“Close Thy Byron; Open Thy Goethe”: The struggle between the Byronic and Carlylean Hero in 19th Century British Literature

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To the memory of Visitación, an admirer of the Brontë sisters

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Introduction

Lord Byron's literary work –which includes his renowned dramatic plays *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812), *The Corsair* (1814) and *Manfred* (1817) – is currently one of the most researched issues within the Victorian studies framework, in vogue in the academic field. Lord Byron is responsible for the culmination of one of the most fascinating characters that English Literature ever had –the outcast –, which started to draw some sympathy in the middle ages with characters like *Tutivillus*, a minor demon from the so-called Morality Plays. The contribution of Byron to the presentation of this kind of characters was such that even contemporary literature retains many echoes from his heroes.

Nevertheless, the challenging spirit of Byronic heroes did not fit in the Victorian ideological framework, which far from praising a transgressive figure sceptic with their

system of values, removed these heroes from the centre of the plots. The aim of this research is to explore the evolution of the Byronic characterization throughout the Victorian Era, which endeavoured to reject their heroism; as well as to dig deep into the channelling of the Byronic heroism towards the Victorian discourse.

This dissertation is structured into two parts as follows. Part I will be introductory and is devoted to provide a complete definition of the Byronic hero with the help of representative characters like Childe Harold, Manfred or Conrad, from *The Corsair*. Furthermore, it is within the aims of this first part to identify these Byronic heroes' literary forebears and confirm this way the tradition in English literature of presenting the outcast as fascinating. Works like Christopher Marlowe's *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus*, John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, *The Robbers* by German Romantic Friedrich Schiller and Gothic stories such as Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian* or Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, will take part in the analysis.

Part II entails the core research of this dissertation. It is simultaneously subdivided into three sections. Section I explores the Victorian context and the birth of a new kind of hero –regarded as the Carlylean hero–, which stood for the Victorian values and replaced the heroism of Byron's characters. Through the binary opposition between the Carlylean and Byronic heroes, we will get to know with "the earnestness, moral responsibility and domestic property" (Abrams 1044) of the time and the critical voices to it.

Section II is devoted to explore the different stages of the Byronic hero evolution in order to fit in the new discourse. Among the primary sources that will be used in this chapter are Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* and Charlotë Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, from

Early Victorian Era; Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White,* from Mid-Victorian Era; as well as Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and Oscar Wilde's *The Portrait of Dorian Grey,* from the Late Victorian Era to evidence the decay of the Victorian values.

In regards to Section III, the last pages of this dissertation are concerned with the loss of the Byronic and Carlylean traits at the end of the nineteenth century. It will be speculated about the definite end of these two models in literature and an alternative heroic figure to Byron and Carlyle will be presented for future research.

Part I: The Byronic Hero

One of the most intriguing and extraordinary figures of nineteenth century writing is –undoubtedly –what nowadays is regarded in academia as the Byronic hero. This archetypal character, named after the prolific English poet Lord George Gordon Byron, responds to the definition of a heroic Romantic figure in particular, which intrinsically appears in great part of Byron´s literary work.

A common feature to all of Byron's poetical pieces, such as *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812-1818) or *Manfred* (1816), involved placing this kind of character in the centre of their narrative. Despite the differences among the heroes of Byron's stories, most of these characters followed similar patterns and there are some common traits that can be attached to heroic figures like Manfred, Conrad or Childe Harold, such as courage, moral relaxation and challenging spirit.

These poems were published at the beginning of the nineteenth century, time in which industrialization reached its highest expansion. The regimentation of labour, the

rise of new machines, that threatened the livelihood of workers; and their impossibility to organize themselves in trade unions in order to defend their own rights,[1] led to "a violent hostility towards the machines" (Jump 351) with multiple outbreaks and riots across the country. A social rift had developed among high and working classes, and a sense of rebellion prevailed among the most wretched people, victims of the capitalist changes that were taking place at that time in England.

What is more, George IV, who is described as a "vain and self-indulgent [king]" (Jump 352), did not seem to be a true leader to rule the country. The lack of agency of the monarch and the innumerable drawbacks for workers, unable to adapt to change, led to the rise of a critical spirit intrinsic to both the Romantic and the Byronic hero.

In a recent research, scholar Natalija Pop Zarieva (2017) claimed that the Byronic hero "represents the *noble outlaw*, [that is] a solitary person from noble origins who is disrespectful of hierarchy and social institutions, or rebels against the whole society" (743). In this sense, the character introduced by Byron, who at the same time shares many other traits with the Romantic hero, involves the rejection of society and the necessity of a life isolated from it. Both heroes embraced this critical approach to the system, which encompassed a challenging discourse against the society of the time; and found in nature a good shelter to escape from society.

The need of these heroes to flee from society to nature is evidenced in Deborah Lutz argument. According to this scholar, the romantics believed that "our most authentic selves lay in what was mysterious and strange" (X). That "unknown" world was nature, away of the industrial cities that were arising in England in early nineteenth century. This might explain why Byronic heroes embodied individualism outside

[1] Jump, John D. "Byron: The Historical context". *Byron's Poetry: Authoritative texts, Letters and Journals, Criticism and Images of Byron.* A Norton Critical Edition, 1978: 351

society and "[ventured] out into the anguished world in order to find, paradoxically, the self" (Lutz X).

Despite not being Byron's first poetic hero, one of the most representative outlaw characters is likely to be Conrad, from *The Corsair*; whose story was published in 1814. Nevertheless, there is lack of consensus in academia when considering which Byron's most representative outlaw character was. On the other hand, some critics consider Childe Harold to be the most representative outlaw character, since it was the first character with which Byron achieved great popularity.[2] Either Conrad is the most representative Byronic character or not, *The Corsair* can be really helpful to provide a complete portrayal of what a Byronic hero actually is.

The story is the account –by a third person narrator – about the life of an isolated character: "a man of loneliness and misery, scarce seen to smile, and seldom heard to sigh" (Byron 40, I, VIII), who spends great part of his life travelling from remote places to others while his wife Medora awaits his return. Conrad is presented as a "superior" man outside the dominant discourse, as evidenced in the poetical voice of the poem: "Yet, in the whole –who paused to look again, / Saw more [in him] than marks the crowd of vulgar men" (Byron 42, I, IX).

What made Conrad superior to the rest of human beings was not his physical isolation from society but rather his freedom from any moral or belief ("Behold –but who hath seen, or e'er shall see, / Man as himself –the secret spirit free?" (Byron 44, I, X)), as well as his firm convictions.

He was also described as a frightening character feared by his vassals. Assertions such as "his dark eye-brow shad[ed] a glance of fire" (40, I, VIII) and "there

[2] Abrams, Meyer, et al. *Norton Anthology of English Literature.* R.S. Means Company, 1997: 563

was a laughing Devil in his sneer" (42, I, IX), suggest readers how fearful characters like Conrad were. In any case, what perhaps best defines the character of Byron might be the following lines:

> He knew himself a villain—but he deem'd
> The rest no better than the thing he seem'd;
> And scorn'd the best as hypocrites who hid
> Those deeds the bolder spirit plainly did.
> He knew himself detested, but he knew
> The hearts that loath'd him, crouch'd and dreaded too (46, I, XI)

In these six lines a complete portrayal of Conrad is provided, which encompasses all the different traits that have already been mentioned in this essay. Conrad was aware of his evil nature, yet at the same time felt superior to the rest of human souls in terms of coherence, as well as he was aware of the respect that he inspired in others.

Just like other Byronic heroes, Conrad also embodies one of the most important features that traditionally have been attached to the Byronic hero and that has not been introduced in this essay until now: the ambivalence of their acts. Byron's characters had this capacity for awakening in the reader sentiments both of fascination and scorn. In Thomas B. Macaulay's words, an English historian who researched the figure of Byron, the archetype that Byron introduced was "a proud, moody, cynical [man], with defiance on his brow, and misery in his heart, a scorner of his kind, implacable in revenge, yet capable of deep and strong affection." (qtd. in Hoppenstand et al. 82). The acts of Conrad were either loathsome or enthralling. He could be really detested by his vassals for his contempt towards them, yet at the same time he was capable of very strong affection especially every time he thought of her love Medora, as we can see in the following lines:

Yes, it was love –unchangeable –unchanged –
Felt but for one from whom he never ranged;
Though fairest captives daily met his eye,
He shunn'd, nor sought, but coldly pass'd them by (46, I, XII)

The ambivalence that surrounded these characters is perhaps one of the things that make Byronic heroes so extraordinary. Even though characters such as Conrad could become really detested, there were some compelling aspects in him that made the reader sympathise with him. It is important to note that when pointing to this ambivalence, Macaulay was referring to Childe Harold, yet this definition can also be extrapolated to other characters like Conrad.

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage –first published in 1812 – revolves around the same theme of isolation that was previously discussed in *The Corsair*. Just like Conrad's, Childe Harold's story places a weary wanderer at the centre of the narrative. Even though the stories of both heroes are slightly different –whereas the former is a pirate, the latter a tourist –, they are much related in terms of solitude and of the fascination that these characters create in the reader.

Broadly speaking, Childe Harold embraces many of the features of a Romantic hero such as melancholy and a sense of detachment from society, which also belong to the Byronic archetype. Harold lives in constant distress. For him, "High mountains are a feeling, but the hum / of human cities torture" (Byron 219, III, LXXII) suggesting his non belonging to society. Harold feels lonely and apathetic, whilst a tone of sorrow and disappointment prevails throughout the whole work. "Why should I for others groan, / When none will sigh for me?" (183, I, XIII), he wonders himself, without any hope in the world and its kindness.

Perchance my dog will whine in vain,

Till fed by stranger hands;
But long ere I come back again,
He'd tear me where he stands. (183, I, XIII)

It is in this dramatic work where critics date the first encounter with what is regarded as an actual Byronic hero. For that reason, Childe Harold could be approached in terms of transition between Romantic and Byronic characterization. The similitude between these two kinds of heroes is such, that in many occasions it becomes a tough task to differentiate them.

We should bear in mind that Lord Byron was part of the Romantic Movement, which took place in England between late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The Byronic hero is therefore a kind of Romantic hero with some aesthetic and thematic modifications. In Zarieva's words, the Byronic hero "shows elements of the Romantic hero [such as individualism and challenging spirit] combined with traits of [...] the Anti-hero characterization of the protagonists in the Gothic novels" (742). Among these gothic traits we can find the good nature of antiheroes who were demonized.[3] The fact that, despite being kind-hearted, these characters were labelled as villains, served to defy traditional stereotypes of heroism as Byronic heroes evidenced.

The belonging of Byron to the Romantic Movement may shed some light on why many of the features –associated with the hero of Byron – listed before, such as fascination, isolation, moral superiority, rebellious spirit, courage, and melancholic tone, also belonged to the definition of Romantic hero. What makes them different then?

[3] See for instance Karl Moor in Friedrich Schiller's *The Robbers* (1781). Despite being labeled as a criminal by his father, he fights against the abuses and corruption of authorities, as well as he shows true affection and commitment with both his love Amalia and his men. Or think of Theodore in Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), who –despite not being placed in the centre of the narrative and being imprisoned– he is the one that takes action, saves the heroine from the villain and becomes the ruler of the castle.

As it was previously claimed, the similitude between these two kinds of heroes is such that we can hardly make a distinction. Both the Romantic and Byronic heroes rejected and questioned social norms, by isolating themselves form society. Yet, whereas the former served as an inspiration for others and challenged the dominant discourse in favour of society such as Karl Moor or Ivanhoe[4], the Byronic hero rather acted for himself, stressing an even more autonomous nature. As Peter Thorslev claimed,

> His motives in rebellion are his inability to conceive or to tolerate limits to his freedom. [...] This hero is not always or even frequently a philanthropist; he is more of a metaphysical rebel. When he does wish to benefit humankind, it is usually through precedence and example, by showing man what capacities he has to realize: he wills, in Oswald's words, to "enlarge man's intellectual empire" (93).

Undoubtedly, the most extraordinary characteristic of Byron's heroes was the ambivalence they were surrounded by. Characters such as Childe Harold or Conrad inspired in readers sentiments of fascination and scorn at the same time. There are some thresholds transgressed by these characters that make the reader reject their acts. Yet, the descriptions of their life in such attractive manner are likely to make the reader feel some empathy and indulgence towards them. In the case of *The Corsair*, the appealing tone of the poetic voice as well as the use of a heroic couplet stanza helped to raise this empathy in the reader. According to Manuel Neila, the heroic couplet employment – traditionally reserved for high topics – clashes with the representation of a social outcast

[4] Just like Karl Moor in *The Robbers*, Sir Walter Scott's hero Ivanhoe is disinherited by his father, yet he represents all the values of loyalty to his principles and his kindness fighting against all the atrocities committed by the Norman nobles on the side of prince John, King Richard's brother.

such as the corsair.[5] By presenting the character in such a heroic manner, the poetic voice suggests some empathy with Conrad.

The portrayal of the Byronic hero would not be complete without full reference to and analysis of Lord Byron's masterpiece, *Manfred*. Published in 1816, it is regarded by many critics as Byron's greatest work. It is a metaphysical drama, which reflects upon the limits of human nature and self-repentance. Like Byron's earlier heroes, "Manfred is hounded by remorse –in this instance, for a transgression that (it is hinted but never quite specified) is incest with his sister Astarte" (Abrams 588). Inspired by Gothic villains, Byron created a kind of character full of "danger, mystery and sexual menace" (Hughes 56) and Manfred was an example of that. Great part of *Manfred* involves an impassioned dialogue between Manfred and some supernatural forces he is able to invoke. He requests from the spirits "forgetfulness" (Byron 56, I, I)[6] for all the damage he caused that "[had come] down on those who loved [him] – / On those whom Manfred best loved" (90, II, I), openly referring to his dead love Astarte.

The capacity of Manfred for appealing to the spirits necessarily places him above the rest of mortals. He is superior to the rest of human beings and their morals. Nevertheless, he is not a deity either but a half deity, presented as the nexus between humans and the supernatural. Following the line of discussion that has been followed in this whole chapter, the Byronic hero of this dramatic work –that is Manfred –, is the representation of a superior man that goes beyond the limits of humankind. Manfred's moral transgression of loving his sister places him outside any moral norm and two

[5] Neila, Manuel. "Prólogo". *The Corsair. El Corsario. Edición Bilingue*. Sial / Contrapunto, 2015: Madrid: 14: Original text: "Por otro lado, el empleo del pareado heroico, reservado tradicionalmente para el tratamiento de temas elevados, resulta chocante si se aplica a la presentación de un marginado social como el Corsario."

[6] To avoid confusion, I will use the following referencing system when citing Byron's dramatic play: (Author's surname, Page, Act, Scene). The Author's surname will only be placed in the first quotation, being omitted in the rest.

major issues should be taken into account when approaching this work in relation to this superiority: his difficulty to achieve an actual freedom of the mind and his renouncement to the spiritual assistance.

On the one hand, despite being above any moral discourse, it turns out to be quite disconcerting to see the suffering of Manfred for his incestuous relationship with Astarte. Why should anybody free from any moral discourse like Manfred suffer for having an incestuous relationship in which he was truly in love? This might suggest "the internal flaw, hamartia, which takes him down" (Zarieva 744). Freedom from arbitrary morality was a goal the Byronic hero always aimed at, yet it was also difficult to achieve it.

This idea of a flaw hero goes hand in hand with the ambivalent feeling that Byron's characters create. Readers are likely to condemn Manfred for his incestuous relationship with Astarte and even his part of responsibility in her death –as hinted in the second act: "I loved her, and destroyed her" (104, II, II) –. However, the impassioned suffering of Manfred for the loss of Astarte, linked with his willingness to reject everything he has in life –in order to have a clear conscience – makes the reader feel some sympathy for him.

On the other hand, the superiority of Manfred also lies in his ability to reject the assistance of supernatural forces. There are grounds for saying that Byron's *Manfred* recalls in a number of aspects the story of Faustus. Both characters transgress human limits imposed by their own set of values. However, they are slightly different: whereas Faustus ends up seduced by the covenant the devil offers him, Byron's Manfred rejects the power of Arimanes, and remains critical of any superior force above him. The imperfect character of Manfred, which readers could feel identified with, as well as his

capacity to reject the assistance of the spirits makes Manfred worthy of being regarded as "the most impressive representation of the Byronic hero" (Abrams 588). Manfred not only ignores the power of Arimanes, as evidenced in his speech:

> Must crimes be punished but by other crimes,
> And greater criminals? Back to thy hell!
> Thou hast no power upon me, that I feel –
> Thou never shalt possess me, that I know. (184, III, IV)

But he also acknowledges he is the only being to be blamed for his self-destruction, as we can see in the following lines:

> I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey
> But was my own destroyer, and will be
> My own hereafter. (186, III, IV)

Such courage shapes Manfred as a "totally autonomous man, independent of any external authority or power, whose own mind, as he says in the concluding scene [(186, III, IV)], generates the values by which he lives "in sufferance or joy"" (Abrams 588).

At first sight, this kind of character might also recall the *Übermensch* concept introduced by philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche almost a century later. In fact, in his autobiographical work entitled *Ecce Homo* –published in 1908–, Nietzsche acknowledged feeling more attracted by Byron's Manfred than Marlowe's Faust.[7] Manfred is fruit of a more psychologically elaborated character and that makes him remarkable.

The aim of this first chapter of the dissertation was to provide the reader –with the help of works such as *The Corsair, Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and *Manfred*– an accurate definition of the Byronic hero that would encompass all the traits common to

[7] Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhem, et al. *Ecce Homo Nietzsche's Autobiography*. T.N. Foulis, 1911: 40-41

the characters of Byron. Despite the existence of some differences in the characterization of the heroes, some points in common have been identified among Byron's most researched heroes.

These characters tend to be isolated wanderers from society presented as superior men with respect to the rest of the mortals, in terms of transgression and freedom of mind; who had the ambivalent capacity for awakening in the reader sentiments both of fascination and scorn to their persona. Their independence from any moral discourse was such and so enthralling that they even inspired the *Übermensch* concept that Nietzsche introduced to encourage the freedom of the mind from any arbitrary set of morals.

On the other hand, the characterization of these heroes also entailed presenting Byron's characters as imperfect, who in spite of transgressing moral codes they displayed some guilty conscience. With his poetical work, Lord Byron undoubtedly created a character paradigm that lasted during great part of eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The contribution of Lord Byron's work in the literary field –presenting the ones in the margins of society– was such, that even today there are many echoes of his characters in present day literature.

Nevertheless, the Byronic hero did not come out of anywhere. As it was previously claimed, they were influenced by the Romantic characterization and the Gothic villain. Yet, the literary forebears of Byron do not stay there, as it will be further proved in the following pages. Byronic heroes were but the result of a literary tradition, which has its roots in the Middle Ages and displayed some empathy with the evil characters as *Tutivillus*. This character in particular was a minor demon that featured in different Morality Plays like *Mankind*. Despite retaining a didactic aim, "the play [...]

had an unparalleled entertainment experience with Satan and his minions right in the centre of the action" (Matos 68), suggesting some empathy with the devil.

The binary opposition between good and evil has always been a motif of literature, in which it was expected that the power of the former prevailed over the latter. Lord Byron, whose characters challenged the traditional stereotypes of heroism –being the good character the hero and the evil the villain–, did not take up this challenge but continued the literary tradition I was talking about. If we happened to analyse literary classics previous to Byron we might be able to identify this approach to heroism as well. It is the case of the role of the Devil in Christopher Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*, first published in 1592; or its characterization in the so famous poem *Paradise Lost*, by John Milton published in 1667.

It should be noted that during informal discussions with my thesis supervisor previous to the writing of these pages about the origins of the Byronic hero, we reached the conclusion that Byronic hero might have its roots in many literary classics previous to him. It seemed to us that Byron might had been influenced by the villains of German playwright and philosopher Friedrich Schiller –because of their fight against injustice –; or gothic writers, such as Ann Radcliffe.

In Meyer Abrams' words, "Manfred's literary forebears include the villains of Gothic fiction and Melodrama, The Greek titan Prometheus, rebel against Zeus, ruler of the Gods; [and] Milton's fallen angel, Satan" among others (588). In the same way, Zarieva went beyond enunciating "villains of Gothic fiction" and referred to Ann Radcliffe and her work *The Italian* in particular as clear sources that might have inspired Byron in his writing (742). All of these literary characters displayed an

ambivalent tenor in their acts. They might transgress some moral or legal law, but most of the times there was a good reason behind.[8]

Even though Byron acknowledged not being aware of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, nor could he read Goethe's Faust –since he did not speak German –, it seems that the plot was recounted to him by his friend M.G. Lewis.[9] The fact that Byron could not speak German also suggests that he is likely not to have heard about Schiller's stories. Either Schiller was read by Byron or not, he was a remarkable writer from the German Romanticism which introduced a paradigm that later influenced the English Romantic Movement. One way or another, Byron might have received some traits common to German writers like Schiller.

One of the most illustrative examples of this literary tendency that started to create some sympathy around the evil characters is –unquestionably – *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus*, by Christopher Marlowe. In this play, there is an ambivalent treatment to the devil character. It is uncertain whether the devil "figured as a spiteful super-being who could cause bodily disease and natural disaster with considerable latitude" or rather worked as a "spiritual temptation" (Macdonald 823) to test believers' faith as part of God's plan. That is whether the devil was expected to be loathed or on the contrary –as an innovation –enthralling.

Traditionally –specially in catholic contexts –, the figure of the devil in literature had been approached in terms of disdain and scorn, placing part of the blame on the devil for the fall of Adam and Eve, who represented humankind.[10] Patrick Collinson

[8] Think of Karl Moor, who fought against the tyranny of nobles; or Prometheus, who stole the fire of Gods in order to give it to men.

[9] Abrams, Meyer, et al. *Norton Anthology of English Literature.* R.S. Means Company, 1997: 588

[10] It is true that in Catholic context, humans are responsible for their sin and they are the only ones to be blamed for their fall. Yet, the figure of the devil has always been approached in terms of disdain because of his capacity to lead humans to sin.

coined the term *Rustic Pelagianism* to define this widespread mentality in the catholic realm that "[thought] God receptive to sincere aspirations to goodness" (Macdonald 823) and regarded the devil as a resistant force –nothing to do with God's plan – to prevent human kindness "accounting for the observed presence of unmotivated evil in the world" (823). On the contrary, *Calvinism* –which believed in predestination and rejected any positive picture of human nature – regarded the devil as a dependent entity from God who, in a world full of depravity and evil, was sent to check believers' faiths and try to rescue them.[11]

There are two versions of Marlowe's Faust: the A-text (1604), which followed a Calvinistic tone; and the B-text (1616), which was more theologically conservative. Whereas in the A-text the power of devil is not coercive, in the B-text it is encountered a true autonomous devil whose aim is to commit evil and condemn humans. This means that in A-text, "[the devil] can neither go beyond what God permits; nor do humans any harm that is not mediated through their own wicked wills" (Macdonald 827). In this first version, the devil is part of God's designed plan and is sent to test believers, leaving the responsibility on humans for their downfall. On the contrary, the B-text represents the traditional Catholic approach to the figure of devil and casted great part of the blame on him for the downfall of Faust.

Such diverging approaches in these two versions of the tragedy contributed to the ambivalent treatment of the character of the devil that is also intrinsic to the Byronic heroes. It is in the A-text where Marlowe followed the medieval tradition of ambivalent devils, defying this way the traditional stereotypes of hero and villain.

[11] Macdonald, James Ross. "Calvinist Theology and "Country Divinity" in Marlowe's Doctor Faustus". *Studies in Philology* (2014): 823

The same representation of the devil in ambivalent terms was successfully achieved in John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. What makes this poem to be regarded as an outstanding piece of writing is that for the first time in English literature, the devil became the centre of the narrative, just like Byron did with his outlaw characters almost two centuries later. In addition, in this poem the devil turns out to be the most psychologically complex character in comparison to God –his antagonist – or even Adam and Eve, who were the ones that actually lost Paradise.

Just like the Gothic villains who hogged all the limelight of the plots, the devil in Milton's poetic work switched into the centre of the narrative. Nevertheless, it should be noted that in this work Satan is not openly an object of admiration either. He is determined to achieve his goal, yet his goal of corrupting humankind is evil, and consequently he cannot be admired for that. Yet, there are simultaneously some compelling aspects in his behaviour that may make the reader sympathise with him.

Some critics assert this is not an accidental choice by Milton, but it is deliberately made in order to prove how seductive the devil can be and thus to "remind the Christian reader that it is dangerous to sympathise with these particular figures" (Bradford 98). Just Like in Marlowe's Faust and in the case of the Byronic characters, the devil of Milton does not benefit from an open fascination by the narrator towards his figure, yet their ambivalent treatment makes the reader question their roles of heroes or villains.

In regards to Gothic stories that might have influenced Lord Byron at the time of creating his renowned hero, this research should not ignore the influence of villains of both Anne Radcliff's *The Italian* –published in 1797 – and Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* –from 1764 –.

What we have to bear in mind in terms of similitude with Byron's works is not only the veiled imagery that prevailed in these two stories, as evidenced in the discovery of a family tie between Ellena and Schedoni in *The Italian*; or Theodore and Friar Jerome in Walpole's work; but rather the role of villains in the stories. In these two stories, the virtuous characters –that is the ones that should be admired for their acts – are replaced from the core narration. Borrowing from Deborah Lutz's analysis:

> The villains in much of the Gothic create the central development and complexity of the narrative by their inexplicably meaningful actions, their deeply perturbed spirits which precipitously race toward ruin on a grand scale. These villains and their violent machinations against the heroine's virtue steal the show while the characterless lover is lost in the background with his transparent tenderness and adoration. (31)

As evidenced in these two stories, Gothic literature placed the villain –full of danger and sexual menace – in the centre of the narrative. This was a question of style that found more enthralling and captivating the psychology of the Villain like father Schedoni or Walpole's Manfred, rather than the virtuous hero.

The antiheroes of Romantic fiction serve as an example of literary forebears of Byronic heroes as well. There must be many examples, yet I find in Karl Moor in Friedrich Schiller *The Robbers* a very representative one. The analysis is very similar to the analysis of the villains. Just like Father Schedoni or Walpole's Manfred, in spite of being demonized by his father and brother, Karl occupies the centre of the narrative as all these outlaws and outcast characters did.

Gothic writers like Ann Radcliffe or Horace Walpole; Romantic poets like Friedrich Schiller; or ever earlier writers such as Christopher Marlowe or John Milton belonged to this tendency in literature that suggested some empathy –or at least

attraction– around every character outside the dominant discourse. This kind of characterization encompassed a number of traits common to all of them such as moral relaxation or capacity of fascination. The resemblance of Byron's heroes with all these characters is such that many critics and this thesis itself have claimed that the Byronic hero was inspired by them. There are some characteristics intrinsic to Byron that differentiates his heroes from previous characters. Thus, we should regard Byronic heroes as another stage of this literary tradition that, which started long before Byron, with some innovations.

Part II: The Evolution of Byronic Hero in The Victorian Era

The second part of this dissertation is devoted to explore the reception of Byronic heroes in literary movements subsequent to *Romanticism*, especially in Victorian Literature. Byron successfully managed to create a character paradigm, which lasted great part of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries –yet, with some modifications–. The influence of Lord Byron's work in the literary field was such, that even today there are many echoes of his characters in present day literature. Undoubtedly, the Victorian literary production could not "escape" from that.

With the accession of Queen Victoria to the throne in 1837, a new historical period started in England known as the *Victorian Era*, which lasted almost sixty-five years until the death of the monarch in 1901. What probably best defines this period of time is the moral strictness embraced by the Queen, which turns out to be rooted in her husband –the Prince Albert–, "[an] extremely strait-laced [man] and a great stickler for morality" (Gwinn et al. 506). This moral strictness was mirrored in the literary works of

the time, whose interest shifted from heroics deeds –typical from *Romanticism*– to more realistic ordinary life plots.[12] However, as M.H. Abrams claims,

> For a period almost seventy years in length we can hardly expect generalizations to be uniformly applicable. It is therefore, helpful to subdivide the age into three phases: Early Victorian (1830-48), Mid-Victorian (1848-70), and Late Victorian (1870-1901) (1046).

The early ages of the *Victorian Era* were marked by the quick industrial development of the country, which had started at the end of the eighteenth century. England became the most modernized country of the western world. The regimentation of the labour, the rise of the machines as well as the construction of the largest railway network that had ever existed led this country to an unprecedented economic growth.[13] Unfortunately, this time was not free of troubles. "After a period of prosperity from 1832 to 1836, a crash in 1837, followed by a series of bad harvests, produced a period of unemployment, desperate poverty and rioting" (Abrams 1047).

The prosperity came back to the country during the decades of 1850s and 60s. The improvements in the working conditions of the workers, the abolition of certain acts such as *the Corn Laws* in 1846, as well as the subsequent introduction of a system of free trade, led England to its largest economic expansion[14]. By that time, England ruled over territories such as India, Australia or Hong Kong. And all this economic success would not have been achieved without the involvement of all the citizens in the English enterprise.

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[12] Haden, M. Elisabeth. "Aspects of the Byronic hero in Heathcliff." *Thesis*. Denton,Texas: Graduate Council of the North Texas State University, 1970: 2

[13] Abrams, Meyer H., Greenblatt, Stephen. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. 7th ed. New York, London: W.W. Norton and Company, 2000: 1046-47

[14] "The Corn Laws, in force between 1689 and 1846, were designed to protect English landholders by encouraging the export and limiting the import of corn when prices fell below a fixed point" (Cody 1). However, with the rise of Industrialization, many people left the countryside and the collection of corn decreased, while its prices dramatically increased. The abolition of these laws not only allowed a bigger exchange in commerce with other colonies, but Britain's largest economic expansion.

The shifting nature of the *Victorian Era* suggests that seventy years of rule were far to be static, to become invariable, but decades were rather different from one from the other. Just like the subdivision of the reign of Queen Victoria into different periods that combined prosperity and difficulties, the Byronic character in Victorian Literature should be approached in terms of evolution throughout the whole period. In this sense, the Byronic character that we might encounter in works from the beginning of the era such as *Wuthering Heights* or *Jane Eyre* –both published in 1847–, is unquestionably not the same character that we might find in works such as *The Woman in White* (1960), written during the biggest splendour of the British Empire; not to mention in works such as *The Picture of Dorian Grey* (1890) or *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), which were published during the so-called *fin de siècle*.

The time of *Romanticism* had reached its end, paving the way to nineteenth-century *Realism*. Reason and pragmatism replaced the idealism that prevailed at the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Simultaneously, the expansion of the Empire needed of the citizens' commitment to the economic growth and individualism was pushed into the background. The heroism of Byron's characters, therefore, did no longer fit in the new Victorian ideological framework. It was the end of Byronic heroes' individualism. As a result, a new literary hero arose in Victorian novels later regarded as the Carlylean Hero, which struggled against the hero of Byron –if we still can approach him as such– by representing the Victorian values.

From now on, The Carlylean hero –named after the Victorian historian Thomas Carlyle–, will occupy the centre of this present discussion in terms of the antagonism he shares with the Byronic hero in Victorian fiction. In his critical work –*On heroes, Hero-worship, and the Heroic in History* (1841)–, Carlyle provided a definition of the

different features a true hero should meet, neglecting Byronic characters' heroism[15], as well as he researched different examples of "great men" in Universal History.

On Heroes is divided into six different lectures, each of them devoted to the analysis of each kind of hero throughout history (Hero as divinity: Odin (I); Hero as a prophet: Mahomet (II); Hero as a poet: Dante and Shakespeare (III); Hero as a priest: Luther and Knox (IV); Hero as a man of letters: Rousseau and Burns (V); Hero as a king: Cromwell and Napoleon (VI)). According to Carlyle, "no great man lives in vain. The history of the world is but the biography of great men" (14), suggesting that "Carlylean great men" have a duty with humanity and they are expected to rule over the rest of human beings. In Ian Ousby's words, the hero Thomas Carlyle introduces is somebody extraordinary capable of leadership.

> The hero […] is an exceptional man, so different in degree from the rest of [men] that he seems almost different in type. His distinction is expressed in public leadership, whether in religion, literature, or politics. He leaves behind him a permanent mark on history and a permanent claim on public memory. (Ousby 157)

The Carlylean hero is "the truest-hearted, justest, [and] the noblest man" (Carlyle 90). "His mission is order. [...] He is here to make what was disorderly, chaotic, into a thing ruled, regular" (93) by denouncing the false hero-worship through his public leadership. In other words, he has to define what is right and what is wrong and shift the evil into good.[16]

[15] Ousby, Ian. "Carlyle, Thackeray, and Victorian Heroism." *The Yearbook of English Studies* 12 (1982): 152

[16] Carlyle considers that a true hero –the ablest man– ascends to a position of power above the rest of the members of the community, that allows him to define what is right and what is wrong. In this sense, the Carlylean hero's task of denouncing false hero-worship acquires relevance in this discussion, which involved pointing to fascinating characters like Byronic heroes whose lifestyle were not good models to be followed (according to the dominant discourse). If we understand that Victorian Era is known as a

The end of the *Romantic Era* led to the rise of an open rejection of Byronic heroism by most of Carlyle's contemporaries, because of its unfit nature in the new ideological framework. The task of writers such as Carlyle was what Ian Ousby defined as "both destructive and creative": Carlyle "[had] first [to] attack false heroes [like the Byronic] and hero-worship and then, [...] [to] define a true heroism to proffer for [his] audience's admiration" (153). This whole idea is captured in the famous quote that Thomas Carlyle wrote in *Sartor Resartus*: "Close thy Byron; Open thy Goethe" (232), by which he was encouraging his contemporaries "to abandon the introspection of the Romantics and to turn to the higher moral purpose that he found in Goethe" (Abrams 1045).

Carlyle's heroism model has in common some traits with the heroes of Byron; after all, they both involve the characterization of exceptional men above the rest of human souls. Just like the Byronic characters during *Romanticism*, the Carlylean heroes were highly admired for their enthralling nature and will to do justice. However, the heroism of Carlyle emphasised the duty of the superior man with the community –as to improve it–, which clashed with the alienated lifestyle of Byron's heroes. This is perhaps what best differentiates the two kinds of heroes: the commitment of the hero to the society and his sense of duty.

Another significant difference between the two models of heroism was their social status. Whereas Byronic heroes were in Zarieva's words *noble outlaws*[17], Carlylean heroes were rather middle-class men, stressing their capacity of power and

period of very strict morality, Byronic characters outside the moral discourse could not be considered as good examples of heroism in that context.

[17] Zarieva, Natalija Pop, and Kriste Iliev. "The Byronic hero: Emergence, Issues of Definition and his Progenies". *филко/filko* 1 (2017): 743

leadership, which in spite of lacking it at the early stages of their lives they managed to achieve it.

> None of [Carlyle's] great men wears the robe of the *grand monarque*: They are usually men of humble origins (he takes particular pleasure in the peasant ancestry of Luther and Burns) and, when they have achieved eminence, they still remain simple and austere (Ousby 157).

Despite sharing the same will for justice, Byronic heroes lacked morality, something which was given great importance within the Victorian discourse. "The Byronic hero, then, cannot and is not supposed to serve as a role model. Instead, the [Carlylean] hero is supposed to be viewed as the ultimate leader, who must be followed without question" (Stein 3). Nevertheless, the character introduced by Byron was not that easy to get rid of, if we consider the level of admiration that had arisen around the Byronic heroes during *Romanticism*. For that reason, Victorian fiction plots –unable to dispose completely of the legacy of Byron– were centred on the rivalry between the Byronic and the Carlylean heroes and in the triumph of these latter over the former.

In order to evidence this powerful discourse of the Carlylean heroes, which greatly influenced the life of people, I would like to talk about Queen Victoria. Despite neglecting female heroism in his research –something that we could understand because of the male-centred context in which his work arose–, the major features of a true hero –introduced by Carlyle– of commitment to society, setting a role model and denouncing false heroes, can also be applied to female literary characters or even historical figures such as Queen Victoria herself.

According to Carlyle, if you "raise [the ablest-man that exists in your country] to the supreme place, and loyally reverence him: you have a perfect government for that country" (90). Victoria can be regarded as a good example of ablest-woman. She

demanded her citizens "earnestness, moral responsibility and domestic property" (Abrams 1044) in order to achieve the greatest expansion of the British Empire. The fact that she embraced this moral strictness she preached, and that she involved herself with her country made her a true leader for England. During the Crimean War (1854-56) she was but another citizen of England, which did not hesitate about helping the injured.

> The Queen personally superintended the committees of ladies who organized relief for the wounded and eagerly seconded the efforts of Florence Nightingale [the precursor of professional nursery]: she visited crippled soldiers in the hospitals and instituted the Victoria Cross for gallantry (Goetz et al. 507).

No matter if it was a deliberate involvement of the queen with the society to increase her popularity; her commitment was such that she became a true leader of the country. In Goetz's words, "none will question her high sense of duty or the transparent honesty, the massive simplicity, of her royal character" (509), and that attitude greatly influenced the lives of British people. In his sixth lecture about the heroism of monarchs or rulers of a country, Thomas Carlyle did not mention anything about Queen Victoria. Yet, her influential role in the life of her citizens in terms of morality, which was embraced by her as well, could have placed the Queen as an example of a Carlylean heroine.

Section I: Transgression of Byronic characters

Let us thoroughly pause to analyse the binary opposition between the Carlylean and the Byronic heroes. Whereas the former involved the characterization of the "ablest man" to rule a country because of his commitment to society, the latter was but the "unable man" for that enterprise: a –difficult to get rid of– threat to the Victorian ideology,

typically characterized as an isolated and self-indulgent man, outside from any moral discourse. Yet, who says which character is able for leadership and which character is not? Why were the Carlylean heroes the ablest men to rule a country and the Byronic heroes were not?

According to Carlyle, "whoever can speak, speaking now to the whole nation, becomes a power, a branch of government, with inalienable weight in law-making, in all acts of authority" (75). This means that the ones that dominate discourse dominate knowledge. Knowledge encompasses a number of different fields, among which is morality. If knowledge about what is right and what is wrong was established by the dominating forces, then the Byronic demonization might turn out to be arbitrary.

As it was previously noted, the new nineteenth-century order left aside the idealism of *Romanticism* and established reason and rationalist criteria as the only way to access knowledge about life. Charles Dickens, one of the most representative Victorian novelists, was able to print this general belief in the first lines of his renowned work *Hard Times*:

> Now, what I want is Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else. You can only form the minds of reasoning animals upon Facts; nothing else will ever be of any service to them. (Dickens 1)

This rational discourse turned out to be very dangerous because of its arbitrariness. It involved trusting "facts" –that is knowledge and reason established by the dominant forces–, as the only sources for understanding life, ignoring feelings or personal points of view. Yet, what do we consider as facts? Are not they something that we have been repeatedly told? Have we contrasted all the information we are given?

What if knowledge is biased? To what extent is it objectively free from any ideology? Byronic heroes used to ask themselves all these questions.

In his book *–Dueños del Tiempo y del Espanto–*, Eduardo Valls found a connection between the Nietzschean's *Übermensch* concept and Byron, whose characters may have involved a prototype of it. Although it is not within the aims of this dissertation to discuss the relationship between Byron and Nietzsche, the philosophy of this latter might be helpful to shed some light on the arbitrariness of nineteenth century discourse that removed the heroism of Byron's characters because of their questioning of power. Furthermore, Nietzsche's stance about dominant discourses –retrieved by Eduardo Valls– will serve as a tool to research the evolution in the treatment Byronic characters experienced in Victorian Literature. If the middle nineteenth-century dominant discourse rejected the heroism of Byron, then the characterization of these heroes will be the object of some modification.

Nietzsche's argument about the arbitrariness of the rationalist criterion revolves around "an intellectual dichotomy between the Dionysian and Apollonian [forces]" (Haussman 271) that he introduced in his book *The Birth of Tragedy* (1886). That is an opposition between pleasure (Dionysian) and reason (Apollonian). In Rüdiger Safranski's words, "both Dionysian and Apollonian forces [are] in play in all of the types of culture [...]. Art, religion, and knowledge are Apollonian forms in which Dionysian reality is both warded off and channelled" (qtd. in Valls 48). In other words, the Apollonian forces of society –among which we could include the Carlylean heroes– established what was right and what was wrong. Furthermore, they aimed to shift the evil into good. Borrowing from Valls' discussion,

> Man can only access the Dionysian stratum through the Apollonian forces [that is to understand his sexuality –among other things– through the Carlylean

> rationalist discourse]. And these forces, in turn, are established by the individual himself. Therefore, the apprehension of the world is, in essence, an act of creation. [...] If the conceptualization entails an act of creation, then all human judgments are, by definition, an invention, that is, a lie. Thus, the realist criterion has no meaning because it moves in the field of fiction (53).[18]

Whereas Byronic characters embodied the Dionysian forces, the Carlylean heroes on the contrary represented the Apollonian forces, the ones that conceptualized the true heroism, the model of life to be followed. It was through the Apollonian forces embodied by the Carlylean heroes that Victorian discourse was able to reject Byronic characters. However, if the hypothesis that claimed the arbitrariness of conceptualization of reality is confirmed, the whole Victorian discourse and all the heroes that embodied its values would not meet the heroic standards introduced by Carlyle anymore, suggesting that the false heroism did not only revolve around the Byronic heroes. This is in fact what happened at the very end of the nineteenth century: the decay of Victorian set of values.

Nineteenth century fiction was marked by the dialectical struggle between the Carlylean and Byronic heroism, between the ablest and unable men to lead. This dialectical struggle involved the demonization of the Byronic characters by the Carlylean heroes, and the denouncement of the arbitrariness of the heroes of Carlyle by the Byronic characters.

Nevertheless, it took time until this demonization was effective. For that reason we should talk about different stages during the evolution of the Byronic hero

[18] Valls, Eduardo. *Dueños del Tiempo y del Espanto: Genealogía Nietzscheana de la responsabilidad en la Narrativa Victoriana*. Madrid: Escolar Mayo, 2017. Original text: "El hombre solo puede acceder al estrato dionisiaco mediante las fuerzas apolíneas. Y estas fuerzas, a su vez, están puestas por el propio individuo. Por tanto, la aprehensión del mundo es, en esencia, un acto de creación. […] Si la conceptuación supone un acto de creación, entonces todos los juicios humanos son, por definición, un invento, es decir, una mentira. Así las cosas, el criterio realista no tiene sentido porque se mueve en el ámbito de la ficción.

throughout the *Victorian Era*. Whereas at the early stages of this period we could talk about a transitional period from *Romanticism* to *Realism*, in which there was still some fascination around the Byronic characters as in the case of Heathcliff; the decades of the 50s and the 60s were marked by an open rejection of the Byronic model, which clashed with the necessity of commitment of all the individuals to the construction of the British Empire. This rejection little by little vanished from fictional works in favor to a return to admiration for Byronic characters as at the beginning of the nineteenth century. This new shift had its roots in the decay of Victorian values that took place at the end of the Victorian Era, through which intellectuals started to realize the arbitrariness of Victorian discourse.

Section II: Evolution of Byronic heroes within the Victorian discourse

There are a number of examples of Byronic heroes we could discuss in detail from Early Victorian Era, such as James Steerforth in Dickens' *David Copperfield* (1849) or George Osborne in Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (1848). Yet, the study of Byronic characters such as Heathcliff from *Wuthering Heights* (1847) or Rochester from *Jane Eyre* (1847) seems to be enough and can be really helpful to evidence the transition between Romantic and Realist novels.

A new literary taste arose in England around the second half of the nineteenth century: the Realist novel, in which "the status of the superhero had diminished in influence while the simple themes of ordinary life gained new attention" (Haden 2). However, as it was claimed in earlier pages of this chapter, disposing of Byronic characters heroism did not involve an easy task and consequently, we must discuss the

existence of a transitional period between *Romanticism* and *Realism*, in which the figure of the Byronic hero was channeled towards the Victorian discourse.

The Brontë sisters led this transitional period in literature with unconventional works such as *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre*. I say unconventional in the sense that –unlike other contemporary novels – these two were hard to categorize either as Romantic or Realist fictional works. Despite being labeled by the canon as Victorian Realist novels,[19] because of following many of the Victorian conventions or simply because of the time in which they were written, characters like Heathcliff or Edward Rochester retained some Romantic traits, which are interesting for our discussion.

I

Heathcliff, the main male character of *Wuthering Heights*, is one of the first examples of the hero through which the transition between *Romanticism* and *Realism* is evidenced. Although the novel displays many different conventions that would place this story within the realm of *Realism*,[20] Emily Brontë's hero retained some Byronic traits, and hence Romantic features like his determination in revenge or his impassioned love for Catherine.

The fact that *Wuthering Heights* was published just at the beginning of the Victorian Era (1847), may explain why Heathcliff is closer to the conventions that

[19] Abrams, Meyer, et al. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. W.W. Norton and Company, New York: 2000: 1064

[20] It is set in Yorkshire moors sometime before 1801, "time when the old […] farming culture based on a […] patriarchal family life, was to be challenged, tamed and routed by social and cultural changes that were to produce the Victorian class consciousness" (Leavis 31). The exploration of all the conventions and changes that were taking place in England at that time makes *Wuthering Heights* –without a doubt– a realist novel as well.

surrounded Byron's Manfred than to other characters of Mid-Victorian fiction like Count Fosco in Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White*. What makes Heathcliff to be regarded as a Romantic hero is probably the fascination he inspires in the reader, or the sympathy he awakes in them for his impassioned love for Catherine Earnshaw. He also frightens and overwhelms the audience, evidencing that the ambivalent treatment intrinsic to Byronic heroes is also present in Heathcliff.

Although slightly different –in the sense that Catherine is not Heathcliff's sister – the love between Catherine and Heathcliff also recalls the bond between Manfred and Astarte. This relationship is evidenced in Heathcliff's cry for the loss of Catherine as well.

> Catherine Earnshaw, may you not rest as long as I am living. You said I killed you--haunt me then. The murdered do haunt their murderers. I believe--I know that ghosts have wandered the earth. Be with me always--take any form--drive me mad. Only do not leave me in this abyss, where I cannot find you! Oh, God! It is unutterable! I cannot live without my life! I cannot live without my soul! (Brontë 213)

As Eduardo Valls claims, "Heathcliff's prediction that his soul will never rest until he is prostrated beside her could be interpreted in the same key [...] as Manfred's existential anguish" (74).[21] Both heroes have to face the loss of their love and "they have become outcasts through this state of intense loss, or melancholia" (Frazell 13).

The impassioned love for Catherine, his resolute will to take revenge without caring for the consequences, as well as his similitude with Manfred, makes Heathcliff to be regarded as a Romantic hero, rather than in Realist terms. Nevertheless, there is a specific trait in Emily Brönte's hero that demands our analysis. Unlike Conrad in *The*

[21] Original text: "La predicción de Heathcliff de que su alma jamás descansará hasta que se postre junto a ella podría interpretarse en la misma clave [...] que el desgarro existencial de Manfred."

Corsair or Manfred, Heathcliff lacks nobility of spirit. He does not seem to be a kind-hearted, but rather the opposite. In Muriel Spark's words, he "is a monster of evil, a devil without any fiery infernal splendor, a mean and sordid evil" (qtd. in Haden 1). He does not show any sympathy for anybody beyond for Cathy.

The removal of nobility of spirit from the characterization of the Byronic hero, in this case in Heathcliff, points to the first transitional stage from *Romanticism* to the Realist Victorian fiction, which Byronic heroes experienced throughout nineteenth-century literature. The Victorian discourse –suspicious of Byronic heroes' heroism– started this way to demonize the characters which retained some echoes from Byron. Heathcliff only presented this nobility of spirit when loving Catherine, which evidenced the difficulty of disposing of Byronic heroes' nobility of spirit. For that reason, we have to regard Heathcliff in terms of a transition from the admiration these characters awoke in the *Romanticism*, to the demonization of their characterization due to their incompatibility with the Victorian discourse.

The same hybrid nature can also be found in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, in which the main male character of the story –Edward Rochester– retained some echoes of Byron like Heathcliff, while starting to be adapted into the new Victorian realist genre. Among these echoes was the capacity of Rochester to fascinate readers and the rest of the characters, as well as his wandering lifestyle. All of these can be evidenced in Mrs. Fairfax's introduction of Rochester to Jane when she arrived at Thornfield to work as a governess.

> He is rather peculiar, perhaps: He has travelled a great deal, and seen a great deal of the world, I should think. I daresay he is clever: but I never had much conversation with him'.
>
> 'In what way is he peculiar?'

> ‘I don’t know —it is not easy to describe—nothing striking, but you feel it when he speaks to you: you cannot always be sure whether he is in jest or earnest, whether he is pleased or the contrary; you don’t thoroughly understand him, in short —at least, I don’t: but it is of no consequence, he is a very good master.” (Brontë 123)

This fascination goes hand in hand with the mystery that surrounds Rochester and is also displayed by Jane who “is never entirely sure of Rochester’s true nature or feelings. [Yet] his clever conversation and unpredictable behaviour are not within the standard behaviour of his society” (Frazell 27), stressing the attractiveness of Rochester. Just like Conrad in *The Corsair*, Rochester is riddled with mystery. Mrs. Fairfax is unable to describe Rochester in very specific terms. She is unaware of Rochester’s private affairs while he is away and he does not share any of his feelings. All that Mrs. Fairfax knows of him is that he is a man of noble spirit, as Byronic heroes were.

In regards to the wandering life of Rochester, which was another remarkable and idiosyncratic feature of Byronic heroes, we could discuss the ten years Rochester spent travelling across Europe after locking his wife Bertha in the attic. This was a time of freedom and escapism which he spent seeking “[his] ideal of a woman amongst English ladies, French countesses, Italian signoras, and German gräfinnen” (Brontë 374). As Kathryn Frazell claims, “this discourse reflects the wild, erratic path that Rochester pursued. [...] He could not find happiness at home, in his own society, and so he sought refuge in wandering through Europe” (27).

All the features of mystery, noble spirit and wandering, bound to the enthralling discourse of Rochester places him within the group of Byronic heroes in Victorian fiction. Yet, it is in the character of Rochester where it is evidenced a transition between *Romanticism* and the *Victorian Era*.

As it was previously claimed, the heroism of Byronic characters –full of individualism and transgressive spirit– did not fit within the Victorian ideological framework, which advocated the commitment of the individuals to the system. Nevertheless, it was very difficult to dispose of their heroism and their appealing character. For that reason, characters from Early Victorian Era like Edward Rochester or Heathcliff, displayed some echoes of Byronic heroes in their characterizations, responding this way to the taste for the heroism of these characters, yet with the subsequent aim of taming these critic figures within the Victorian discourse.

Deborah Lutz claimed that this domestication of the Byronic heroism within the Victorian framework was achieved by presenting Byronic heroes as "dandies".[22] These characters were hedonist noble men "full of moral vacuity, dissipation, degeneration" (Lutz 68), lacking this way of the heroism of Byronic characters. "The depiction of the Dandy was a way to domesticate the Byronic figure, to bring him from the outside to the inside; to control him by making the immaterial material" (Lutz 72). Nevertheless, Lutz Hypothesis' does not seem to contemplate the transitional nature of Rochester, who despite displaying some intrinsic traits of the Dandy, all the traits mentioned above make him to be regarded as a hero as well.

The only trait that made Rochester to distance from Byronic characters' heroism was his redemption at the end. As it was already explained in the first chapter, characters like Manfred were convinced to their "empowerment, autonomy, mastery and defiance of oppressive authority" (qtd. in Frazell 6). They were consequently very determined with their principles and they never yielded to the assistance of any superior force as Manfred evidenced with the spirits. Rochester, on the contrary, yielded to the

[22] Lutz, Deborah. *The Dangerous Lover: Gothic Villains, Byronism, and the nineteenth century Seduction Narrative*. Ohio State University Press, 2006: 68

pleas of Jane of marrying her as a requisite to possess her. The consequences of their acts were very different. Whereas Manfred ended as an autonomous free man, yet dying; Rochester was redeemed by the love and marriage with Jane, yet renouncing to his former will of possessing Jane without marrying. Such renunciation suggested the triumph of characters within the Victorian system of values' framework. The ones who embraced the Victorian moral discourse, was likely to benefit from a happy ending.

With characters like Rochester it is evidenced a transitional movement from *Romanticism* to *Realism*. Rochester retained many echoes of Byron like a wandering lifestyle, full of mystery and fascination, yet the end of the story proves the metamorphosis of these heroes into a new kind of character which fits more in the Victorian ideological framework: the Dandy, whose heroism was removed and started to embrace some Victorian conventions. This was the beginning of the channeling of the Byronic heroism into the Victorian discourse, which reached its peak evolution during the decades of 1850s and 60s.

II

The best example of Mid-Victorian Era Byronism is Count Fosco, the Italian villain of Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White* (1860). In this novel, the character with Byronic traits becomes the result of a couple of substantial modifications. He is therefore no longer to be regarded as a Byronic hero or as a Dandy –if we understand this figure as a Byronic character with little heroism–, but rather as a Byronic Villain.

The most interesting thing for our research about *The Woman in White* is the binary opposition between Walter Hartright, the Carlylean hero of the story who stands

for all the Victorians values, and Count Fosco, the Byronic villain, whose aim is to steal Laura Fairlie's identity to get her patrimony. This binary opposition is doubly completed with Marian Halcombe –Laura Fairlie's sister–, on the side of Walter Hartright; and Lord Percival –Laura Fairlie's husband–, who joined the evil plan of Fosco.

The struggle between the two blocks turns out to be very representative to understand the concern of the Victorian Ideology with channeling the Byronic heroism, which the Victorian discourse managed to achieve as we will see in detail.

Among the differences between the two protagonists we can find their attitude towards their body. Whereas Walter Hartright is sexually repressed by the moral discourse he embraces, Count Fosco's life on the contrary is led by a hedonist discourse which does not allow any arbitrary moral to rule his life.

Walter falls in love with Laura Fairlie. However, there was no chance for him to marry Laura since they did not belong to the same social class. "I should have remembered my position, and have put myself secretly on my guard. I did so, but not till it was too late" (Collins 56), Walter confesses the reader after having found out his attraction for Laura. Great part of nineteenth century fiction explored the class differences. Just like gender, social roles were very well defined. Walter, unable to transgress that convention, displayed some repression in terms of renunciation to his will.

> I had never seen, heard, and touched any other woman in my life. I should have looked into my own heart, and found this new growth springing up there, and plucked it out while it was young. Why was this easiest, simplest work of self-culture always too much for me? The explanation has been written already in the

> three words that were many enough, and plain enough, for my confession. I loved her. (Collins 56)

The mere fact that Laura Fairlie belonged to a higher social class made Walter feel restless in the presence of her, aware of his impossibility of marrying her. In Rachel Ablow's words, "in order to take on a mature position in society, it seems, he [would] need to control the susceptibility that places him in situations like these" (163). Consequently, Walter is forced to exile himself in Honduras where he learns "to be strong" to have a "resolute" heart and to be "as a man should" (Collins 398) before coming back and eventually marrying Laura.

Considering Walter's embracement and representation of Victorian values, he was expected to be an exemplary character in regards to morality. Count Fosco, on the contrary, not only did not embrace these values, but challenged and openly questioned them. Why should he give his desire up as Walter did? This defiance of moral authority is very well mirrored in the following fragment retrieved from a conversation he kept with Laura Fairlie's sister, Marian Halcombe.

> I am a citizen of the world, and I have met, in my time, with so many different sorts of virtue, that I am puzzled, in my old age, to say which is the right sort and which is the wrong. Here, in England, there is one virtue. And there, in China, there is another virtue. And John Englishman says my virtue is the genuine virtue. And John Chinaman says my virtue is the genuine virtue. And I say Yes to one, or No to the other, and I am just as much bewildered about it in the case of John with the top-boots as I am in the case of John with the pigtail. (Collins 222)

The fact that in England, where the story takes place, there is a "virtue" which is claimed to be "genuine", the only absolute truth; and in a different country of the planet such as China, there is a different virtue claimed by its people to be true as well, reveals

that morality is but a social construct, an arbitrary discourse which prevents people to reify their desires.

The challenging spirit of Fosco evidenced that the counterpart of the Byronic hero in Victorian fiction during the Mid-Victorian Era –the Byronic villain– kept his transgressive attitude. Yet, just like Rochester started to do before, Count Fosco lacked Manfred's heroism, and therefore, he cannot be regarded as a true Byronic hero in the sense that he does not embrace the consequences of his acts, unlike Manfred or Conrad. Fosco fears death, lacking this way one of the main features a true hero should have: courage and the commitment to his principles.

Another aspect to discuss in relation to the inclusion of Count Fosco within the category of villain, instead of regarding him as a Dandy or even a hero, lies in the demonization of Fosco by the narrative voice, which turns out to be Walter Hartright. *The Woman in White* is an epistolary novel, in which narration involves an assembly of more than one account written by "more than one pen" (Collins 1) "as a court case" (Ablow 170), whose aim –in Walter Hartright's words – is to "present the truth always in its most direct and most intelligible aspect" (Collins 1).

Each of the testimonials "is presented with little or no commentary from its compiler, Walter Hartright" (Ablow 170), aiming at reaching the largest possible objectiveness. It is true that the villain of the novel –Fosco– provides his own perspective of the events in one of the narrations, and his account is left unaltered; yet it is Hartright who records the accounts[23].

This wittingly designed plot, in which the Carlylean hero investigates the fraud committed by the Byronic villains and denounces them, seems to be really useful to

[23] Valls, Eduardo. *Dueños del Tiempo y del Espanto: Genealogía Nietzscheana de la responsabilidad en la Narrativa Victoriana*. Madrid: Escolar Mayo, 2017: 148

exemplify the dialectical dispute between the Carlylean and Byronic models which prevailed during Mid-Victorian Era. Furthermore, Walter Hartright's ordering task of the events recalls in two aspects the definition of a hero introduced by Carlyle in his book *On Heroes*. On the one hand, Hartright's task when assembling the different clues of the case is "to make what was disorderly, chaotic, into a thing ruled, regular" (Carlyle 93), whereas on the other hand, his investigation also involves the denouncement of a false hero, as Count Fosco was.

Both characters with Byronic traits turn out to be deceitful, a fraud. We learn all of these thanks to the investigation held by Walter Hartright, the Carlylean hero. Sir Percival claimed a noble past he did not have in order to marry Laura Fairlie; and the reader discovers Fosco's relation with a secret Italian brotherhood, who under his robes hides a scar in the shape of "T" from "traditore" (Collins 610) (traitor). We never learn about Fosco's past nor what he did in order to end up murdered like that. Fosco retains his mystery until the very end of his life. However, we could discuss that this tragic end goes in the Victorian discourse line of demonizing free spirits of mind. Fosco might be very admirable by the audience, yet his death and "obscure" origin might be a warning for the reader, unveiling his darker side. If any admiration revolved around Count Fosco –the true Byronic descendant– for his transgression and moral challenging, it is lost when his traitorous nature is unveiled.

It is in the fiction of the Mid-Victorian Era where Victorian discourse started to win the dialectical dispute against the Byronic fascination by demonizing it. The Byronic characterization had shifted from a heroic representation, occupying the centre of the narrative as Manfred, to the presentation of the character with Byronic traits as an Dandy, which started to be tamed by the Victorian discourse –as evidenced with Rochester–. The last stage in the evolution of the Byronic characterization entailed the

demonization of characters such as Count Fosco, portraying them as villains as evidenced in *The Woman in White*, a work in which the murder of Fosco or Sir Percival Glyde's accidental death are presented as a triumph of good over evil.

III

When it seemed the Byronic characterization was completely channeled into the Victorian discourse, with the subsequent triumph of Victorian values over its transgression and moral relaxation, it turns out that at the end of the nineteenth century Victorians witnessed the fall of their own system of values. Such an occurrence led to the removal of Carlylean heroes' hegemony and to the return of some Byronic traits in the main characters.

The late period of the *Victorian Era* (1870-1901) was a time of multiple changes. Great Britain had reached its highest expansion and economic growth. Yet, with the arrival of the decade of the 90s, there was a turning point in British history which endangered its hegemony across the world.

> The decay of British global influence, the loss of overseas markets for British goods, the economic and political rise of Germany and the United States, the increasing unrest in British colonies and possessions, the growing domestic uneasiness over the morality of imperialism – all combined to erode Victorian confidence in the inevitability of British progress and Hegemony (Arata 622).

Whereas the years around the first Jubilee celebrations in 1887 –which commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of Queen Victoria's reign–, were full of "serenity and security" (Abrams 1052), the years around the second Jubilee celebrations a decade later were "marked by considerably more introspection and less self-congratulation" (Arata 622). Some authors started to attack Victorian pillars such as

family structures based upon strict moral codes[24], and a new attraction to moral relaxation came back to literary plots.

A major change took place in regards to literature at the turn of the century: the acknowledgement of the existence of evil within English society hand in hand with the return to gothic conventions. Great part of these pages have been devoted to evidence the Carlylean concern and denouncement of false hero-worship, which projected the evil in Byronic characters, outsiders to the Victorian society. Yet, it is in the literature of the *fin de siècle* that this projection is shifted into the Victorian community itself.

It was "a time of heightened awareness of a number of deep contradictions inherent in the dominant `Victorian´ account of the society" (Middleton XI). For the first time, the transgressive characters were no longer a deceitful Italian character like Fosco, or Queen Ayesha herself in Rider-Haggard's *She* (1886), foreigners and outsiders to the British Empire. Instead of foreign villains, the late nineteenth century literature was riddled with evil characters within the society itself such as Dorian Grey, Lord Henry Wotton or even Dr. Jekyll in the shape of Mr. Hyde. These characters evidenced the failure of the Victorian ethos which, after so much repression and moral strictness, had created even worse characters than the ones it denounced.

In the case of *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson –first published in 1886–, this repression was addressed drawing upon the question of the *double*. Jekyll and Hyde were not different people but different sides of one single person. Whereas Jekyll was a man "of highest respectability" (Stevenson 46) within the Victorian society, "Hyde was the evil side of Jekyll, the vices he indulg[ed]

[24] Abrams, Meyer, et al. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. W.W. Norton and Company, New York: 2000: 1053

[...] [were] not alien to the doctor but [were] desires which he [had] repressed in order to adhere to the middle-class standards of respectability expected of so eminent a physician" (Middleton XIII). Dr. Jekyll –through the help of Hyde– transgresses the moral code that prevents him from being a free man as evidenced in the following excerpt.

> Men have before hired bravos to transact their crimes, while their own person and reputation sat under shelter. I was the first that could thus plod in the public eye with a load of genial respectability, and in a moment, like a school boy, strip off these lendings and spring headlong into the sea of liberty (Stevenson 46).

Setting the story in Soho district, just at the centre of London, heart of the British Empire[25], entailed exploring the hypocrisy that prevailed in Victorian society, very concerned with the respectability of its citizens. This respectability prevented its citizens from transgressing its –socially constructed– moral code in terms of sexuality and power relationships. Such a lack of freedom, once achieved, led to the inverse effect as evidenced with Dr. Jekyll.

Dr. Jekyll had to choose between remaining in the body of Jekyll or Hyde. "To cast in [his] lot with Jekyll was to die to those appetites which [he] had long secretly indulged and had of late begun to pamper. To cast it in with Hyde was to die to a thousand of interests and aspirations, and to become [...] despised and friendless" (Stevenson 48). He preferred to stay within the society, seemingly a safer alternative; yet, he could not cast off the pleasure Hyde provided him. The repression and the rejection of his own desires by Jekyll for the mere fact of fitting in the society standards were such that little by little Hyde gained more and more power over Jekyll, making the

[25] Middleton, Tim. "Introduction". *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde with The Merry Men and Other Stories*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Classics, 1999: XI

doctor a monstrous being. This idea hinted that we cannot go against our nature by embracing a socially constructed system of value, meant to control our lives.

Oscar Wilde's *The Portrait of Dorian Grey* (1890), revolves about the same idea of the double nature of human beings, and how the repression of one of our two sides could lead to dramatic consequences and to the worst in us. Just like *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Oscar Wilde "drew upon gothic codes to critique middle-class mores" (Middleton XI), something which he also achieved by setting the story in the city of London, proving the existence of evil within the Victorian framework as well.

The clearest example of gothic traits within the text is the long-life beauty and youth of Dorian, whose years are printed in the painting he keeps in the attic. The fact that –in Deborah Lutz's words– "the secret expression of [Dorian's] sin [is in a painting] locked away in the attic, has much to do with a figurative meaning of being "in the closet" –forced to hide one's desires and sexual activities" (81-82). Behind this deliberate plot it might be aimed to challenge the repression of the Victorian discourse. The reception of Wilde's work was rejection because of its immoral tenor. Yet, as Lord Henry Wotton claimed, "the books that the world calls immoral are books which show the world its own shame" (Wilde 264).

As we can see, the transgressive and appealing tone of Byronic heroes returned in works of the late nineteenth century. There is also a turn back to placing the character with Byronic traits in the centre of the narrative due to the loss of moral authority Carlylean heroes started to embrace with the fall of their own system of values. Dorian retained many enthralling features starting with his beauty; yet, he turned into a demon as evidenced in the following quote in which Basil Hallward shows concern about Dorian's lifestyle.

> Why is your friendship so fatal to young men? There was that wretched boy in the Guards who committed suicide. [...] There was Sir Henry Ashton, who had to leave England with a tarnished name. [...] What about Adrian Singleton and his dreadful end? What about Lord Kent's only son and his career? I met his father yesterday in St. James's Street. He seemed broken with shame and sorrow. (Wilde 181)

It turns out to be rather arduous to classify Dorian as a hero, a Dandy or villain. Just like Dorian says to Gladys, "to define is to limit" (Wilde 236), and that might suggest his versatile nature. Yet, it should be noted the shifting nature of Dorian:

> Dorian Gray works as an important transitional figure in the [Byronic] trajectory; he represents the philosophy of the Dandy with his worship of the beautiful, yet he is also a destructive seducer and rake, driving numerous women and men to ruin and suicide (Lutz 80).

Dorian retains some appealing traits when challenging the moral discourse he transgresses. Yet, the hedonistic life he leads makes him not worthy of being regarded as a hero. In any case, the Byronic characterization we find in Rochester differs in a number of aspects from the Byronic characterization of Dorian.

We could say that the heroism of Dorian is way larger than the one Edward Rochester might display, at least closer to the heroism of characters like Manfred or Conrad. Undoubtedly, this is a personal reading I make of the two characters and it is open to discussion. My point is that whereas Dorian is more determined –and committed– with his principles and goals, Rochester surrenders to Jane's principles and renounces his own in order to obtain her heart. What best defines Byron's heroes is their commitment to their principles[26] and Dorian –no matter how harmful they can be for

[26] See for instance, Eduardo Valls' subchapter "El héroe Byroniano en la encrucijada del «ser». Trangresión y sabiduría dionisiaca". *Dueños del Tiempo y del Espanto*. Madrid: Escolar y Mayo, (2017): 50-73. Valls discusses the end of Manfred in which the spirits claim Manfred's soul as payment for the

him– follows his determination to taste all the pleasures of life. On the contrary, Rochester surrenders to the social rules of marriage in order to be with Jane. The consequences are different, whereas Charlotte Brontë's Dandy is redeemed at the end of the story by his love for Jane Eyre, Dorian does not redeem himself, with the subsequent and tragic ending of Dorian. This is how the Victorian discourse rewarded or condemned the renunciation of a character's own interest in favour of the society rules that happened with Manfred as well.

What we have to bear in mind about the *fin de siècle literature* is the fall of the Victorian set of values and consequently the decay of Carlylean heroism which stood for them. For the first time, the hypocrisy within men of "highest respectability" was openly evidenced through the return in use of some gothic conventions such as the *double*, which had previously appeared in literature.[27] In this context, there was a return of some enthralling aspects that have traditionally been associated with heroes of Byron such as the challenging of conventions or their questioning of morals. Byron's descendants like Lord Henry Wotton or Dorian Gray came back to the centre of the narrative, yet their questioning of the Victorian moral system was for their own benefit and not for the community. Therefore, we cannot talk about an actual return to Byronic heroism either.

It could be claimed that the end of the nineteenth century involved the loss of Carlylean and Byronic heroism –although this latter had long time before been diminished –. So now what? Can we discuss the definite end of heroism in English literature? The following section may shed some light on this matter.

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use of the magic powers of Arimanes. Unlike Faustus who begs for mercy, Manfred is consequent with his acts and accepts his fate, evidencing his free and autonomous nature.

[27] See for instance Edgar Allan Poe's "William Wilson" (1839) or Petrovich Golyadkin in Dostoevsky's *The Double* (1846)

Section III: The rise of the Detective

In the previous two sections, the evolution of Byronic heroes was researched throughout great part of the nineteenth century. As has been repeated ad nauseam, the individualism and challenging spirit of these characters did not fit in the new ideological order –the Victorian era –, concerned with the commitment of individuals to society and their moral strictness. In this context, the Carlylean hero arose in Victorian literature standing for Victorian values. He presented himself as the true leader to be followed, denouncing the false heroism of Byronic characters and replacing them.

Nevertheless, the existence of evil and inconsistency in representative male characters of the high Victorian society such as Doctor Jekyll or Dorian Grey in the late nineteenth century, suggested the decay of Carlylean heroism as well. Through the *double* issue, the hypocrisy of the Victorian value system was more than evidenced, "which preached, but increasingly failed to practise, a rigid demarcation between proper pleasures and dangerous liberties" (Middleton XIII).

Characters like Dorian or even Lord Henry Wotton were no longer proper Carlylean models. They retained some Byronic traits such as a transgressive rejection of the Victorian conventions or their isolated lifestyle. Yet, we cannot claim an actual return to Byronic heroism at the end of the century. Dorian for instance leads a hedonistic life full of pleasures, which clashes with the life of characters like Manfred, committed to his principles until death; or like Conrad, full of courage, passion and determined will to conquer new territories. Dorian, by contrast, "shows no true passion; his highest achievement is to be bored with all that is exquisite and sublime" (Lutz 81). Furthermore, he does not show much nobility of spirit and ends up committing suicide –despite his seemingly endless power–, lacking this way of Byronic heroism.

Considering the loss of Byronic and Carlylean traits, we may ask ourselves if the late nineteenth century entailed the vanishing of these two models of heroism in literature. Fortunately, this hypothesis is very likely to be wrong if we considered Arthur Conan Doyle's famous Sherlock Holmes, whose characterization hinted similitude with these two models. Under the figure of a detective, Holmes retained some heroic traits common to both the Carlylean and Byronic heroes. His pursuit of justice and search for truth, while investigating the enigmas, were among the features he retained from Carlylean heroes, whose task encompassed the denouncement of evil; whilst his idiosyncratic individualism and his unconventional manners evidenced some echoes from Byron in him. Therefore, we could talk about the rise of a new kind of heroism, which retained traits of the two previous models that existed in Victorian Fiction: that new hero was the detective.

Undoubtedly, detective fiction did not come out of nowhere. Many critics assert that among this new genre's forebears are the Sensation novel and Mystery tales[28]. Sometimes it gets really difficult to differentiate them in the sense that a great part of Sensation fiction drew upon mystery plots. In any case, whereas the Sensation novels had their peak success during the decades of 1860s and 1870s and "Wilkie Collins [is] generally credited with initiating the sensation vogue" (Pykett 219) with *The Woman in White*, the Mystery tale may have its roots in earlier years of nineteenth century as evidenced with Edgar Allan Poe's "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841).

[28] See for instance, Ablow, Rachel. "Good Vibrations: The Sensationalization of Masculinity in the "The Woman in White"". *Novel: A Forum on Fiction.*Vol. 37. No. 1/2. Duke University Press, 2003; Pykett, Lyn. "Sensation and the fantastic in the Victorian novel". *The Cambridge Companion to The Victorian Novel*; Trecker, Janice Law. "Wilkie Collins's Sleuths and the Consolations of Detection." *The Midwest Quarterly*, 54.4 (2013): 337-351.

The Sensation novels were particularly surrounded by mystery. Their popularity stood on their "ability to deal entertainingly with contemporary issues [such as murders or other crimes] and on a willingness to confront the problem of evil" (Trecker 337). Victorian writer Margaret Oliphant "accepted as the basic hallmarks of the first sensation novel: its combination of realism and mystery; the absence of supernaturalism; and, most importantly, the apparently direct communication of a sensation from the novel to the reader" (qtd. in Ablow 161).

Let us say that these novels "played both sides" in terms of support to the Victorian conventions. On the one hand, they were concerned with the denouncement of evil –as was most Victorian fiction–, whilst –on the other hand– they embraced a transgressive tone "unveiling the secrets of respectable society [...] to suggest the duplicitous nature of social reality" (Pykett 221). They remained within the realist framework as can be seen in their emphasis on the use of reason and the following of clues to solve the mysteries, yet their common plot issues –such as murder, blackmail or fraud– evidenced their challenging discourse against Victorian society.

It is true that the detective we find in Collins' hero –Walter Hartright– differs in a number of aspects from Sherlock Holmes. Both Hartright and Holmes led the investigation of their cases, yet both their approaches and the accounts of the events were very different. In addition, it should be noted that –unlike Walter Hartright, who was but a mere amateur detective whose profession was that of a drawing teacher, Sherlock was a professional private detective.

Nevertheless, the distinction between the two heroes goes beyond their degree of professionalism: Firstly, whereas in *The Woman in White* it is the detective who narrates the events, in *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* the reader gets to know the progress

of Holmes' investigations through a third person narrator, Doctor Watson. Unlike Walter Hartright –who dominates the discourse– Conan Doyle's hero is subjected to the eye of Watson who channels Sherlock's perspective into his own.

Secondly, another aspect we should bear in mind when researching the evolution of the detective figure from Sensation to Detective tales is the implications of both heroes. I mean the analysis of their aims at the time of solving the crime.

On the one hand, the aim of Walter Hartright seems to be justifying his marriage with Laura Fairlie and achieving this way a promotion in social class. By dominating the discourse, the accounts may have been arranged in such a manner that would place him as the most suitable candidate for marrying Laura and convince the reader of that. On the other hand, Sherlock's main interest in solving crimes might be keeping himself amused and distracted, as evidenced in the following quote:

> My mind [...] rebels at stagnation. Give me problems, give me work, give me the most abstruse cryptogram or the most intricate analysis, and I am in my own proper atmosphere. I can dispense then with artificial stimulants. But I abhor the dull routine of existence. I crave for mental exaltation. That is why I have chosen my own particular profession, or rather created it, for I am the only one in the world. (Conan Doyle 3)

Whether their purposes were to justify a disapproved marriage, or to get distracted –which may evidence the anxiety that prevailed at the *fin de siècle literature* because of death and the scientific progress–[29] both characters' acts led to the defeat of evil. It is true that Walter Hartright strictness and politeness makes him a Carlylean hero more in tune with Victorian society than Sherlock Holmes, who did not hesitate about

[29] Rata, Irina. "An Overview of Gothic Fiction." *Translation Studies: Retrospective and Prospective Views,* vol. 17, no. 1, (2014): 105

breaking any legal or moral law in order to achieve his goals, retaining this way some Byronic traits.[30] That proves the hybrid heroic nature of Holmes.

I have opted for the character of Sherlock Holmes because it turns out to be the most representative and canonical hero[31] after the fall of Byronic and Carlylean heroism. Arthur Conan Doyle seems to have rooted his hero in the two previous models that existed in Victorian Literature. Yet, there must be more characters like Holmes, which could evidence this transition on heroism until the rise of the detective as a new hero. Further research about this idea would help us understand the shifting nature of heroism in literature, constantly changing in order to fit in new discourses that appear in history.

It is through the analysis of the different heroes of history that we can get to know with the society of each period of time. The heroes and their antiheroes undoubtedly mirrored the general sentiment of the time in which they were in vogue, as well as the kind of leadership its citizens were willing to follow. Through the Byronic hero, we could understand about the industrialization and its fears at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Through Carlylean heroes, like Walter Hartright or Angel Clare in Thomas Hardy's *Tess of D'Urbervilles* we learn about the moral strictness of the time.

[30] See for instance Holmes' fake-engagement to a maid in order to break into the suspect's house and Holmes' evidence concealment to the police in "The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton", or Sherlock Holmes attempt to gain old Cunningham's confidence in order to resolve the crime in "The Reigate Squires".

[31] In his article entitled "The Slaughterhouse of Literature", Franco Moretti discusses the nineteenth century canon which –according to him– only involves 0.5 percent of all published novels. He aims to give possible reasons to such a fact blaming the "market". "Readers: who read novel A (but not B,C,D,E,F,G,H...) and so keep A "alive" into the next generation, when other readers may keep it alive into the following one, and so on until eventually A becomes canonized" (209), concluding that Conan Doyle's work is a perfect example of novel A.

We can make such claims thanks to the comparative research of this present dissertation between the Byronic and Carlylean heroes. The task for further research is to see not only the reason why the Carlylean model failed as well –that we have already researched–, but to understand what was the general sentiment of the time in which the figure of Sherlock Holmes was strengthened, whose last story was published in 1927.

Conclusion

The aim of this dissertation was to provide a complete definition of what is regarded as a Byronic hero, as well as to explore the evolution of Byronic heroes throughout the *Victorian Era*, which was suspicious of their fascinating tone and endeavoured to channel these heroes towards the Victorian ideological framework.

In Part I, with the help of works like *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, *The Corsair* and *Manfred*, it was researched the character paradigm introduced by Byron. Many different definitions have been provided throughout these pages, which could be included in Thomas B. Macaulay's words that regarded the archetype of Byron as "a proud, moody, cynical [man], with defiance on his brow, and misery in his heart, a scorner of his kind, implacable in revenge, yet capable of deep and strong affection." (qtd. in Hoppenstand et al. 82).

These characters were surrounded by mystery; they were wandering souls which embraced a critical and challenging discourse against any moral or legal law. They benefited from an ambivalent treatment in their characterizations. Despite breaking moral and legal laws, they were presented with some sympathy. Furthermore, it has been evidenced that Byronic heroes have their roots in Gothic villains like Father Schedoni in Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian* or Horace Walpole's Manfred; in Romantic

heroes like Karl Moor or other characters from English literature like Faustus and the devil in *Paradise Lost*.

In Part II, the evolution of the Byronic heroes has been researched during the Victorian Era. In Section I, the individualism, moral relaxation and challenging discourse of Byronic heroes have been evidenced that did not fit in the Victorian ideological framework. Since disposing of the heroism of Byronic heroes was not as easy as it seems, a new kind of hero arose in Victorian fiction –the Carlylean hero – who stood for the Victorian values and denounced that Byronic heroes were not good models to be followed.

Through the dichotomy between the Apollonian and Dionysian forces introduced by Friedrich Nietzsche, I explored in this section the dialectical dispute between Carlylean and Byronic heroes, based upon the arbitrary denouncement of false heroism of Byronic heroes and the questioning of the Carlylean discourse by the Byronic heroes.

In Section II, we reached the conclusion that the evolution of the Byronic hero during the Victorian Era can be divided into three parts. The Byronic characterization had shifted from a heroic representation, occupying the centre of the narrative as Manfred, to the presentation of the character with Byronic traits as a "Dandy", which started to be tamed by the Victorian discourse –as evidenced in Rochester's yield to Jane Eyre's pleas of marrying her –. The last stage in the evolution of the Byronic characterization entailed the demonization of characters such as Count Fosco, presenting them as villains. This was evidenced in Wilkie Collin's *The Woman in White*, a work in which the murder of Fosco or Sir Percival Glyde's accidental death were presented as a triumph of good over evil.

Last pages of Section II were devoted to explore the fall of Carlylean heroism in late nineteenth-century fiction hand in hand with the return of some Byronic fascination as evidenced characters like Dorian Grey or Dr. Jekyll, paving the way to Section III discussion about the loss of Byronic and Carlylean traits in literature. However, we can claim about the rise of a new heroism, under the figure of the detective, which retained both Carlylean and Byronic traits.

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