to Brazil, Byron’s image became the popular icon for the Romantic, and, as such, the different ways various Romantics viewed Byron, or reinvented him, reflect the heterogeneity of Romanticism as a world movement. Since Byron became in essence the myth of Romanticism, comparing the various versions of Byron’s image each country co-opted provides a panoramic perspective on differing nineteenth-century notions of Romanticism, with Byron as both the common denominator and the center of difference. The influence of Byron’s image in Brazil, therefore, is significant to current Romantic scholars because it demonstrates a subversive perspective on British Romanticism contemporary with the ideological formulation of Britain’s own notion of a Romantic period.

Many scholars of comparative literature argue whether Romanticism as an international movement had its beginnings in Germany, France, or England. Wherever the official beginning of Romanticism is, it is clear that it was a far reaching movement that sooner or later affected nearly every modern country. Many non-European countries, however, did not officially begin their “Romantic periods” until Europe was already talking about Romanticism in retrospect. For example, in the United States, Emerson published Nature in 1836, and most American scholars still place the beginnings of American Romanticism around 1840. The Brazilian Romantic period, likewise, is inaugurated in 1836 by the publication of Gonçalves de Magalhães’ poem Suspeiros Poéticos e Saudades, but the movement does not become widespread until Gonçalves Dias emerges in the mid-eighteen forties. Most of the second-generation
Brazilian Romantics were not even born before the deaths of Keats, Shelley, and Byron. Essentially, North and South America were developing their notions of what Romanticism meant, and what English Romanticism was, at the same time England was deciding in hindsight what its own Romantic ideology had been. The Brazilian Romantics’ notions of English Romanticism, as reflected in their perception of Byronism, made for an “English Romanticism” radically different from the notions the English were developing of their own just-past Romantic period; and therefore, as usual, Lord Byron is the disrupter of stable periodization and a universally codified Romantic movement on yet another front.

Romanticisms Plural

As early as 1924, Arthur Lovejoy, in his essay “On the Discrimination of Romanticisms,” recognized that the term “Romanticism” had been used in many different ways and the various meanings had only become more disparate over time. He writes, “The apparent incongruity of the senses in which the term is employed has fairly kept pace with their increase in number” (3). Considering the various denotations and connotations of “Romanticism” used over the years in Germany, France, and England, Lovejoy concludes, “The word ‘romantic’ has come to mean so many things that, by itself, it means nothing. It has ceased to perform the function of a verbal sign” (6). He further suggests that one solution to the problem of plural connotations of “Romanticism” is to “learn to use the word ‘Romanticism’ in the plural. . . . What is needed is a prima-facie plurality of Romanticisms, of possibly quite distinct thought complexes, a number of which may appear in one country” (8).

Especially now that English Romantic period scholarship has extended its reach into many European countries, across the Atlantic, and into Asia, dissimilarities between “Romanticisms” have become more evident than ever. With the publication of The
Romantic Ideology, Jerome McGann announced a new era of skepticism in Romantic studies, with the aim of “bring[ing] critique to the Ideology of Romanticism and its clerical preservers and transmitters” (1). The necessity, then, for contemporary scholars to demonstrate an awareness of “the contradictions which are inherent to that ideology” has evidenced itself in many subsequent critical works (2). For example, in “Romanticisms, Histories, and Romantic Cultures,” James Najarian’s review of several recent studies in Romanticism, he refers to “the old debate between Rene Wellek’s assertion that Romanticism was a cohesive phenomenon and A. O. Lovejoy’s claim that it was a fragmented one,” and notes that “‘Romanticism’ is still under scrutiny in a way no other periodization is (the October 2001 issue of PMLA contains an impassioned discussion of the term)” (para. 1). As evidence, he notes how each of the four works his review addresses “is caught up in the ongoing discussion” in one form or another (para. 1).

Picking apart critical assumptions and received ideologies may seem like a patently post-modern move, and therefore no longer surprising, but the catalytic role Byron continues to play in the remapping of Romanticism makes him a tantalizing subject of inquiry for modern critics. It also makes his influence in Brazil bear upon the debate over “Romanticisms” and how we should consider English Romanticism. Jerome McGann admits that his view of Romanticism is based on his reading of Byron; and therefore, he reacts specifically against Rene Wellek’s watershed 1949 essay “The Concept of Romanticism in Literary History,” which codified “Romanticism” as “imagination for the view of poetry, nature for the view of the world, and symbol and myth for poetic style” (qtd. in McGann, “Rethinking Romanticism,” 161). McGann notes that “a Byronic vantage on the issue of Romanticism immediately puts in question Wellek’s imagination/nature/symbol tercet. . . . ‘Imagination’ is explicitly not Byron’s view of the sources of poetry, ‘nature’ is hardly his ‘view of the world’ (Byron is distinctly
a cosmopolitan writer), and his style is predominantly rhetorical and conversational rather than symbolic or mythic” (162). Byron, then, becomes the deconstructive tool to traditional “Romanticism,” “Romanticism’s dark angel” who can “redeem Romantic self-expression from the conceptual heavens that threatened it” (McGann, Byron 14).

Consequently, many recent forays into nineteenth-century studies have been made in the name of remapping the Romantic period at least partially via Byron. For example, Stephen Jones’s Satire and Romanticism examines the importance of satire as a continuing genre during the Romantic period. Jones notes that the Romantic “canon itself is now recognized as only one portion of the body of writing—much of it un-Romantic—produced during the period” (3). Like McGann’s argument against Wellek’s constrictive notion of “Romanticism,” Jones emphasizes the gap between traditional notions of Romanticism and satire: “If Romantic poetry is defined as vatic or prophetic, inward-turning, sentimental, idealizing, sublime, and reaching for transcendence—even in its ironies—then satire, with its socially encoded, public, profane, and tendentious rhetoric, is bound to be cast in the role of generic other, as the un-Romantic mode” (Jones 3). Once again, then, Byron embodies the “un-Romantic mode.” A large part of Lord Byron’s poetry is satiric; however, no one can deny any longer that he is a Romantic. So Byron represents the embodiment of a contradiction within “traditional Romanticism.” As Jones notes, Byron “is simply the most vivid representation of the ambivalent relation of Romantic and satiric modes in the period” (Jones 10).

Byron as the Image of Romanticism

While Byron represents a kind of “other” Romanticism to the English, he was the primary model for European Romanticism and the primary icon for Brazil of European Romanticism. As McGann writes, “For a hundred years ‘Byronism’ in poetry was another name for ‘Romanticism’” (Byron 13). Considering how Byron’s influence on philosophy
has been underestimated, especially in English-speaking countries, Bertrand Russell notes, “It was on the Continent that Byron was influential, and it is not in England that his spiritual progeny is to be sought. . . . Abroad his way of feeling and his outlook on life were transmitted and developed and transmuted until they became so wide-spread as to be factors in great events” (746). McGann also notes that Byron, while always a “highly problematic figure” for the English, was central to European Romanticism: “From Goethe and Pushkin to Baudelaire, Nietzsche, and Lautréamont, Byron seems to stand at the very center of Romanticism” (“Rethinking” 162). Russell quotes Maurois that “in France, when Byron died, ‘It was remarked in many newspapers that the two greatest men of the century, Napoleon and Byron, had disappeared almost at the same time’” (750).

France, in fact, became a center for the distribution of Byronism because, according to Robert Escarpit, it “became then the cross-roads and headquarters of all the revolutionary movements in Europe. . . . And there Byron’s living message was heard and commended. There are many examples of political exiles carrying it from France to their own countries” (51). Along with José de Espronceda, who “awoke a wave of partially political Byronism in the Spain of the forties,” Escarpit notes other political Byronic movements in Italy, Germany, Poland, and Russia, all of which can be traced to France (51). Russell writes that “most French poets, ever since, have found Byronic unhappiness the best material for their verses” (751). Variations of the Byronic Hero image saturated Europe along with Byron’s politics, which would be especially empowered by his heroic death in Greece. Trueblood writes, “More than any other major Romantic poet Byron’s political poetry, especially the later cantos of Childe Harold and Don Juan and The Age of Bronze, reflects the revolutionary upheaval of the peoples all over the Continent seeking political freedom and national identity” (201). But even more than his political
writings, the legend of Byron’s life and death became “a catalyst for the resolve of youthful liberals throughout Europe” (Trueblood 192).

Byron has often been conceived as the prototypical European Romantic. As Wilson writes, “Byron lent his name to the scornful, despairing, and burdened hero of nineteenth-century literature” (2). But Byronism was by no means a homogenous movement, and this is where the significance of his celebrity image becomes significant in helping map out the various Romanticisms that arose throughout Europe and the Americas. Even though much of his poetry was in direct response to the political and cultural environment of various European countries, Europe was not a unified political or cultural body, and each country responded differently to Byronism. Each country fashioned a different image of Byron, as demonstrated by the nearly universal villainization and rejection of Byron’s image in Portugal. In a compilation of essays from the International Byron Society, Paul Trueblood notes a “marked difference between British and Continental Byronism” (192); but the compilation evidences further that each of the ten countries included in the symposium had a different vision of Byron and a different version of Romanticism. In fact, even within each country people envisioned Byron differently. Escarpit notes that among French Romantics Byron’s literary influence was varied: “Each of these writers chose in Byron what was more suitable to his own mood: Hugo took the Eastern color, Vigny took the stoicism of the darker meditations, Musset took the flippancy of the satire without its pungency” (50). Diakonova and Vacuro record a distinct division in Russian reception of Byron: “Late sentimentalists stressed his ‘sensitiveness ever tender and vivid’; the Vestnik Europy emphasized the ‘bleak colouring’ and the ‘rebellious passions’ of the heroes” (144). Unlike most European Romantics, the Portuguese Romantics resented Byron because of his critique of them in Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage, but even there a few lonely poets were closet Byronists. Then Brazil, of course, reflects in numerous translations,
references, and accounts considered in previous chapters just how mutable Byron’s image could be. While Byron’s influence in Europe developed along political fault lines, in Brazil his image was strictly apolitical.

Ultimately, different groups reacted in favor or against Byronism as a result of how compatible the image of Byron was with their own narcissistic vision of Romanticism. Byronism, however, was a fairly accommodating model, especially since nineteenth-century translations could be quite liberal. Also, Byron’s image was easy to alter because he was generally mysterious in life, and after his death the burning of his memoirs gave full rein to the already teeming heap of Byronic folklore. Often “Byron’s work was only very imperfectly known,” as in Russia, where “few read him in the original, and it was only *Childe Harold* (the greater part, but not the whole of it), the Oriental tales and a good many of the lyrics which reached Russian readers; *Don Juan* and other satirical poems were known only in excerpts, so that the concept of Byron could hardly be other than one-sided” (Diakonova & Vacuro 157). Even in the countries where Byron was widely translated, most translations followed the spreading of his personal fame. Therefore few foreign readers could develop an unbiased perspective on Byron’s works, or his person, for that matter; and his image quickly became the symbol for the Romantic movement itself.

Most European Byronic movements were as heavily influenced by their own political and cultural ideologies as anything really from Byron’s works. Cedric Hentshel, in “Byron and Germany,” notes that “a notable constituent of Byronism elsewhere—the urge to achieve liberation from a foreign oppressor—was almost wholly lacking in Germany” (72). Referring to the “irruption of Byron into the ideological environment of young Europe between 1825 and 1848,” Escarpit notes that Byron “has been talked about much more than he has been read” (49). In Russia, many poets were inspired by the death of Byron, but according to Diakonova and Vacuro, the genre of poetry inspired by
his political death “developed on lines traced by Pushkin [Russia’s most famous poet] rather than on those traced by Byron himself, the authors drawing inspiration from Pushkin’s interpretation of Byron’s oriental tales” (Trueblood 149). In fact, most of Byron’s Russian fan club never read his works in the original or in translation.

The alteration of Byron’s works through translation, however, is only an extension of the already commodified and mythologized image he created and sold himself. Byron began his literary career by famously launching the image of the aristocratic rebel upon nineteenth-century pop culture in the form of Childe Harold. Both the character of Childe Harold and the poem quickly became familiar subjects in Britain and on the continent. However, more than just the popularization of his character, with the publication of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage, Byron succeeded in creating himself as a fictional character. As Peter Thorslev notes in The Byronic Hero, “Byron did not project life into literature nearly so much as he projected literature into life” (12). Most of Byron’s characters served a similar function: to expand the appeal and complexity of Byron’s own image as the “Byronic Hero.” Tantalized readers gobbled up each new work, enamored, scandalized, or intrigued by the revelations Lord Byron had made in his next character. Before he knew it, “The ‘Byronic’ became public property and Byron found that his identity was no longer synonymous with his image” (Wilson 6).

Even as early as 1816, with the publication of Cantos III and IV of CHP, Byron had begun to give up maintaining control over his own image and a distinction from his characters. In his preface to those cantos he writes, “The very anxiety to preserve this difference, and disappointment at finding it unavailing, so far crushed my efforts in the composition that I determined to abandon it altogether—and have done so” (146).

For Byron, what began as a little exploitation of his own aristocratic ethos turned into an all-out commodification and symbolization of his image into a ideological container—a problematic idea for Byron, who never intended to sell out like he accused
Southey of doing. Ironically, Byron becomes so co-opted before long that he no longer has the ability to not sell out. He becomes himself a work of art—a myth—and a container for various ideologies, all of which associate him with their Romanticisms. Referring to Roland Barthes, Wilson emphasizes that with the “magical potency” of myth, Byron as a “signifier” became disassociated from Byron the man to refer “instead to something entirely separate, to a different and constantly changing set of secondary cultural associations” (9). She writes,

Opposing ideas about Byron and the Byronic were circulating together. Byronism has represented at the same time both solitary elegance and gross libertinism, physical indulgence and emaciation; the sharp dandy as well as the disheveled wanderer are said to look ‘Byronic,’ and Byron was being erased officially at the same time as he was being recreated in the subculture of Byromania (9).

As a result of the mythic proportions of Byronism, biographers have had a hard time separating Byronic folklore from fact, and readers have struggled to distill Byron’s works into a cohesive picture of Byronism. Bertrand Russell notes, “The world insisted on simplifying him, and omitting the element of pose in his cosmic despair and professed contempt for mankind” (752). Likewise, Byron’s satire was especially incongruous with his popular image in many countries. But despite the variations of Byronism, his image continued to be synonymous with Romanticism (McGann, Byron 13); and, therefore, in the mutations of Byronism one can trace some of the key variations in European and world Romanticisms. Notably, though many of the authors now considered “Romantics” never considered themselves by that appellation, many did consider themselves Byronists, or of the “Byronic School,” as was the case in Brazil. Especially in terms of mapping out “Romanticisms,” then, Lord Byron’s celebrity image is at least as important as his works. As Russell notes, “Like many other prominent men, he was more important
as a myth than as he really was. As a myth, his importance, especially on the Continent, was enormous” (752). Russell might add that the importance of Byron’s image was also enormous in the Americas.

The Myth of Byron in the Americas

In his essay “Byron’s Notions of the American Revolution,” Naji B. Oueijan notes that Byron was “on the verge of leaving for the New World to settle permanently in South America” (106). He also was planning a tour of the Americas, according to Mr. Bankroft’s report of a conversation with Byron: “[Byron] spoke a great deal of a tour which he was bent on making through America; he believed that he would judge its people with impartiality” (Lovell 290). Though he never did end up crossing the Atlantic, he was influenced by the politics of the American Revolution, and both North and South America were widely influenced by Byronism. Oueijan’s article examines the aspects of Byron’s politics and poetry that were influenced directly by the North American war of independence. Byron was also similarly interested in the struggles for freedom going on in South America. He associated South America with the same ideals of liberty he found in North America and writes in a letter, “There is nothing left for Mankind but a Republic, and I think that there are hopes of such. The two Americas (South and North) have it; Spain and Portugal approach it; all thirst for it” (The Works V, 462).

During the poet’s life, readers in North America were just as interested in Byron as he was in America. In 1924, Samuel Chew published an article in the American Mercury titled “Byron in America,” in which he examines Byron’s popularity in America and notes, “Byron admired America—or thought he did; perhaps what he really admired was American admiration of himself and his poetry” (qtd. in Oueijan 108). Even before the Americas developed their own Romantic ideologies, Byron was widely read—in the original in the U. S. and usually in French translation in Latin America. According to
Byron’s letters, he both regularly and irregularly received American admirers. In his “Detached Thoughts: October 15, 1821–May 18, 1822,” Byron writes,

Whenever an American requests to see me (which is not unfrequently), I comply: 1stly, because I respect a people who acquired their freedom by their firmness without excess; and, 2ndly, because these transatlantic visits, ‘few and far-between,’ make me feel as if talking with Posterity from the other side of the Styx. (The Works V, 416)

Byron’s prescience could not have been more accurate. His real Romantic descendents in the Americas would not emerge until after his death, and, especially in Brazil, they were a morbid crew who would have given years off their short lives for such an interview, though Byron in person would not have even approximated their expectations.

Was Byron only interested in America because he was popular there? While Oueijan concedes that “during his life-time Byron was the most popular literary figure in America and . . . this fact delighted him much,” he argues that “Byron’s popularity in America did not stimulate his personal interest in transatlantic affairs; rather, the opposite is true” (Oueijan 108). Whether Byron was interested in America for America’s sake or not, his poetry did appeal to Americans, even though they were not his primary audience.

McGann writes that in order to succeed, a poet “must have an audience and hence must operate with certain specific sets of audience expectation, need, and desire. . . . [T]he audience’s social character must be reflected back to itself so that it can ‘reflect upon’ that reflection in a critical and illuminating way” (Byron 38). Perhaps Byron’s libertarian politics, his free-spirited individualism, or even his satirical perspective on Britain embodied American social energies. However, as his influence in Brazil demonstrates, even more than his works, Byron’s celebrity image was itself the text that fulfilled his American audience’s “expectation, need, and desire.” As the past chapters
have shown, his image in Brazil reflected back to Brazilian Romantics their own “social
certificate . . . in a critical and illuminating way.” Though Byron repeatedly lambasted
Southey as a hypocrite for changing his style and politics to cater to his audiences, many
of the calculated facets of Byron’s image were accepted by much more diverse audiences.
Southey could have critiqued Byron for allowing his audiences to take over his image.

Byron, whether through his own conscious rhetorical strategies or through
modifications made to his image beyond his control, became a much greater popular
chameleon than Southey. McGann writes, “Of himself he could say, with far more
certainty than he could of Southey, that he had written verse to foster his image and
advance his career” (McGann, *Byron* 44). For Europe and America, Byron became the
dynamic myth of Romanticism. In North America he was the most popular European
poet during his lifetime, and after his death, in both North and South America, Byron
became the symbolic icon of British Romanticism and the embodiment of modernity.
Just as the shape of the Byronic differed from France, to Germany, to Russia, it took a
different, customized form in the various American countries and at various times before
and after their own “Romantic periods.” The modifications these countries made to the
image of Byron in order to make him fit their own views of European Romanticism
reveals more than their own cultural climate. Especially in Brazil, the manipulated
translations of his works, exaggerated legends of his life, and performative rituals of his
followers never professed an intention to Brazilianize Byron. Their attempts to be
faithful to the spirit of the Byronic, as it were, reveals their perception of the true English
Romantic ideology—in the end a very different Romanticism than the one Britain re-
envisioned for itself through the second half of the nineteenth century.

The popularity Byron achieved in Brazil and the modifications Byron’s image
underwent illustrate a couple of critiques on the traditional notion of English
Romanticism. First, Byron is clearly the key English Romantic. Though he has been
sidelined in anthologies now and then as a minor Romantic, Byron’s prominence in the Brazilian Romantic canon clearly demonstrates how culturally specific canon selection and periodization methods can be. Byron’s influence in Brazil unarguably dwarfs all other English Romantics. The only English author that approximates his influence is Shakespeare. In a further reorganization of the traditional “Big Six,” Shelley appears before Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Keats (and Southey). But both German and French authors outnumber English authors in number of translations and references in epigraphs. Romanticism as a course of study in Britain and America has adhered principally to English texts and authors. Though Romanticism did develop theories of nationalism imbedded in its own ideologies, the narrow culture-specific focus through which English literary studies have presented Romanticism has belied the actual flow of ideas and inter-nationality European Romanticism enjoyed.

A second aspect of Brazil’s European Romantic canon involves the difference in thematic content. As established in the body chapters, Brazilian Romantics considered European Romanticism as a predominantly gothic, exotic, and highly sentimental literary form of expression. Furthermore, being Romantic was more of an expression of how one lived than what one produced on paper. Though the importance of imagination developed in Brazilian Romanticism, it was not a clear aspect of the Romantic works they translated and imitated. Imitating the image of Byron was far more widespread a focus than imitating his works in original verse. While Brazil’s Romantic period began with strong emphases on politics and nature, neither played a significant role in their notion of Byron or European Romanticism.

Brazil’s perspective on Byron is clearly influenced by several factors, including its own culture, religion, political situation, and relationship to Europe. The cultural, political, and literary situation in Brazil interacted with Byron’s image to empower it as a cultural metaphor for negotiations underlying their new national literature and political
solidarity. Brazil’s perspectives on European Romanticism are clearly biased, in many ways one-sided. Literary scholars have done the same thing to Romanticism, or to any literary period for that matter, that Brazilian Byronists did to Byron’s image. By isolating the tenets of Romanticism that fit the best with English and American theoretical inquiry and that best reflect a stable literary history of ideas, anthologists and critics have patterned a Romanticism after their own image. But what more can socio-historic critics of Romanticism hope for? Perhaps considering as many Romantic perspectives as possible, while never creating a comprehensive, unifying Romantic ideology, will at least allow us to trace the shadow of the influence called Romanticism. In Brazil, at least, that influence took on the image of Lord Byron.
Throughout this thesis, I have translated all of the quotes that were originally in Portuguese. The quotes in
Portuguese appear in the endnotes to each chapter. As a further note, I am not an expert in Portuguese
translation by any means, but I have tried to be as faithful as possible to the original. In instances where
several linked quotes appear, I will list them in one note, as below.
“... passava habitualmente os dias na contemplação do horror”
“caverna do sangue”
“fúnebre galeria de seu aposento”
“cujos assuntos eram enforcamentos, terremotos, desastres, grandes epidemias, pestes negras, cemitérios e
hospitais de sangue, causas célebres, magia negra, cabalística, documentos sobre malefícios, escrituras em
pele humana, pactos com o Diabo, fórmulas de esquecidos filtros; obtenção e efeitos dos mais sutis venenos
das clássicas pitonisas” (Almeida 136)

“louco furioso”
“justa ou injustamente, que importa!—para escapar aos seus algozes refugiou-se na morte; e atiro-se pela
janela do quarto que ocupava no segundo andar”
“aresenal de torturas”
“primorosa tradução do Lara, poema de Byron” (Almeida 140)

Este livro não é ainda a tão esperada obra sobre a influência de Byron no Romantismo brasileiro... Trata-
se, portanto, de um estudo preliminar, que pretende pôr a bola de neve em movimento e abrir caminho para
um estudo mais completo da influência propriamente dita. (Barbosa 28)

For an in depth analysis of Brougham’s response to Hours of Idleness, see Jerome Christensen, Lord

“torrente de improperios que o nobre e orgulhoso lord deixou correr de mistura com os altíssimos
louvores” (Telles viii). Note: Translated quotes will be included in the original Portuguese in footnotes
throughout.

Recording Harold’s arrival in Lisbon, Byron writes,

Oh, Christ! it is a good sight to see
What heaven hath done for this delicious land!
What fruits of fragrance blush on every tree!
What goodly prospects o’er the hills expand!
[...]
What beauties doth Lisboa first unfold!
Her image floating on that noble tide,
Which poets vainly pave with sands of gold.
(1.15.207-10, 1.16.216-218)

Byron also dedicates several lines in praise of Sintra, which he calls a “glorious Eden” and questions, “what
hand can pencil guide, or pen, / To follow half on which the eye dilates / Through views more dazzling unto
mortal ken / Than those whereof such things the bard relates, / Who to the awe-struck world unlock’d
Elysium’s gates?” (1.18.236, 238-242). Byron’s comparison of Sintra to “Eden” in CHP is still repeated today
in descriptions of the region.

Outside of the poem, Byron’s letters confirm that the sentiments echoed in CHP were reflections of Byron’s
actual experience. In a letter to Frances Hodgson from Lisbon, Byron records that he had “seen all sorts of
marvellous sights, palaces, convents, &c” and notes that “the village of Cintra in Estramadura is the most
beautiful, perhaps in the world” (Marchand 215). Byron repeats his sentiments about the natural beauty of
Sintra to his mother in a letter from Gibraltar, writing, “It contains beauties of every description natural &
artificial, Palaces and gardens rising in the midst of rocks, cataracts, and precipices[... . ] It unites in itself
all the wildness of the Western Highlands with the verdure of the South of France. (Marchand 218).

Considering the convent at Mafra, Byron writes, “Here impious men have punish’d been, and lo! / Deep in
yon cave Honorious long did dwell, / In hope to merit Heaven by making earth a Hell” (CHP 1.20.258-60).

Byron’s perspective on Catholicism in Portugal reflects common English notions of hypocrisy, corruption,
and apostasy within the Catholic church. The juxtaposition of his praises for the architecture and environs of
the churches and convents with his criticisms reflects a dilemma of Romantic period authors who recognize
the natural and man made beauty of Catholic countries but cannot rationalize the merits of Catholics to live in or create such sublimity.

8 Byron actually makes several errors concerning Portugal in CHP that Portuguese critics waste no time pointing out. He refers to a convent, “Nossa Señhora de Pena,” which he mistranslates as “our ‘Lady’s house of woe,” conjuring at the same time a connection between the convent’s name and rumors of Catholic corporeal punishment. Even after Byron discovers the error, he chooses to leave it in the second edition and includes in a note, “I do not think it necessary to alter the passage, as though the common acceptation affixed to it is ‘our Lady of the Rock’, I may well assume the other sense from the severities practiced there” (CHP 1.20.255 note). Byron also mistakes the location of the signing of the treaty of Sintra, which he writes several stanzas on.

9 “Este modo de falar de um extrangeiro não agrada muito ao sentimento nacional” (Telles 52).

10 Byron would be the first to point out that he did not intend the ostensibly fictional Childe Harold to be equated with himself, as he writes in the preface to canto one. However, naturally recalcitrant responses of Portuguese poets, critics, and even ex-patriots to Byron’s damaging assessment of them make no distinction in their counter-attacks. In fact, the Portuguese identification of Byron with Childe Harold represents the common amalgamation of Byron with his characters that Byron eventually gave up trying to refute. In a letter to Hobhouse introducing the fourth canto of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage, Byron writes,

I had become weary of drawing a line which every one seemed determined not to perceive [. . . .] It was in vain that I asserted, and imagined that I had drawn a distinction between the author and the pilgrim; and the very anxiety to preserve this difference, and disappointment at finding it unavailing, so far crushed my efforts in the composition that I determined to abandon it altogether—and have done so. (CHP IV.122)

Besides giving up making a distinction, however, Byron played up the similarities and purposefully embedded tantalizing allusions to his scandalous personal life in his later creative works. Byron’s visit to Portugal is unique, however, because the opposite is true. If there were any misdeeds or any bait for scandal in his own visit to Portugal, he eliminated it from Childe Harold’s visit and his own letters.

11 “As inclinações do seu atavismo e as emoções da sua sensibilidade propeliam-no aos desregramentos exaustivos” (Carvalho 129).

12 Byron’s father, Captain John Byron was commonly known as “Mad Jack” for his profligate exploits, and Byron’s great-uncle, was known as the “wicked” fifth Lord Byron. (“George Gordon Byron,” DLB para. 2)

13 “O auxílio que nas duas recentes campanhas nos havia prestado a Inglaterra lisonjeava excessivamente o orgulho de lord Byron” (Telles i).

14 “Teriam nossos mortais inimigos ouvido da boca de nosso Pais, que Portugal fora independente, e que os seus filhos espantaram já o Mundo, quando ainda o Povo Inglês não passava de uma orda de Selvagens!” (Proclamação 121).

15 “. . . é a vós que deve o seu poder, e sua Independência” (Proclamação 121).

16 “. . . quadros bem expressivos da perfídia e ingratidão do Governo e povo Inglês, esse monstro que não contente em ter bebido nossa prosperidade, quer ainda nosso sangue, e devorar nosso cadáver Nacional” (Proclamação 121).

17 “O que porém tinha mais destruído este estado no nosso século, era a cega confiança que tinha numa nação ambiciosa, cobiçosa da grandeza, e do poder, que oferece ao princípio uma mão para socorrer, e que oprime depois com uma infinidade de braços.” “A Inglaterra defrutava por inteiro as minas de ouro do Brasil; e Portugal não era mais que a ecónomo das suas próprias riquezas. Este estado se via cheio de Ingleses opulentos, que possuíam todas as riquezas do Reino, e nada ficava aos Portugueses de propriedade” (“Profecia” 45).

18 A Dominação Ingleza em Portugal: O que é e de que nos tem servido a alliança da Inglatera (D’Andrade).
A aliança inglesa nunca trouxe a Portugal senão encargos, ruína, conflitos com outras potencias, vergonhas e desgraçações, e que a Inglaterra envilece-nos perante a Europa fazendo passar o nosso país por uma colônia sua" (D’Andrade 5).

Concerning Byron’s perspective on the patriotism of the Portuguese, the anonymous author of a Portuguese review in the Investigador Português writes:

The patriotism which the Portuguese have shown in 1810 and 1811 (an attitude which I suspect Childe Harold would be incapable of) anticipated stanza XVIII. And, in order to decide the respect which these travelers and their publications deserve . . . it is enough to say that which is obvious (and which will confound them all, whatever country they belong to), namely that they were so blind during their travels in Europe that the two countries which they constantly insulted, abused and mocked are the only ones that have shown patriotism and manliness—Portugal and Spain. (qtd. in Moser et al. 71)

Southey, though he eventually grew to love Portugal, wrote back to England during his first three-month stay in 1796, “I am at Lisbon and therefore all my friends expect some account of Portugal, but it is not pleasant to reiterate terms of abuse, and continually to present to my mind objects of filth and deformity” (qtd. in Macaulay 145). Southey also notes the filth of the Lisbon streets and the number of beggars and stray dogs, and writes, “Glady would I exchange the golden Tagus with the olive and orange groves of Portugal for the mud-encumbered tide of Avon and a glimpse of Bristol smoke” (qtd. in Macaulay 145). Not only do Southey’s initially negative impressions of Lisbon resemble Byron’s, Southey also praised the natural glories of Sintra:

I eat oranges, figs, and delicious pears, drink Colares wine, a sort of half-way excellence between port and claret, dream of poem after poem and play after play, take a siesta of two hours, and am as happy as if life were but one everlasting to-day, and to-morrow not to be provided for (qtd. in Macaulay 157).

Though Southey first visited Lisbon ten years before Byron, both his critiques and his praises seem to ratify Byron’s. He was, after all, much more “Byronic” himself in 1796 when he criticized Portugal than in the later years of his life as poet laureate when he glorified it. Southey’s radically ameliorated perspective on Portugal also suggests that perhaps if Byron had stayed longer he would have liked it better.

“Em Inglaterra não há nenhum tolo que não faça um livro de tourist, nem arquitolo que não o faça sobre Portugal: estes livros e os sermões constituem o grosso da sua literatura” (Herculano 91).

Amelia Opie provides excellent evidence of the English presence in Portugal in Adeline Mowbray (1804), in which her main characters, Adeline and Glenmurray, join an already populous English community in Lisbon and encounter a pseudo-reformed libertine merchant, who turns out to be a reprehensible character later in the novel, and his haughty, ignorant sisters (185-214). Though Opie’s representation of Mr. Maynard and his sisters may be considered a cross section of the English community in Portugal, what Opie herself leaves out of the novel even better demonstrates the attitude of English settlers in Portugal. Opie refers to the health benefits of living in Portugal, since both Glenmurray and Maynard move there for the air, but she makes no reference to the Portuguese people or culture. In fact, Opie notes that while in Lisbon Adeline “was considerably improved” in her knowledge of “the French and Italian languages,” but she ignores Portuguese (188). Interestingly, Opie also does not comment on the environment in Lisbon, even though her characters take frequent walks and meet in public parks. The English settlers in Opie’s novel demonstrate an oblivious insularity from all things Portuguese, which prevents them from assaying the country as Southey and Byron do.

One of the evidences that Byron’s displeasure with the Portuguese can be traced to a single event is the drastic difference in tone between this letter, sent July 16th from Lisbon, and his later letters sent from Gibraltar. According to Hobhouse, Byron left for Gibraltar on the 21st though he planned to leave on the 17th. Examining the letter to Hodgson, Macaulay calls it “good-humored, nonsensical, and not in the least anti-Portuguese. . . . Unless this gay letter was bravado, Byron felt at peace with Portugal on the day before he meant to leave it” (167).

Of the character of Spanish women, Byron writes, “The freedom of women which is general here astonished me not a little, and in the course of further observation I find that reserve is not the characteristic of the Spanish belles, who are in general very handsome, with large black eyes, and very fine forms” (Marchand 219).
The letter is reprinted in J. Almeida Flor’s “A Portuguese Review of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage,” printed in 1977. Along with a calculated rebuttal to Byron’s scathing remarks about the Portuguese, the letter includes several translated passages of the Poem and is the first, and one of the only Portuguese versions of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage (Moser et al. 60).

Of Byron and Dr. Halliday, another traveler to criticize Portugal, the author writes, “Those who have seen and heard what has happened in the armies of the Peninsula for the past three years will agree that both Childe Harold and Dr. Halliday make us laugh so much that they will deservedly be sprinkled with spit” (qtd. In Moser et al. 72).

For further information on Byron’s reception throughout Europe, see Paul Graham Trueblood (ed.). Byron’s Political and Cultural Influence in Nineteenth-Century Europe. Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press. 1981.

Macaulay writes, “Of this anger, patriotic and indignant Portuguese have put forward one explanation—a legend of unknown origin and no traceable authenticity . . . and the affair remains a mystery” (166).

“Passa por certo que este notável humorista foi maltratado, uma noite, á saida de S. Carlos. Como e porque, não me parece facil averigual-o; Crê-se, todavia, que foi por zelos de um serio marido” (Telles 51).

“A nossa ignorancia achaste tão rude
Por serios maridos achar inda aqui,
Que, quando buscavas manchar a virtude,
Nas costas as manchas te punham a ti?” (Lemos 243).

Especially for Portuguese Romantics, the publication of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage created a dilemma. For the rest of Europe “Byron” was synonymous with Romanticism, but how does one explain such scathing derision coming from such a sublime poet? Many Portuguese have, therefore, felt as ambiguous about Byron as he did about them. Telles begins his account of Byron’s visit with a line from Macbeth: “Such welcome and unwelcome things at once, / ’Tis hard to reconcile” (title page). Especially with the publication of Byron’s letters, the Portuguese bewilderment over his scathing denouncements only increased since his letters vacillate in tone as much as CHP. The attempts to re-tell the narrative of Byron’s visit to Portugal, most in the shape of rebuttal, can be seen as endeavors to reconcile the poet with the poem—the cause, Byron’s original tour, with the effect, one of the most negative reviews Portugal has received.

“Porque é que assim mentes? Porque é que assim lanças
Aos ventos da terra de nós fama tal?
Vingança?! E são estas d’um Lord as vinganças?!
Que culpa em teus vicios terá Portugal?!” (Lemos 243)

“Por isso é que somos um povo de escravos?!
Mas quaes a teu modo quizeras cá ver?
Seriam maridos talvez menos bravos?
Seriam mais livres talvez a mulher?” (Lemos 243).

“E se porventura—o que nem é bom pensar—alguma vez lhe peza no animo a elevação d’esse engenho grande, mas tão sobranceiro e desdenhoso, lá está para refrigorar a tradiccional anecdota de S. Carlos. Sorrei-se e fecha o livro. Isso lhe basta” (Telles viii).

“Lord Byron pretendeu colorar essa desfeita na nota á estancia XXI do Childe Harold sobre os assassinatos em Lisboa” (Telles 52).

Many inconsistencies in the various accounts demonstrate their folkloric nature. Challenging all the accounts that place the attack at São Carlos, Carvalho notes that “during the ten days that Byron visited Lisbon, S. Carlos was closed, and, as a consequence, the English bard could not have been accosted upon leaving a production at that theatre (“Durante os dez dias da visita de Byron a Lisboa, S. Carlos esteve encerrado, e, por consequência, o bardo ingles, não podia ser enxovalhado, à saida de um espectáculo naquele teatro”; Carvalho 141). The first recorded Portuguese account, however, by Herculano, claims the encounter happened as Byron and Hobhouse were leaving the theater, and Byron’s account places the
incident outside São Carlos as well, except in his account they were arriving, not leaving. Charlotte Hooker in her article, “Byron’s Misadventures in Portugal,” points out that Hobhouse does not overtly mention São Carlos, but in his entry for July 18 writes, “At ½ past nine went with B. in a Calash to Rua dos Condes attacked near the _____ by 4 men” (49). Furthermore, “Byron set the attack at ‘eight in the evening’ and Hobhouse ‘at ½ past nine.’ Byron identified the attackers as ‘three of our “allies’,” whereas Hobhouse called them “4 men” (Hooker 49). Neither Byron or Hobhouse mention anything about an irate husband or a female interest.


39 “Embora destituída de provas, admite-se a tradição que dá Byron como apaleado por um brigoso auriga de sege, se atendermos ao desgarre dos bilieiros coevos, e, naquele ensejo, à presumível bebedice do petulente poeta, para quen a embriguês representava um dever” (Carvalho 139). Other references to the coachman account are recorded in Francisco Maria Bradalio’s Viagem à roda de Lisboa (1855, p. 117) and Pinheiro Chagas’s Madrid (2d ed., p. 209).

40 João Pinto de Carvalho, for instance, presents an alternative story, though his only evidence is having heard it word-of-mouth:
   An English gentleman, now deceased, told us that, according to a tradition preserved in his family (one of the oldest in the British colony), Byron and Hobhouse were assaulted by some rogues at the top of Rua de São Francisco (Rua Ivens), as they were coming from a banquet at the English embassy, on Rua do Acre, and were descending the Chiado [Rua Garrett] by carriage.40 (Hooker 50)

Other references to the encounter that do not specify assailants include Alexandre Herculano’s, O Panorama and his Pároco de Aldeia.40 J. Dias da Costa records a notice Portuguese writer Camilo Castelo Branco made to Byron’s encounter in Lisbon in Escriptos de Camilo (p. 240), and Vitorino Nemésio recounts Herculano’s perspective in A Mocidade de Herculano (p. 116).

41 “E é hoje por de mais conhecido o resentimento lusitano contra o poeta, que nos julgou depreciativamente. Sobre o tema já correram muitos rios de tinta com o patriótico objectivo de desajarontar o brio nacional. A verdade, porém, é que muito mais agressivos e violentos foram os juizoz que ele emitiu sobre a Inglaterra. E tal deveria bastar para apaciguar o ardor dos nossos agravos” (Rebelo 92).

42 Dr. D. G. Dalgado, in 1919, wrote Lord Byron’s Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage to Portugal with the express purpose “to point out why it was that Lord Byron reviled the Portuguese with passionate animosity, and presented them as though possessing no redeeming features” (v). Demonstrating the continuing controversy, he writes, “This inquiry is of considerable interest, and has not yet received that amount of attention which it deserves” (v).

43 The best of these is also written by Moser. See Moser, F. de Mello, “Byron and Portugal: The Progress of an Offending Pilgrim.” In Trueblood 132-142.

44 The first Portuguese translation of Byron was a partial translation of the stanzas referring to Portugal in CHP, printed in 1812 as part of the first Portuguese retort in the Investigador Português, a London-based, Portuguese paper. However, the Investigador did not circulate in Portugal, so the first translation of Byron’s works published in Portugal did not occur until 1833 with O Preso de Chillon, translated by Fernando Luiz Mouzinho de Albuquerque. O Cercó de Corinthe was then translated by Henrique Ernesto d’Almeida Coutinho in 1839, but the next translation of one of Byron’s works was not until 1875 with the translation of extracts of Don Juan titled Os Amores de D. Juan. Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage is not translated again until Alberto Telles, in 1879, writes Lord Byron em Portugal, in which he translates only the sections referring to Portugal. He does not mention the earlier translation in the Investigador Português, which was likely still unknown in Portugal. Two years later, Telles published the first canto of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage, and then later that year all four cantos. Both translations are in prose. For a researched bibliography of all Portuguese works published on Byron before 1977, see Carlos Estorninho’s “Portuguese Byroniana: A Bibliography,” published in Byron Portugal 1977.

46 “Em 1845 voltou-me o prurido de escritor: mas ésse ano foi consagrado à mania que então grassava de *byronizar*. Todo estudante de Alguma imaginação queria ser um Byron, e tinha por destino inexorável copiar ou traduzir o bardo inglês. . . . Assim é que nunca passei de algumas peças ligeiras, das quais não me figurava herói e nem mesmo autor, pois divertia-me escrevê-las com o nome de Byron, Hugo, ou Lamartine nas paredes do meu aposento à Rua de Santa Teresa. . . . Era um desacato aos ilustres poetas atribuir-lhes versos de confecção minha . . . Que satisfação não íntima não tive eu, quando um estudante . . . releu com entusiasmo uma dessas poesias, seduzido sem dúvida pelo nome do pseudo-autor” (qtd. in Magalhães Junior 40).

47 In the words of Brazilian critic R. Magalhães Junior: “No other influence was stronger in Brazil during the life of Álvares de Azevedo [the key second generation Romantic] than that of Lord Byron. Our Historians customarily call the type of epidemic that dominated Brazilian letters: The Byronic Malady [or O Mal Byronico]” (39).

48 A contemporary of Azevedo in the São Paulo Academy between 1849 and 1855, Francisco de Paula Ferreira de Resende wrote *Minhas Recordações*, in which he described living in a lodge “that had in front the cemetery and to the back the Temanduateí and called itself the Cabin, or House, of the English” (“que tendo em frente o Cemitério e pelos fundos o Temanduateí se denominava Chácara, ou Casa, dos Ingleses”; qtd. in Broca 90). The “Chácara dos Ingleses” was also known as the meeting place of the Sociedade Epicuréia or Epicurean Society, which, according to Brito Broca “there promoted Byronic orgies” (“ali promovia orgias byronianas”; 90). Broca also records that Azevedo was know to have lived in the house (92).

49 In her article, “Conjuring Byron: Byromania, Literary Commodification and the Birth of Celebrity,” Ghislaine McDayter considers the commodification of Byron’s celebrity image in Europe noting: “What set Byron apart from previous poets for literary critics, both then and now [including Scott, Hazlitt, and McGann], was that he was in the business of selling not just poetry, but himself—and thus his fame depended as much on his personal as on his poetic charms. . . . But while Byron’s contemporary critics may have seen him as actively producing and rigidly controlling his literary image in the public realm, it did not take long for Byron himself to realize his own relative insignificance in the construction of his public image—and its absurdity. (McDayter 46, 48)

50 Houve um dia em que a poesia brasileira adoeceu do mal *byronico*; foi grande a sedução das imaginações juvenis pelo poeta inglês; tudo concorria nêle para essa influência dominadora: a originalidade, a sua doença moral, o prodigioso do seu gênio, o romanesco da sua vida, as noites de Itália, as aventuras de Inglaterra, os amôres da Guiccioli, e até a morte. (qtd. in Magalhães Junior 39)

51 Pires de Almeida uses “Escola Byroniana” in the title of his articles in the *Jornal do Comércio*, which appeared between 1903 and 1905, but the phrase is applied to Álvares de Azevedo and his compatriots as early as 1863 in A. Corrêa de Oliveira’s “Fragmento de um escrito—III A Poesia” in which he writes of Azevedo, “As suas poesias, ebelezadas nos perfumes da escola byroniana, não foram inspiradas ao fogo de nossos lares” (qtd. in Candido 134).

52 In “A General Schema of Luso-Brazilian Letters,” Frederick G. Williams notes that divisions between generations are never static and all forms of stratification are debatable, but with an exception of Ronal de Carvalho, all of the Luso-Brasilian scholars cited place Azevedo as the first of the second generation.

53 “Aqui, o romantismo de aspecto melancólico e macabro, conforme visto, tomou a pessoa de Byron como um exemplo de vida literária a ser seguido” (Alves 118).

54 “. . . uma literatura equivalente às européias, que exprimesse de maneira adequada a sua realidade própria, ou, como então se dizia, uma ‘literatura nacional’” (Candido 11).

55 “. . . uma literatura *independente, diversa*, não apenas uma literatura, de vez que, aparecendo o Classicismo como manifestação de passado colonial, o nacionalismo literário é a busca de modelos novos, nem clássicos nem portugueses, davam um sentimento de libertação relativamente à mãe-pátria” (Candido 12).
56 “... o ponto de partida para a teoria do Nacionalismo literário”; “o primeiro poema decididamente romântico publicado em nossa literatura” (Candido 14).

57 There is a hint of irony in the fact that The Giaour is one of the first translations of Byron’s works into Portuguese. By 1814, Byron was critical of the permutations of his own celebrity image, and in The Giaour he satirizes the distorted image critics had created in his name with a truly monstrous character (see McDayter 48–49).

58 “É triste o estado dos poetas ... que versejam como se estivessem na Europa, como representantes de Lamartine e Victor Hugo. A liberdade, de que êles tanto se ufam, não é real, porque existirá no pensamento: o poeta egoísta é imitador, é escravo, e não merece êsse nome, se não fala com a pátria à humanidade” (qtd. in Ramos 17).

59 “Nosso Romantismo, [é] transfigurador de uma realidade mal conhecida e atraído irresistivelmente pelos modelos europeus, que acenavam com a magia dos países onde radica a nossa cultura intelectual. Por isso ao lado do nacionalismo, há no Romantismo a miragem da Europa: o Norte brumoso, a Espanha, sobretudo a Itália, vestíbulo do Oriente byroniano. Poemas e mais poemas cheios de imagens desfiguradas de Verona, Florença, Roma, Napoles, Veneza, vistas através de Shakespeare, Byron, Musset, Dumas” (16).

60 “... [foi] naturalmente, [d]as celebridades da época, de que sofriam a influência e cujos modelos seguíam, em alguns casos, de maneira até servil. Byron, Lamarine, Ossian, Victor Hugo, Chateaubriand, Musset, Vigny, Goethe, Ugo Foscolo, etc.” (Broca 100).

61 “Em 1845 voltou-me o prurido de escritor: mas êsse ano foi consagrado à mania que então grassava de byronizar. Todo estudante de Alguma imaginação queria ser um Byron, e tinha por destino inexorável copiar ou traduzir o bardo inglês. ... Assim é que nunca passei de algumas peças ligeiras, das quais não me figurava herói e nem mesmo autor, pois divertia-me escrevê-las com o nome de Byron, Hugo, or Lamartine nas paredes do meu aposento à Rua de Santa Teresa. ... Era um desacato aos ilustres poetas atribuir-lhes versos de confecção minha ... Que satisfação não íntima não tive eu, quando um estudante ... releu com entusiasmo uma dessas poesias, seduzido sem dúvida pelo nome do pseudo-autor” (qtd. in Magalhães Junior 40).

62 “Merecer a crítica de A. Herculano, já eu consideraria como bastante honroso para mim; uma simples menção do meu primeiro volume, rubricada com o seu nome, desejava-o de certo, mas esperá-lo, seria de minha parte demasiada vaidade” (qtd. in Rocha 43).

63 See Chapter One

64 “Os redatores e colaboradores do jornal não parecem ter tomado consciência ainda de que uma revolução literária havia tido lugar na Europa” (Barboza, “Imprensa” 185).

65 Ofir Aguiar, in “Mediação do Francês em Traduções do Inglês” (“Mediation of the French in Translations from the English”), examines Brazilian translations of Ossian’s “The Song of Selma,” Byron’s “Lines Inscribed upon a Cup Formed from a Skull,” and Oscar Wilde’s “The Ballad of Reading Gaol” to demonstrate the pervasive mediatory influence of the French in most translations of English writers into Portuguese. In all three instances the French translations clearly modify the originals and the Brazilian versions reproduce the errors and nuances that the French introduce. Onedia Barbosa in his meticulous study of translations of Byron into Portuguese takes great pains to demonstrate the detrimental effects of the French influence by comparing the English originals with the French translations and the Portuguese translations. One particularly poorly translated example is Eleutério de Sousa’s translation of Byron’s “The First Kiss of Love.” The fourth stanza in English reads,

> I hate you, ye cold compositions of art,  
> Though prudes may condemn me, and bigots reprove;  
> I court the effusions that spring from the heart,  
> Which throbs, with delight, to the first kiss of love.

The already modified French version of Louis Barré, from which the Portuguese is translated, reads,

> Froides compositions de l’art, je vous exècre! Que les prudes me condamment, que les bigots me dévouent à
l'enfer; j’aime les simples effusions d’un coeur qui bat de plaisir au premier baiser d’amour.

And the even further modified Portuguese version reads,

Composições frias de arte, eu vos detesto, embora astuciosa devoção me condene e vote-me aos infernos! Aos vossos encantos, se os há, prefiro as simples efusões de um coração que palpita de gozo ao primeiro beijo de amor! (qtd. in Barboza, Byron 196-97)

In both translations the translators tend to add emphasis to the already emphatic poem. Each new translation adds another exclamation point! Noticing that Eleutério de Sousa’s version of Byron’s “First Kiss” comes from a French translation effects our interpretation of the significance of the differences and makes it more difficult to determine the influence Brazil had on the image of Byron generally.

66 “Mas não vos pedirei perdão contudo: Se não gostais desta canção sombria Não penseis que me enterrare em longo estudo Por vossa alma fartar de outra harmonia! Se variô no verso e ideias mudo É que assim me desliza a phantasia . . . Mas a critica, não . . . eu rio della . . . Prefiro a inspiração da noite bella” (qtd. in Alves 103).

67 “Plangendo amores impossíveis, dores imponderáveis, a fatalidade da morte, num tom frequentemente pressago, dió-nos a impressão de terem sido criaturas tristes e soturnas. A julgar por essa poesia lacrimejante, cheia de agonias, somos levados a imaginar, ao mesmo tempo, que a vida naquela época não oferecia derivativos às inquietudes desses jovens poetas. Mas parece que na maioria dos casos se tratava de uma tristeza meio artificial, haurida mais nos livros do que na realidade. Reproduziam os desesperos de Byron, Musset, Espronceda, sem chegar a senti-los verdadeiramente” (Broca 117).

68 “. . . a feição lírico-amorosa, mesclada da sensualidade de um autêntico filho dos trópicos, e a feição social e humanitária, em que alcança momentos de fulgurante eloqüência épica” (Biographia para. 5)

69 The epigraphs attributed to the following authors in Ramos’s Grandes Poetas Romanicos do Brasil: Esparsos Completos are found on the following pages: Shakespeare (144, 148, 185, 241-2, 262, 269, 311, 331, 348, 715), Ossian (248, 507, 546, 561, 563, 717), Thomas Moore (257, 339, 389), Cowper (243, 334), Shelley (261), and Crabbe (160).

70 Byron’s original stanza reads:

How sweetly shines, through azure skies,
The lamp of Heaven on Lora’s shore;
Where Alva’s hoary turrets rise,
And hear the din of arms no more! (Oscar of Alva 1:1-4)

Amédée Pichot’s French version, in prose:

Le flambeau des nuits brille au milieu des cieux d’azur, et répand une douce lumière sur le rivage de Lora. Les vieilles tours d’Alva élèvent jusqu’aux nues leurs créneaux grisâtres. Le bruit des armes ne retentit plus dans le chateau solitaire. (qtd. in Barbosa 149)

Cardoso de Meneses translates the lines, emphasizing the elements added in Pichot’s version:

Brilha no azul do céu da noite o círio
Sobra a praia de Lora; as torres d’Alva
Ameias cor-de-cinza às nuvens erguem;
Não mais co’as armas troa ermo o castelo. (emphasis added, qtd in Barbosa 149)
“Em 1845 voltou-me o prurido de escritor: mas êsse ano foi consagrado à mania que então grassava de *byronizar*. Todo estudante de Alguma imaginação queria ser um Byron, e tinha por destino inexorável copiar ou traduzir o bardo inglês. . . . Assim é que nunca passei de algumas peças ligeiras, das quais não me figurava herói e nem mesmo autor, pois divertia-me escrevê-las com o nome de Byron, Hugo, or Lamartine nas paredes do meu aposento à Rua de Santa Teresa. . . . Era um desacato aos ilustres poetas atribuir-lhes versos de confecção minha . . . Que satisfação não íntima não tive eu, quando um estudante . . . releu com entusiasmo uma dessas poesias, seduzido sem dúvida pelo nome do pseudo-autor” (qtd. in Magalhães Junior 40).

Several selections of Soído’s *O Pirata*, translation of *The Corsair*, illustrate the types of changes many Brazilian translators made:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our flag the scepter all who meet obey. (1.1.6)</td>
<td>Flutua sem rival nossa bandeira.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That for itself can woo the approaching fight. (1.1.17)</td>
<td>Cetro que a quantos topa senhorea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To lead the guilty—Guilt’s worst instrument— (1.11.250)</td>
<td>Para ser do crime ignóbil instrumento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refreshing earth—receiving all but him! (2.16.1168)</td>
<td>Frescor a terra dando, e a tudo vida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh! how he listened to the rushing deep. (3.7.1418)</td>
<td>Oh! com que avidez ouve Conrado</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

O Sr. Alexandre Herculano protestou brilhantemente, no *Pároco da Aldeia*, contra a acrimoniosa severidade com que Byron julgou os Portugueses. (qtd. in Barbosa 125)

O Presidente do Conservatório Dramático Brasileiro concedendo licença, nos termos da lei, para que esta admirável tragédia se possa representar em qualquer teatro desta corte. (qtd. in Barbosa 64)

Como era natural, de par com os fervorosos adeptos da sedutora escola viam-se muitos byronianos [. . .] que se distinguiam, mais pela vida desregrada, do que pelo mérito de seus trabalhos poéticos. (Almeida 199)

As traduções mostram claramente que esse *byronismo* está mais na imaginação dos tradutores do que no texto de Byron. Não poderíamos, com base apenas nas traduções, explicar o desenrolar do processo de transformação do byronismo, de expressão do *mal byrônico*, com seus sintomas de ceticismo, melancholia, misantropia, até o ponto em que passou a ser sinônimo de romantismo negro, romantisimo macabro, inspirador das lendas e fantasias. (Barbosa 270)

Os rapazes tinham tomado ao sério os papéis romanescos. As aventuras de mais estrondo eram, na verdade, as que mais os seduziam e impossível fôra imaginar o que de inconcebível se dava sob o pretexto de imitação da atraente e irresistível escola. (Almeida 199)

E assim, à noite, alta noite, os ponches de conhaque flamejavam na pluralidade das mesas de estudo, os livros eivados de cepticismo eram os mais percorridos, e daí as imprecações contra os cultos e o fanatismo poético pelas mulheres sensuais, daí igualmente as reproduções, mais ou menos fiés, dos festins, dos “banguetes negros”, no Campo Santo. (Almeida 201)

Todos nós tínhamos tomado nomes de patronos, que eram os de personagens dos poemas e dramas de Lorde Byron e daí, Manfredo, Lara, Giaour, Marino Faliero, Beppo, Conrado, Sardanapalo, Mazeppa, Caim etc. (Almeida 202 note)

[José Romão de Sousa Fernandes] que entrelinhavas o teu breviário com citações profanas tiradas de Petrarca, de Byron e até do ateu Shelley! (Almeida 11)

Cêrca de trinta estudantes, a pretextos de combater o *spleen* produzido pelas vigílias, engendraram um festim macabírico no Cemitério da Consolação. (Almeida 201)

Consigo haviam levado provisão de bôcas, certos de encontrarem, no ossário comum, os crânios necessários para lhes servirem de taças. (Almeida 201)

Súbitamente, idéia de louco atravessou o cérebro de um dos nossos companheiros:
—Se aclamássemos uma Rainha dos Mortos? disse êle.
Um, dous, três! Arregacemos as mangas até o sovacos, byronianos de Paulicéia! . . .
Eu vos conjuro,—ó duendes medonhos!—dançai em ronda, volteando abandonados túmulos, enquanto nos entregamos à profanação. . . . A faina! à lida, pois! em memória das noites fantásticas do Chefe-lorde, da embriaguez clássica e das bacanais no mosteiro de Newstead. (Almeida 203)

Naquela Loja maçônica, onde os Cavaleiros da Rosa Cruz iniciam-se os mistérios de sua ordem e submentem-se às provas dos sucessivos graus, não nos faltarão vistosas insignias, aventais e estandartes, abracadabrânticos, mortalhas, às dezenas, as vestimentas do Irmão Terrível, e aos entrants do Templo, espadas de aço, que se cruzam em forma de abóbada, machetes, compassos dos construtores do Templo de Salomão, fachos, e tudo mais necessário para os funerais da recrutada Rainha dos Mortos. (Almeida 205).

Os fraseados sucederam-se, no sentido de convencê-la que tudo aquilo mais não era do que um cerimonial preparado pelos seus admiradores para coroá-la Soberana do Reino dos Mortos. Eufrásia, sem bem compreender-nos, negava-se ao convite; mas, enquanto ela, recalcitrante e medrosa, recusava-se, o Irmão Terrível, agarra-a, envolve-a toda num longo cachimbo de maçarico vivas labaredas de enxôfre, que destacavam as horrendas figuras. (Almeida 206)

. . . dando ao cerimonial um caráter de peregrinação aos túmulos pelos Espíritos de que falam as velhas lendas dos Elfos, ou de almas denadas, matilha de lobisomens, ou mesmo de uma nuvem de corvos que, aos estampidos do raio, buscam, escavando a terra das covas rasas, evar-se na carniça dos miseráveis fornecida pelos enfermeiros dos hospitais.

Mas isso pouco nos abalava, a nós outros saturados da leitura de célebre noite Walpurges de Goethe, e da invocação de Manfred nas geleiras do Alpes. A morte, e tudo que é tétrico, podia acaso espavorir aquêles que temperavam seus ponches em crânios ferventados?! Aquêles que em seus extravagantes aposentos, tudo era arranjado com artuculados ossos humanos trazidos ainda bafentes e gordurosos do depósito geral do Campo Santo?! . . . (Almeida 211)

Não era tudo havermos aclamado uma Rainha dos Mortos, preciso se fazia ainda levar a impiedade ao ponto de designar-lhe um noivo, que a esposaria, dando a ambos por leito nupcial a cova da esumada velha. E a sorte recaiu em Lara, o orgíaco confrade que, no feérico entêrro, tão belamente figurava de Satã. Ocioso seria acrescentar que o enlace matrimonial foi celebrado in extremis, por isso que Eufrásia, inteiridada no caixão, com os olhos parados, apenas dava, de espaço a espaço, sinais de vida, pelo estrebuchar dos braços e das pernas.

Arriado que fora o caixão, Satã pulou no rebordo da sepultura, e caiu-lhe em cheio sôbre a tampa, disposto a perpetrar o ato. E o banquete de bodas começou escandaloso, intercalado de danças macabras e de recitações características da escola poética e literária. (Almeida 213)

Súbito, gritos partiram do fundo da cova: Era o esforçado Satã que, com os braços erguidos, pedia-nos retirar-lhe um noivo, que a esposaria, dando a ambos por leito nupcial a cova da esumada velha. E a sorte recaiu em Lara, o orgíaco confrade que, no feérico entêrro, tão belamente figurava de Satã. Ocioso seria acrescentar que o enlace matrimonial foi celebrado in extremis, por isso que Eufrásia, inteiridada no caixão, com os olhos parados, apenas dava, de espaço a espaço, sinais de vida, pelo estrebuchar dos braços e das pernas.

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Súbito, gritos partiram do fundo da cova: Era o esforçado Satã que, com os braços erguidos, pedia-nos retirar-lh; debruçados sôbre o revestimento da sepultura, tomam-lo pelos pulsos, puxando-o para baixo. Estava pálido, trêmulo, assombrado. Hirto, e de pé à beira do escuro fôsso, com os olhos à flor das órbitas, em vão procurava pronunciar uma frase, articular uma palavra sequer que pudesse exprimir tamanha suprêsa, tão grande emoção! E êste horrível estado durou alguns instantes, até que pôde, recobrando a voz, exclamar:

—É morta!
—Morta! Repetimos em grupo.
—Oseulei um cadáver! Explicou-se afinal, desferindo convulsiva gargalhada.
E a realidade era cruel: Eufrásia estava realmente morta.

Apavorados e indecisos, mútuamente nos olhamos, refletindo nas conseqüências de tão tresloucada aventura. (Almeida 217–218)

É que julgávamos calmos, frios, egoístas quase, que o romantismo e o byronianismo eram fúteis teorias de descabeladas extravagâncias; frenesis e insâncias tanto mais sedutoras, quando são fruídos em confortável aposento de estudante, às flamas de um ponche com o cigarro de palha ao canto da bôca, e ao abrigo de tôdas as contingências.

E assim desiludidos, avançávamos, às vergastadas do temporal, e—cumpre confessar,—ansiosos de um pouso. (Almeida 224).
Appendix

Excerpts of Byron’s works appeared in epigraphs before many Brazilian Romantic poems. Some of the major authors include the following (from Ramos’s *Grandes Poetas Românticos do Brasil*):

- **Gonçalves Dias**
  - “A Tarde” (79)
  - “Sonho” (87)
  - “A História” (149)
  - “Quando nas Horas” (153)
  - “O Bardo” (190)

- **Álvares de Azevedo**
  - “Saudades” (256)
  - “Prefácio” *Segunda Parte da Lira Dos Vinte Anos* (262)
  - “Vagabundo” (276)
  - “Sombra de D. Juan” (290)
  - “Canto Primeiro” *O Poema do Frade* (300)
  - “Canto Segundo” *O Poema do Frade* (303)
  - “Prefácio” *O Conde Lopo* (318)
  - “Primeira Parte” *O Conde Lopo* (324)
  - “Canto I, Vida da Noite” *O Conde Lopo* (326)
  - “Canto II, Febre” *O Conde Lopo* (331)
  - “Segunda Parte” *O Conde Lopo* (333)
  - “Canto IV, Fantasmagorias” *O Conde Lopo* (339)
  - “Terceira Parte” *O Conde Lopo* (343)
  - “Canto V, No Mar” *O Conde Lopo* (two quotes, 343)

- **Fagundes Varela**
  - “Sobre uma Página de Byron” (534)
  - “Prefácio” *Cantos e Fantasias* (545)
Castro Alves

“O Fantasma e a Canção” (Port. 708)

“A Uma Taça Feita de Crânio Humano” (Trans. 713)

“As Trevas” (Trans. 728)

“Remorso” (788)

“O Derradeiro Amor de Byron” (800)
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