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Julia embodies the kind of platonic love and selflessness which is associated with the cliché of angel-woman and it is precisely because of this that Harold finds himself unworthy of her. What is at work here is again an instance of the dominance of ideology over the poet-subject: in his subjectivity he is an earthy being who is bound to the pleasures of flesh while Julia transcends the level of a human being and has metaphysical attributes. Thus, in this instance, he finds himself unsuitable for having a love relationship with a heavenly creature 'angelic woman' and abandons her since cohabitation with such a being is ideologically unthinkable to him. Once again the role of patriarchal ideology is highlighted here as the subject's subscription to viewing women according to the either/or mentality of Angel/Monster is exposed. For Ernest Jones, the origins of this mentality is embedded in the duality of the mother image in the unconscious of the infantile:

"The underlying theme relates ultimately to the splitting of the mother image which the infantile unconscious effects into two opposite pictures: one of a virginal Madonna, an inaccessible saint towards whom all sensual approaches are unthinkable, and the other of a sensual creature accessible to everyone. . . ." (qtd. in Egan, "Riven Home" 154)

The case of Julia precisely corresponds to the mother-image of 'virginal Madonna, an inaccessible saint.' Since Julia in Child Harold's (his first name denotes 'infantile') mind is associated with the mother image of saintly angle all sexual approaches to her is completely unthinkable to him. As a result, he abruptly leaves her. This fact brings us to this conclusion that Byron in his poetry fluctuates between attraction and repulsion toward the image of the angle-woman, that has no middle mundane ground, it is as if women are in the realm of fantasy.

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I hear thy name spoken,/ And share in its shame.
They name thee before me, /A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me--/Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee, /Who knew thee too well--
Long, long shall I rue thee, / Too deeply to tell.
In secret we met--/ In silence I grieve,
That thy heart could forget, / Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee /After long years,
How should I greet thee?-- /With silence and tears.

The speaker grieves since it is unbelievable to him that his beloved is capable of deceit and dishonesty (In silence I grieve, That thy heart could forget, / Thy spirit deceive). His shock and incredulity toward this fact presupposes an ideological background where the possibility of such transgressions was eradicated. Transgression and sin is associated with human realm, but an angelic creature stands above the moral frailty of common man and symbolizes moral perfection. Therefore, the fact that an 'angle woman' is capable of transgression and dishonesty contradicts the ideological mindset of the poet/speaker. In his mind the angelic woman is the epitome of innocence and purity as exemplified in the last line of "*She Walks in Beauty*": 'a heart whose love is innocent!' thus her dishonesty more than hurting his feelings imparts a massive blow to his ideological way of thinking. Therefore, at least partly, his grieving is the outcome of the failure of his ideological way of thinking about women.

The ideological basis of Byron's attitude toward women is also well divulged in his treatment of Julia in "*Child Harold Pilgrimage*" (1812-1816). In this narrative poem, where the protagonist is blatantly a metaphor for Byron himself, Julia is the first woman that Harold falls in love with. The important thing about Julia is the way she described in the poem. She is portrayed as a beautiful nonsexual woman who is more concerned with spirit rather than flesh, contrasting the figure of child Harold who is marked by hedonism and debauchery. Thereby, Harold concludes that he does not deserve her and breaks his love relationship with her (Gross, "Byron: The Erotic Liberal" 32).

"Therefore, it might be no coincidence that, as some critics claim, the inspiration for writing this poem came to Byron after glimpsing Wilmot at a funeral (this reading is based on the images of darkness which wrap the lady throughout them poem which is reminiscent of the mourning clothes that she and people around her wear at that funeral).

As in The Cambridge Companion to Byron, Drummond Bone shrewdly explains her "beauty is 'like the night' because this time of spiritual darkness mourning the passing of a loved one does not detract from her beauty, but instead accentuates it (37)." Such death imagery corresponds to Gubar and Gilbert's association of death with the 'angel-woman'. Both on physical and conceptual levels, once a woman enters the cult of angel-woman her livelihood is subtracted from her: her physical appearance resembles a 'ghost,' marked by paleness and thinness, as a sign of beauty and her identity is reduced to the level of a speechless image as she becomes a walking 'beauty.' Here, it is important to mention that this critical analysis is no condemnation of Byron, as a subject he is simply a space where the dominant circulating discourses of his age are accumulated. As a poet he plays the role an outlet for the expression of these discourses, that is to say ideology (in this case patriarchy) speaks through him. That's why such ideological angle-making of females is echoed in the works of Byron's contemporaries as well, namely Wordsworth's "The Solitary Reaper" (1807) which describes the speaker's mesmerization upon witnessing a woman walking all alone in "her own aura of beauty." Furthermore we can find other examples of such ideological tendency in Byron's other love poems, such as "When We Two Parted":

When we two parted / in silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted / to sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold, / colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold / sorrow to this.
The dew of the morning / Sunk chill on my brow--
It felt like the warning /Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken, / And light is thy fame;

affairs of earthly life. This is to say the lady is not merely beautiful; the aura of a heavenly Beauty also encapsulates her existence. The fact is this divinely image which is conveyed by the poem is filtered through the subjectivity of the poem's speaker. Byron wrote this poem for Mrs. Wilmot, the wife of his cousin. But in the process of praising her beauty and virtues he elevated her above the level of a common human being and ascribed platonic and divine features to her. That is to say the patriarchal ideology reigning over the poet's subjectivity spoke through the poem and turned a real woman (Mrs. Wilmot) into an angelic spectra of heavenly delicacy and tenderness compatible to male fantasy. As the explanation of Gilbert and Gubar in *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*:

The aesthetic cult of ladylike fragility and delicate beauty-no doubt associated with the moral cult of the angel-woman-obliged "genteel" women to "kill" themselves (as Lederer observed) into art objects: slim, pale, passive beings whose "charms" eerily recalled the snowy, porcelain immobility of the dead. Tight-lacing, fasting, vinegar-drinking, and similar cosmetic or dietary excesses were all parts of a physical regimen that helped women either to feign morbid weakness or actually to "decline" into real illness. (25)

Such killing oneself into art or more precisely the aestheticization of woman is exemplified in Byron's poem, however in this case it is no suicide but a murder. The male fantasy of the poet murders the human traits of the object-woman and transforms her into a semi sculpture of beauty and virtuosity that is speechless. It has no story to tell and no idea to express and is simply an object that is to be viewed and enjoyed. This act of dehumanization on the part of poem's speaker deprived the lady of poem of any personal narrative or identity as she became a mere object of admiration for male gaze. According to Gilbert and Gubar loss of personal narrative is the most dominant hallmark of the angelic woman equating a symbolic death as it is only through presenting a personal narrative that human subject is able to express his or her symbolic existence: "a life that has no story, like the life of Goethe's Makarie, is really a life of death, a death-in-life.[...] having died to her own desires, her own self, her own life, leads a posthumous existence in her own lifetime ("Madwoman" 25).

male gender. This stereotype finds its precursor in the Myth of Creation where Adam was manipulated by Eve into eating the apple and losing paradise. On the other hand the latter stereotype which presents an angelic image of woman undermines the humanity of woman equally: it pictures woman as a divine and unearthly entity who is as pure and innocent as angels. From this perspective woman transcends the level of a human and by attaining an ultra-human status loses her human identity similar to the way human status is undermined in the first cliché, but in the reverse direction. Therefore, analogous to 'monster woman,' 'angel woman' is a product of the patriarchal hegemony which constantly has attempted to confine women within its totalitarian formulas (Gilbert and Gubar, "Madwoman" 17-22).

In Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics* (1970) the male fantasy for such subjugation is explored through an analysis of Norman Mailer's *An American Dream* (1965). In this novel a maid 'Rutha' who is brutally raped and sodomized by her master (Mr. Rojack) expresses gratitude to his master for his manly violence:

Accordingly, the final stages in which this man has his will with his maid take place under the most ideal conditions. Rutha now responds quite as masculine egotism would prescribe: "... she was becoming mine as no woman ever had, she wanted to be part of my will." It would seem that she could want nothing better for herself, and at once her "feminine "or again true "woman instincts," emerge and she acquires what her master relays to be. ("Sexual Politics" 13-14)

This passage well explains the dynamics of male desire for subjugating woman into roles that male fantasy desires. The 'true woman' instincts that Rutha displays are a clear cut reflection of how male fantasy (in this case that of the author) envisages the true essence of womanhood, namely cheerful acceptance of dehumanization in the hands of the superior male. This description quite fits the identity of angle woman as described by Gilbert and Gubar: a woman deprived of personal identity and narrative whose sole duty and pleasure in life is to comfort and please the desiring male. Is not the unnamed lady of Byron's poem a personification of this condition? In the poem the unnamed woman is the personification of platonic beauty, dwelling above the mundane

Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.
One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling place.
And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

From a feminist perspective the extreme praise and adulation that Byron addresses this unnamed woman stereotypes her as what Gilbert and Gubar term 'angle-woman.' Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar in *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979) proposed this view that patriarchal discourse has constantly been trying to reduce the identity of woman to two contradictory clichés: The angle and the monster. That is to say the ideology of patriarchy is based on an either/or axis, in which either the image of woman resembles a monstrous entity the seductress and manipulator of men or its opposite: an angel who has divine personality traits and guarantees safety and peace. According to Gilbert and Gubar both of these stereotypes equally undermine the status of woman as a human. In the first stereotype we are confronted with a devilish image of woman that not only lacks human traits but also embodies all the possible threats that endanger the

Introduction

The Romantic period unlike what is often presumed was not simply an outpouring of love poems although many of the great poems of the age were about nature and love. The Romanticism was a reaction against the eighteenth-century's fixation upon order, rationality, and scientific precision. The thinkers and the intellectuals of Romantic-era asserted that the followers of Enlightenment project and its philosophers had a wrong understanding of human nature as they tried to confine it within formulas. Thus, Romanticism is generally viewed as a reaction against the pervasive rationalism of the eighteenth century. The most renowned personages of this era include poets and intellectuals such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Blake, and William Wordsworth, Percy Bysshe Shelley, John Keats, and Lord Byron (Rosenthal, "Romanticism" 13).

Among these Lord Byron stands out as the most luxurious and scandalous of the major Romantic poets. But his ill fame did not stop him from becoming the most fashionable poet of his day. He is the progenitor of a popular Romantic hero or antihero which is often referred to as the 'satanic hero' or the 'Byronic hero': he is customarily rebellious, asocial, conceited and in exile, in addition to being alluringly romantic. These characteristics are detectable in Byron's personality as well and because of such personality traits he was like a flamboyant rock star in that age. He was immensely popular and his luxurious and flamboyant lifestyle and lack of morality turned him into a cult figure. There were many rumors that surrounded Byron's personal life such as abusing his wife, and having numerous affairs with various women, having intercourse with male partners, and incestuously taking to bed his own sister, August Leigh. These rumors led to his wife filing for divorce and his departure from England. He moved to the Continental Europe where he hoped he will be less judged as a satanic figure and more appreciated as an artist (Elze, "A Biography with a Critical Essay" 11-17).

Lord Byron's poems "*She Walks in Beauty*" and "*When We Two Parted*" are among the most anthologized of his love poetry. The former is concerned with an unnamed woman who is quite striking, and is the object of the speaker's admiration:

She walks in beauty, like the night

Abstract:-

The ideology of patriarchy has constantly permeated the great masterpieces of far past and the recent outstanding works of today literature equally. While today the pervasiveness of this ideological way of thinking and its intrusion through literary works is much subtle in accordance to our newly shaped gender consciousness and more difficult to trace, the works past exhibit the ideological subjectivization of this discourse more blatantly. Stereotyping of women and appropriating imposed roles and duties for them populate the works of past literature and as for understanding the present one is obliged to know his past it is compulsory to read such stereotyping from the perspective of critical theory. To this aim this paper by applying the feminist theory of Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar and Kate Millet on Lord Byron's romantic poetry attempts to study the implications of such stereotyping from the vintage point of critical theory.

Key terms: Patriarchy, Feminism, Subjectivization, Critical Theory, Romantic poetry.

نبذة مختصرة:

قد تخللت أيديولوجية النظام البطريركي باستمرار روائع كبيرة من الماضي البعيد والأعمال المتميزة الأخيرة من الأدب المعاصر أو الحديث على حد سواء. على أن انتشار هذه الطريقة الأيديولوجية للتفكير من خلال الأعمال الأدبية قد خفي تماماً وفقاً لوعينا الجنساني الذي تم تشكيله حديثاً ويصعب تتبعه، إلا أن الأعمال السابقة تظهر الافتراض الأيديولوجي لهذا الخطاب بشكل أكثر وضوحاً. حيث إن القوالب النمطية للمرأة وتخصيص الأدوار والواجبات المفروضة عليها تملأ أعمال الأدب السابق، ولأن فهم الحاضر هو ملزم بمعرفة ماضيه فإنه من الضروري قراءة هذه القوالب النمطية من منظور النظرية النقدية. ومن أجل تحقيق هذا الهدف، تسعى هذه المقالة من خلال تطبيق النظرية النسوية لساندرا جيلبرت وسوزان جوبار وكيت ميليت على شعر اللورد بايرون الرومانسي إلى دراسة الآثار المترتبة على هذه الصورة النمطية من وجهة نظر النظرية النقدية.

المصطلحات الرئيسية: البطريركية، النسوية، التعميم، النظرية النقدية، الشعر الرومانسي.

A Feminist Reading of Byron's Poetry Through the Lens of Susan Gubar, Sandra Gilbert and Kate Millet

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**تفسير النظرية النسوية لشعر بايرون من خلال عدسة سوزان جوبار
وساندرا جيلبرت وكيت ميليت**

المدرس المساعد
ذو الفقار عبد الامير سليمان
تدريسي في الكلية التربوية المفتوحة - النجف الأشرف
تدريسي في المديرية العامة للتربية في محافظة النجف الأشرف