

Vol II Issue V Feb 2013

ISSN No : 2249-894X

*Monthly Multidisciplinary
Research Journal*

*Review Of
Research Journal*

Chief Editors

Ashok Yakkaldevi
A R Burla College, India

Flávio de São Pedro Filho
Federal University of Rondonia, Brazil

Ecaterina Patrascu
Spiru Haret University, Bucharest

Kamani Perera
Regional Centre For Strategic Studies,
Sri Lanka

Welcome to Review Of Research

RNI MAHMUL/2011/38595

ISSN No.2249-894X

Review Of Research Journal is a multidisciplinary research journal, published monthly in English, Hindi & Marathi Language. All research papers submitted to the journal will be double - blind peer reviewed referred by members of the editorial Board readers will include investigator in universities, research institutes government and industry with research interest in the general subjects.

Advisory Board

Flávio de São Pedro Filho Federal University of Rondonia, Brazil	Horia Patrascu Spiru Haret University, Bucharest, Romania	Mabel Miao Center for China and Globalization, China
Kamani Perera Regional Centre For Strategic Studies, Sri Lanka	Delia Serbescu Spiru Haret University, Bucharest, Romania	Ruth Wolf University Walla, Israel
Ecaterina Patrascu Spiru Haret University, Bucharest	Xiaohua Yang University of San Francisco, San Francisco	Jie Hao University of Sydney, Australia
Fabricio Moraes de Almeida Federal University of Rondonia, Brazil	Karina Xavier Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA	Pei-Shan Kao Andrea University of Essex, United Kingdom
Catalina Neculai University of Coventry, UK	May Hongmei Gao Kennesaw State University, USA	Osmar Siena Brazil
Anna Maria Constantinovici AL. I. Cuza University, Romania	Marc Fetscherin Rollins College, USA	Loredana Bosca Spiru Haret University, Romania
Romona Mihaila Spiru Haret University, Romania	Liu Chen Beijing Foreign Studies University, China	Ilie Pinte Spiru Haret University, Romania
Mahdi Moharrampour Islamic Azad University buinzahra Branch, Qazvin, Iran	Nimita Khanna Director, Isara Institute of Management, New Delhi	Govind P. Shinde Bharati Vidyapeeth School of Distance Education Center, Navi Mumbai
Titus Pop PhD, Partium Christian University, Oradea, Romania	Salve R. N. Department of Sociology, Shivaji University, Kolhapur	Sonal Singh Vikram University, Ujjain
J. K. VIJAYAKUMAR King Abdullah University of Science & Technology, Saudi Arabia.	P. Malyadri Government Degree College, Tandur, A.P.	Jayashree Patil-Dake MBA Department of Badruka College Commerce and Arts Post Graduate Centre (BCCAPGC), Kachiguda, Hyderabad
George - Calin SERITAN Postdoctoral Researcher Faculty of Philosophy and Socio-Political Sciences Al. I. Cuza University, Iasi	S. D. Sindkhedkar PSGVP Mandal's Arts, Science and Commerce College, Shahada [M.S.]	Maj. Dr. S. Bakhtiar Choudhary Director, Hyderabad AP India.
REZA KAFIPOUR Shiraz University of Medical Sciences Shiraz, Iran	Anurag Misra DBS College, Kanpur	AR. SARAVANAKUMARALAGAPPA UNIVERSITY, KARAIKUDI, TN
Rajendra Shendge Director, B.C.U.D. Solapur University, Solapur	C. D. Balaji Panimalar Engineering College, Chennai	V. MAHALAKSHMI Dean, Panimalar Engineering College
	Bhavana vivek patole PhD, Elphinstone college mumbai-32	S. KANNAN Ph.D, Annamalai University
	Awadhesh Kumar Shirotriya Secretary, Play India Play (Trust), Meerut (U.P.)	Kanwar Dinesh Singh Dept. English, Government Postgraduate College, solan

More.....

Address:-Ashok Yakkaldevi 258/34, Raviwar Peth, Solapur - 413 005 Maharashtra, India
Cell : 9595 359 435, Ph No: 02172372010 Email: ayisrj@yahoo.in Website: www.isrj.net



THEMES OF LORD BYRON'S POEMS

ARVIND DESHMUKH

Asst. Professor

Dept. of English, G. V. Tonpe Arts, Commerce and Science College,
Chandurbar, Amaravati

Abstract:

Lord Byron uses the theme of life and death frequently in many of his poems to show the importance of these themes in the Romantic Era. The meaning of life in Byron's work is based on how he views his own life, and depicts it as light. The theme of life is shown when he writes about the sun and expresses "The bright sun was extinguish'd" (BYRON 107). In this particular poem, he talks about the sun as it reflects life because as the light dies out, so does everything around it, meaning that light is essential for life. In the Romantic Era, the importance of life was everything to the romantics, and so they strived to live a successful, meaningful life before disease or illness took over. Opposite to the theme of life, is the theme of death, which was also important to the people of this time. Lord Byron's poetry often reflected the theme of death, as in his time many of his lovers passed before he believed they were supposed to. The theme of death is represented by the image of darkness that is seen when he writes "Seasonless, herbless, treeless, man less, lifeless-- A lump of death" ("DARK", 21). Byron's view on life at this time was very bitter, and the way he described it, it was based on his hardships in life, such as the death of one of his lover's. The themes of life and death are very significant in Byron's poetry as it was mainly influenced by his life growing up in the era and his hardships during his time.

KEYWORDS:

Themes, Poems, Analysis, Characters, Liberty, Nature, Love, Culture, Art.

INTRODUCTION:

he poetry of Lord Byron is varied, but it tends to address a few major themes. Byron looked upon love as free but unattainable in the ideal, an idea springing from his own multitude of affairs and ultimate lack of happiness in any of them. His characters and themes are highly autobiographical; most every poem by Byron finds as its inspiration some real person or place Byron had encountered. And although Bryon was a Romantic poet, much of his poetry follows traditional forms.

"She Walks in Beauty" was written by Byron about Mrs. Wilmot, his cousin Robert Wilmot's wife. It develops the conceit of a speaker's awe upon seeing a woman walking in her own aura of beauty. Among Byron's most famous verse, it is a surprisingly chaste poem from so debaucherous an author.

"When We Two Parted" (1816) conveys the author's sorrow at the loss of his beloved. Many scholars believe Byron falsely attributed its writing to 1808 in order to protect the identity of its subject, Lady Frances Wedderburn Webster, who was linked to the Duke of Wellington in a scandalous relationship. The poem is highly autobiographical in that it recounts Byron's emotional state following the end of his secret affair with Lady Frances and his frustration at her unfaithfulness to him with the Duke.

Byron wrote "Darkness" in July-August 1816. The poem is at least partially influenced by the

Title: THEMES OF LORD BYRON'S POEMS

Source: Review of Research [2249-894X] ARVIND DESHMUKH yr:2013 vol:2 iss:5

mass hysteria of the time brought about by an Italian astronomer's prediction that the sun would burn itself out on July 18th, thus destroying the world. The prophecy gained adherents due to the increase in sunspot activity at the time and the so-called "year without a summer" of 1816—an ongoing overcast sky which was a result (unknown at the time) of the eruption of Mount Tambora, an Indonesian volcano, in 1815. During this gloomy time, the sun was pale and the sky clouded and hazy. Temperatures dropped, and thunderstorms dominated the weather. During the solar eclipse of June 9th-10th, the sun actually seemed to vanish from the sky.

Byron published "The Prisoner of Chillon" in 1816 in the volume *The Prisoner of Chillon and Other Poems*. He was inspired to write the poem by his visit, with Percy Shelley, to the Chateau de Chillon on Lake Lemand in Switzerland. There Byron learned the story of Francois de Bonnivard, a sixteenth-century patriot imprisoned for his defense of the freedom of Geneva. This poem marks the first time Byron chooses to tell the story of a real historical figure with attention to historical, rather than fantastic, detail.

Don Juan is a mock epic in that its protagonist—while often heroic (as in the battle of Ismail in Canto VIII)—is in fact naïve, his adventures in love almost entirely the result of accidents. Byron accentuates its comic tone with playful rhymes and, in particular, incisive homonyms. Byron makes his satire of the classical epics clear in Canto I, where he notes that "Most epic poets plunge 'in medias res'" (in the middle of the story) (1.6.41), but then states, "That is the usual method, but not mine" (1.7.49), thus telling the tale of Don Juan from the very beginning: his birth.

Byron wrote the first two cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* during his travels to Europe in 1809-1811. He revised and published them in March 1812. Byron envisioned *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* as a poetic travelogue of his experiences in Portugal, Spain, Greece, and Albania, areas of Europe not under Napoleon Bonaparte's direct control. As a record of his journey through lands in which war was an ever-present specter, it is not surprising that much of the work meditates upon war, conquest, and violence in the name of one cause or another. The poem also reflects Byron's political views, particularly his support for Greek independence from Turkey (a cause for which he would eventually fight and die) and the very close-to-home incident of the Convention of Cintra (stanzas 24-26), in which the English politicians allowed enemy French soldiers captured in battle to return to France with their loot intact. Besides his politics, Byron also includes his love for the East in his celebration of the peoples and places he encounters.

The third and fourth cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* were added and published in 1816 and 1818 respectively. The third canto continues the travelogue framework of the first two cantos. This time, *Childe Harold's* journey is from Dover to Waterloo, then following the Rhine River into Switzerland. The visit to Waterloo evokes a meditation upon Napoleon, which becomes a wider meditation upon the nature of human genius. Similarly, the Switzerland scenes lead Byron to a contemplation of political philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, another "genius" misunderstood by his contemporaries.

The fourth canto of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* continues the journey of the earlier cantos, this time having the narrator travel from Venice to Arqua, Ferrara, Florence, and finally Rome. The visit to Rome makes up half the canto. Again the narrator laments the fall of older civilizations, and this time the subject is Venice. The city is depicted as a cultural ghost town, peopled by the "mighty shadows" of literary giants such as William Shakespeare.

THEMES OF LORD BYRON'S POEMS

LIBERTY

Several of Byron's poems, particularly those based on his travels, raise the problem of oppression throughout Europe and defend the necessity of human liberty. *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* often digresses into long tirades against oppressors. These poetic reflections bear witness to Byron's experience with battlefields of old, such as Waterloo, and present struggles such as the Greek struggle against Ottoman/Turkish occupation. Perhaps his most powerful statement against oppression is found in "The Prisoner of Chillon," in which he traces the eventual mental oppression of a patriot who stood against the oppression of his people. To Byron, liberty is a right of all human beings, while the denial of liberty is one of mankind's greatest failings.

THE POWER OF NATURE

To Byron, Nature was a powerful complement to human emotion and civilization. Unlike Wordsworth, who idealized Nature and essentially deified it, Byron saw Nature more as a companion to humanity. Certainly, natural beauty was often preferable to human evil and the problems attendant upon civilization, but Byron also recognized Nature's dangerous and harsh elements. "The Prisoner of Chillon"

connects Nature to freedom, while at the same time showing Nature's potentially deadly aspects in the harsh waves that seem to threaten to flood the dungeon. Childe Harold's Pilgrimage looks to Nature as a refuge from human conflict, but sees there, amid the avalanches and volcanoes, the seething fury of the natural world.

THE FOLLY OF "LOVE"

Throughout his life, Byron sought the perfect object of his affections, which paradoxically made him a fickle and unstable lover to many women (and men). His poetry reflects this tension, although usually with the weight being on the side of capricious love. He idealizes women he knows in his opening stanzas to the first three cantos of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, turning them into muses who inspire their respective narratives. However, the fact that each canto has a different woman as its muse points to infidelity on the part of Byron's creative genius. "She Walks in Beauty," perhaps his most famous poem dedicated to an individual woman, extols the virtues of a woman with whom Byron was never romantically involved. This theme recurs throughout Byron's poetry: the ideal love is that which is unattainable. Finally, in Don Juan Byron mocks the ideal of love even as his hapless protagonist falls into various women's beds.

THE VALUE OF CLASSICAL CULTURE

Byron was a staunch friend of the classical world who grieved what seemed to him the desecration of its cultural achievements and traditions. His journey through Greece showed him the dilapidated state of famous ruins, some of which had been turned to more mundane uses in the recent past. He also vilified Lord Elgin of England as the chief despoiler of ancient treasures due to Lord Elgin's procurement of several marble statues from Greece to be displayed in England. Elgin became Byron's primary target and a symbol of cultural oppression, just as Napoleon and Turkey became symbols for political oppression.

REALISM IN LITERATURE

Although he was a Romantic poet, Byron saw much of his best work as descriptions of reality as it exists, not how it is imagined. Thus, the subjects of many of his poems come from history and personal experience. "The Prisoner of Chillon" was inspired by the real-life imprisonment of Francois de Bonnavard, while Childe Harold's Pilgrimage is more biographical travelogue than adventure tale. Even the apocalyptic "Darkness" was written to reflect the mass hysteria that arose out of superstitious prophetic interpretations related to the natural disaster of a volcano's eruption.

THE ENDURING POWER OF ART

Even as he bewailed the loss of classical culture through the despoiling of Greek ruins, Byron saw permanence in the art created by these cultures and by his own contemporaries. In the fourth canto of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Byron notes that even the greatest civilizations decline, yet their art and literature remain. He also contrasted the destructive power of oppressive nations (such as Napoleon's France) with the creative power of the artist to bring into being that which had not, until that point, existed. In keeping with this theme, Byron used his poetry to demonstrate the ephemeral nature of human civilization while creating works of art that would survive long after any empire of his own day.

A DAY OF RECKONING

While Byron was by no means the prophet of apocalypse that his fellow Romantic poet William Blake was, Byron's poetry nonetheless returns time and again to a "day of reckoning." The most obvious example of this theme is "Darkness," a vision of a future earth nearly devoid of life and populated by creatures no longer human. More subtly, Byron insisted that the leaders of oppressive civilizations and the men who would destroy the works of the past would face their own days of judgment. This day would be hastened by Byron, who cast aspersions upon their characters in his writings, such as he did with Lord Elgin and Napoleon.

LORD BYRON QUOTES

Man's love is of man's life a thing apart, 'Tis woman's whole existence.
The night Hath been to me a more familiar face Than that of man; and in her starry shade Of dim and solitary

loveliness I learned the language of another world.
 What is the end of Fame? 'tis but to fill A certain portion of uncertain paper: Some liken it to climbing up a hill, Whose summit, like all hills, is lost in vapour: For this men write, speak, preach, and heroes kill, And bards burn what they call their "midnight taper," To have, when the original is dust, A name, a wretched picture, and worse bust.
 What is the worst of woes that wait on age? What stamps the wrinkle deeper on the brow? To view each loved one blotted from life's page, And be alone on earth, as I am now.
 Friendship is Love without his wings!
 Now hatred is by far the longest pleasure; Men love in haste, but they detest at leisure.
 Society is now one polish'd horde, Form'd of two mighty tribes, the Bores and Bored.
 Fools are my theme, let satire be my song.
 And, after all, what is a lie? 'Tis but The truth in masquerade.
 'Tis strange -- but true; for truth is always strange; Stranger than fiction.
 Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains; They crown'd him long ago On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds, With a diadem of snow.
 When we think we lead, we are most led.
 Sincerity may be humble but she cannot be servile.
 A mighty mass of brick, and smoke, and shipping, Dirty and dusty, but as wide as eye Could reach, with here and there a sail just skipping In sight, then lost amidst the forestry Of masts; a wilderness of steeples peeping On tiptoe through their sea-coal canopy; A huge, dun cupola, like a foolscap crown On a fool's head--and there is London Town.
 I am the very slave of circumstance And impulse -- borne away with every breath!
 Though women are angels, yet wedlock's the devil.
 'Tis solitude should teach us how to die; It hath no flatterers; vanity can give No hollow aid; alone--man with his God must strive.
 I have a notion that gamblers are as happy as most people, being always excited; women, wine, fame, the table, even ambition, sate now & then, but every turn of the card & cast of the dice keeps the gambler alive.
 Glory, like the phoenix 'midst her fires, Exhales her odours, blazes, and expires.
 Oh! too convincing -- dangerously dear --In woman's eye the unanswerable tear!
 Pleasure's a sin, and sometimes sin's a pleasure.
 There is pleasure in the pathless woods, There is a rapture on the lonely shore, There is society, where none intrudes, By the deep sea, and music in its roar: I love not man the less, but Nature more, From these our interviews, in which I steal From all I may be, or have been before, To mingle with the Universe, and feel What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.
 Grief is fantastical, and loves the dead, And the apparel of the grave.
 Sorrow is Knowledge: they who know the most Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth, The Tree of Knowledge is not that of Life.
 We are the fools of Time and Terror: Days Steal on us, and steal from us; yet we live, Loathing our life, and dreading still to die.
 Deep Vengeance is the daughter of deep Silence.
 The sight of blood to crowds begets the thirst of more, As the first wine-cup leads to the long revel.
 I hate all pain, given or received; we have enough within us The meanest vassal as the loftiest monarch, Not to add to each other's natural burden Of mortal misery.
 Is far the worst of treasons. Dost thou deem None rebels except subjects? The prince who Neglects or violates his trust is more A brigand than the robber-chief.
 Accursed be the city where the laws would stifle nature's!

REFERENCES:

Lord Byron's Poems Themes by Lord Byron
 Christensen, Jerome (1993), Lord Byron's Strength, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
 Lord Byron's Religion: A Journey into Despair. Paul D. Barton. (Edwin Mellen Press, 2003).
<http://www.gradesaver.com/lord-byrons-poems/study-guide/major-themes/>
<http://www.gradesaver.com/lord-byrons-poems/study-guide/short-summary/>
http://www.notable-quotes.com/b/byron_lord.html
 (2007, 09). Lord Byron. StudyMode.com. Retrieved 09, 2007, from <http://www.studymode.com/essays/Lord-Byron-121052.html>

Publish Research Article International Level Multidisciplinary Research Journal For All Subjects

Dear Sir/Mam,

We invite unpublished research paper.Summary of Research Project,Theses,Books and Books Review of publication,you will be pleased to know that our journals are

Associated and Indexed,India

- * International Scientific Journal Consortium Scientific
- * OPEN J-GATE

Associated and Indexed,USA

- DOAJ
- EBSCO
- Crossref DOI
- Index Copernicus
- Publication Index
- Academic Journal Database
- Contemporary Research Index
- Academic Paper Databse
- Digital Journals Database
- Current Index to Scholarly Journals
- Elite Scientific Journal Archive
- Directory Of Academic Resources
- Scholar Journal Index
- Recent Science Index
- Scientific Resources Database

Review Of Research Journal
258/34 Raviwar Peth Solapur-413005,Maharashtra
Contact-9595359435
E-Mail-ayisrj@yahoo.in/ayisrj2011@gmail.com
Website : www.isrj.net