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# Byron and Álvares de Azevedo: Byronism in Brazil

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M.Phil. Thesis

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## Abstract

This research consists of a study of two major Romantic poets: Lord Byron from Great Britain and Álvares de Azevedo from Brazil. It discusses the link between the poetical movement of Romanticism in Brazil and in Great Britain, showing how European Romanticism was received and practiced in Brazil especially focusing on the image of Byron as the disillusioned and macabre hero to inspire the Brazilian. Chapters include *The Social Context in the Romantic Brazil*, *Romanticism in Brazil*, *The Epicurus Society and Life in São Paulo*, *Byron and Álvares de Azevedo*, and *Byron Translated*.

Romanticism in Brazil played a key role on defining a national cultural and literary identity in the recently independent country that was Brazil. In its foundation, however, it still dialogued with many European countries such as Britain, France and even Portugal in order to create, shape and cultivate its own culture. Brazilian Romanticism assumed distinct voices throughout the nineteenth century; this thesis is developed considering the existence of three generations of poets and focusing on the second or intermediate generation, mainly known as 'the Byronic generation.' The main characteristics of the Byronic generation were associated with the principal features of Lord Byron's poetry or life for the Brazilian: individualism and subjectivism, doubt, disillusionment, melancholy, pessimism, cynicism and bohemian negativism.

Amongst Brazil's prominent authors of the period is Álvares de Azevedo (1831-1852) - the foremost Brazilian Byronist. Azevedo is the most popular amongst his contemporaries - and also amongst twentieth century Brazilian writers. Azevedo's life and writing related to the type of dark and satanic

imaginary associated with Byronism in Brazil showing him to be one of the best interpreters and disciples of Byron.

The findings underline that the image of Byron seems to have played a key role in the formation and development of a national literature. Although Byron was still a European author, he had his image and work adapted to suit the Brazilian literary ideas and interests. Byron's work and life assumed mythical proportions when they were brought together into the image of his heroes such as *Don Juan*, *Childe Harold*, and *Manfred*, by his Brazilian readers and translators. Thus, although Brazilian Romanticism is generally understood as a blend of all things from European Romanticism, it was, however, adapted by the hands of Brazilian writers to a 'local colour' corresponding to their literary project.

The thesis was developed with the hopes of being continued in the future as part of a PhD project involving other poets, and it could be published as an introductory volume in English to the study of Brazilian Romanticism and its relation to Byron. The volume could perhaps place Brazilian Romanticism in a place of recognition and stature in the international literary canon. As the research has shown, Brazilian Romanticism - although a very distinctive and important literary movement with strong European roots - has been neglected by a canon predominantly consisted of European authors.

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Finally, I would like to thank my family for their unconditional support throughout my Master's degree; without their love and understanding this academic work would have never been possible.

## Editions of Works

*Byron* - All quotations from Byron's poetry refer to *Lord Byron: The Major Works*, ed. by Jerome J. McGann, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000) unless otherwise stated. Cited in the text with title, canto, stanza, and lines of the poem referred to - whenever suitable.

AA - All quotations from Álvares de Azevedo poetry refer to *Álvares de Azevedo: Obra Completa*, ed. by Alexei Bueno (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Nova Aguilar, 2000) unless otherwise stated. Cited in the text with title, canto, stanza, and lines of the poem referred to - whenever suitable.

All quotations from Castro Alves refer to *Castro Alves: Poesias Completas*, ed. by Jamil Almansur Haddad, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1959). Cited in the text with title, canto, stanza, and lines of the poem referred to - whenever suitable.

Quotations from poems by Gonçalves Dias, Junqueira Freire, Casimiro de Abreu, and Fagundes Varela refer to Péricles E. da Silva Ramos, *Poesia Romântica: Antologia* (São Paulo: Edições Melhoramentos, 1965) - or otherwise stated. Cited in the text with title, canto, stanza, and lines of the poem referred to - whenever suitable.

I have tried to provide translations of poems and quotations into English. Wherever there is not a reference note, the translations are my own.

## Introduction

This MPhil thesis aims to explore and discuss through historical and literary context, and poetry analysis, the influences of the poet Lord Byron from Great Britain in Álvares de Azevedo from Brazil for the constitution of what was known as the Brazilian Byronism.

Álvares de Azevedo's life and writing related to the type of dark and satanic imaginary associated with Byronism in Brazil. In his view of poetry and life, he contemplated the most sublime beauties of human existence in poems of the first part of his only poetical work, the *Lira dos Vinte Anos* or *Lira of the Twenty Years* and, after that he explored blasphemy and Satanism, showing, in the second part of his *lira*, to be one of the best interpreters and disciples of the main European Romantics including not only Byron but also Musset, Goethe, and Lamartine.

This work discusses questions such as: how European artistic and philosophical thought was received and practiced in a transatlantic tropical country; why and how to establish a clear and convincing link between the poetical movement of Romanticism in Brazil and in Great Britain (the Byronic movement in particular); and what Brazilian translations, specially Azevedo's and his most representative contemporaries, can tell us about the image of European Romanticism and Byron.

For the purposes of this thesis I have considered that Brazilian Romanticism is divided into three 'generations.' This work, however, focus on the second generation, also known as 'Byronic' generation, with its main

characteristics associated with the principal features of Lord Byron's poetry to Brazilian Romantics: individualism and subjectivism, doubt, disillusionment, melancholy, pessimism, cynicism and bohemian negativism.

It is divided into chapters that gradually introduce the reader to a panorama of Brazilian Romanticism, and furthermore, to the particular Romantic generation that was the Byronic generation, with analyses of some of the most important poems of, the most influential and characteristic Brazilian Romantic poet: Álvares de Azevedo.

Starting with an introduction about the importance of the study and consideration of the historical context in Romanticism to the analysis of the literary period, the first chapter is entitled *The Social Context in the Romantic Brazil*. The following chapters are: *Romanticism in Brazil*, *The Epicurus Society and Life in São Paulo*, *Byron and Álvares de Azevedo*, and *Byron Translated*.

## **Introduction to the chapters**

Any study of what is called Romanticism cannot ignore the sea of possibilities and contradictions in its definition. What is Romanticism? The question is recurrent in most of the serious studies related to the term and, in order to reach a proper definition, one can face the most varied hypothesis: Romanticism is a school, a trend, a form, a historical emergency, a socio-cultural event, a state of the spirit.

To modern history, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were times of great and important changes in artistic, political, economical and social fields as never seen before in such a short period of human history. All these factors

combined would constitute the framework for the period, and according to Arnold Hauser's historical materialistic and social approach to the subject - and, despite his closeness to a teleological method:

the insight that historical developments have their origin not in formal principles, ideas and entities, not in substances which unfold and produce in the course of history mere 'modifications' of their fundamentally unhistorical nature, but in the fact that historical development represents a dialectical process, in which every factor is in a state of motion and subject to constant change of meaning, in which there is nothing static, nothing timelessly valid, but also nothing one-sided, and in which all factors, material and intellectual, economic and ideological, are bound up together in a state of indissoluble interdependence, that is to say, that we are not in the least able to go back to any point in time, where a historically definable situation is not already the result of this interaction.<sup>1</sup>

Since nothing is 'one-sided' and 'all factors are bound up together', Hauser's argument of the historical Romanticism can lead us to the thought of a necessity of linking and historicising any area under discussion in the history of cultural production. It is important to make clear that the subject matter is Romanticism and, therefore, one should be aware of its almost indissoluble blending of social forces. The critic and philosopher Benedito Nunes emphasizes Hauser's argument saying that 'without the Romantics' historical consciousness, nineteenth-century historicism would be inconceivable.'<sup>2</sup> Another allied statement regarding the importance of the combination of historical, social and cultural factors for a definition of Romanticism was written by the critic J. Guinsburg:

it is also a historically defined school that came out in a certain moment, in concrete conditions and with answers specific to the situation that it was presented to...No matter what, Romanticism is a historical fact and, more than that, it is the historical fact that marks

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<sup>1</sup> Arnold Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, 3 vols, London, 1999, III, p.161.

<sup>2</sup> Benedito Nunes, 'The Literary Historiography of Brazil', in *The Cambridge History of Latin American Literature*, ed. by Roberto Echevarría and Enrique Pupo-Walker, 3 vols, Cambridge, 1995, III, p.19.

in the history of human consciousness, the relevance of the historical conscience. It is, therefore, a way of thinking that thought and thought about itself historically.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, the first chapter in this thesis is entitled *The Social Context in the Romantic Brazil*. It shows how the first politically stormy decades in Brazilian modern history led to a bourgeois fascination with European Romanticism and an attempt to adapt it to a Brazilian context. It highlights how the Independence of the country was fundamental to the constitution of a more developed and autonomous society allowing the foundation of the first journalistic press and academic institutions.

The next chapter, *Literary Romanticism in Brazil*, and also the following sub-chapter entitled *Generations* will present the foundations, main aspects and also the difficulties of classification of the different generations of poets in Brazilian Romanticism. The critic Antonio Candido, in *Formação da Literatura Brasileira*<sup>4</sup> or *Formation of Brazilian Literature*, argues that the formation of Brazilian national literature synthesizes universal and particular trends and seems to come out as a poor imitation of European literature - thus depriving it of an intention of building a genuine and national literature. Very similar are the interpretations by Cilaine Alves, author of *The Beautiful and the Grotesque: Álvares de Azevedo and the Romantic Irony*<sup>5</sup> when she comments on the relation between the poetical work Álvares de Azevedo and Byronism. In this chapter I

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<sup>3</sup> J. Guinsburg, 'Romantismo, Historicismo e História', in *O Romantismo*, São Paulo, 2002, p.14

é também uma escola historicamente definida que surgiu num dado momento, em condições concretas e com respostas características à situação que se lhe apresentou... Seja como for, o Romantismo é um fato histórico e, mais do que isso, é o fato histórico que assinala, na história da consciência humana, a relevância da consciência histórica. É, pois, uma forma de pensar que pensou e se pensou historicamente.

<sup>4</sup> Antonio Candido, *Formação da Literatura Brasileira*, Belo Horizonte, 2000.

<sup>5</sup> Cilaine Alves. *O Belo e o Disforme: Álvares de Azevedo e a ironia romântica*, São Paulo, 1998.

demonstrate that although literature in Brazil tended to be seen as sub product of European production, Romanticism in Brazil, however, could have happened as a positive ambivalence: it looked upon Europe at the same time it had a very particular project that somehow developed and created a national literature that was, at some point, in fact very particular as the 'Byronic generation.'

Then we move to the city of São Paulo - headquarters of Brazilian cultural establishment - in the nineteenth century, in the third chapter, named: *The Epicurus Society and Life in São Paulo*. It is an important part of the thesis because of its explanation of the social atmosphere that surrounded life in the student city of São Paulo. It shows how Byron was socially interpreted by the students in the Faculty of Law who moulded the British poet into their own and exaggerated form of Byronism and later incorporated that image into their own literary production. Although the critic Correa de Oliveira notes that:

His poetry, embellished in the aromas of the Byronic school, was not inspired from our [Brazilian] fires. The harmonies of our skies, the aromas of our soil did not offer his burning soul more than an almost lifeless spectacle; they were as if pale marvels, before which the poet would not bend<sup>6</sup>.

The chapter shows what could be perceived as a Brazilian project for the literature at that moment and that Álvares de Azevedo's work was still the best Brazilian example of a national literature even though related to an adapted image of Byron who still represented all things European to be respected and appreciated. Further on in the chapter there is also an account on the Epicurus Society, a society formed by the young students and poets that wanted to live the life of Byron and the heroes of his poems.

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<sup>6</sup> Cited in Candido, *Formação*, p. 134.

The fourth chapter is devoted to a comment on Byron's most significant poetry (read macabre and Satanic) illustrating how the Brazilian interpretations of it influenced on the construction of his image as a Romantic hero. Álvares de Azevedo's life is recounted, as well as his situation in the Brazilian Romantic canon, and there is a discussion of some of his most representative poems to this thesis. This chapter illustrates how Azevedo's life and writing related to the type of dark and satanic imaginary associated with Byronism in Brazil; his association to the Epicurus Society made him both a national and universal poet, whose style of poetry was developed within the broader formation of Brazilian Romanticism.

The final chapter before conclusion is entitled *Byron Translated*. It explores how the translations of Byron's poems into Portuguese in Brazil played a key role in building his myth in Brazil. The study by Onédia C.C. Barboza entitled *Byron in Brazil: Translations*, established a valuable list of Brazilian translators of Byron and provided excerpts of some of the works. Her careful study also pointed out and well characterized the so called Byronism, affirming that Azevedo was in the foreground of Byronism in Brazil, and arguing the need to intrinsically connect the foundations of Brazilian Byronism to the name and work of Álvares de Azevedo.

## **Social Context in Pre-Romantic Brazil**

The changes in the social mechanism that started with the Industrial Revolution in 1750 would define new paradigms for life and social-economic activities in the Western colonial relations. The power of influence of the first modern Revolution under Britain could be seen in the country's new policy:

there would be no more interest in expanding British domain through territorial conquests overseas, determining an old and yet decadent relation of exploitation of colonies through slave labour which supplied the metropolis with natural mineral resources or agriculture.

At that moment, the expansion of markets for British industrial products - as seen by the unnecessary massive acquisition of Manchester's and Birmingham's iron products in Brazil due to one of the several obtuse Portuguese treaties with Britain - was set up according to a new model of imperialism: industrial, capitalist and, consequently, cultural.

One of the first essential changes involved the slavery system. The maintenance of the slavery system in the Americas<sup>7</sup> was no longer interesting for Britain, mostly because - in order to point out a brief justification - in 1783, the British Empire would lose the control over one of its most important colonies and, the majority of the European metropolis would continue to adopt the slavery system in their colonies as a fundamental factor of their economy.

According to a general definition, slaves are people who are property of another, forced to work for somebody for no payment; human beings in a situation of total destitution. However, British policies and pressure to draw the slavery system to an end in the Americas did not include any human rights considerations; the focus was on creating a bigger and more profitable free-worker market, thus keeping its industries and trades going as well as strengthening the emerging new social class, the bourgeoisie.

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<sup>7</sup> It is interesting to draw attention to the episode that took place a few decades after the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, the American Revolution (1770-1783) and subsequent loss of that colony, something that would contribute to a new definition of the model of imperialism adopted by Britain. The American Revolution arises as one of the first revolutionary expressions in search of a substantial modification in political structure, seeking for autonomy as a territory and people.

The chain reaction of economic and social revolutions proceeded incessantly, spreading throughout Europe, which faced the outbreak of the French Revolution (1787-1789) filled of Romantic ideals that soon had political and cultural effects in the American colonies, especially those in Latin America. The historian Eric Hobsbawm writes about the importance of the French Revolution:

The French Revolution may not have been an isolated phenomenon, but it was far more fundamental than any of the other contemporary ones and its consequences were therefore far more profound [...] it was, alone of all the revolutions which preceded and followed it, a mass *social* revolution, and immeasurably more radical than any comparable upheaval [...] The results of the American revolutions were, broadly speaking, countries carrying on much as before, only minus the political control of the British, Spaniards and Portuguese.<sup>8</sup>

and carries on:

The French Revolution is a landmark in all countries. Its repercussions [...] occasioned the risings which led to the liberation of Latin America after 1808.<sup>9</sup>

According to Hobsbawm's account, the process of independence in the Americas started with the French Revolution spreading its ideals all over Europe and also with first independent country in the New World: the United States of America. Both factors can be seen as milestones for many other revolutions in countries in Latin America that soon began their own process of independence. Mexico was the first to declare its independence from the Spanish control in 1810, followed by Brazil's neighbour Venezuela in 1811, acting as a starting point for countries in South America.

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<sup>8</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution 1789-1848*, London, 2007, p.74.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p.75.

## The historical moment in Brazil

Romanticism in Latin America coincides with the beginning of independent life in most of the countries in South America. The first half of the nineteenth Century was, for Brazil, a time of successive and important political events as never seen before in the country. At the end of 1807, after Napoleon's request to the Prince Regent of Portugal, Dom João VI (1767-1826), to seal the Portuguese ports to British trade, confiscate British property, and arrest British citizens, Portugal found itself trapped between a traditional 'alliance' with Great Britain and the Napoleonic army's approach on Lisbon. Pondering on whether to accept the French Emperor's orders or being bombarded by British ships, Dom Joao VI - counselled by the British minister, Lord Strangford<sup>10</sup> - safely fled to Brazil escorted by British ships in return for assuring commercial privileges to Great Britain. The enterprise took to Brazil more than 15,000 Portuguese courtiers, the national library with over sixty thousand volumes (which provided Brazil's first real library), and the royal treasury.

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<sup>10</sup> *The Works of Lord Byron*, The Wordsworth Poetry Library, Hertfordshire, 1994.

For thee, translator of the tinsel song,  
 To whom such glittering ornaments belong,  
 Hiberian Strangford! with thine eyes of blue,  
 And boasted locks of red or auburn hue,  
 Whose plaintive strain each love-sick miss admires,  
 And o'er harmonious fustian half expires,  
 Learn, if thou canst, to yield thine author's sense,  
 Nor vend thy sonnets on a false pretence.  
 Think'st thou to gain thy verse a higher place,  
 By dressing Camoëns in suit of lace?  
 Mend, Strangford! mend thy morals and thy taste;  
 Be warm, but pure; be amorous, but be chaste;  
 Cease to deceive, thy pilfer'd harp restore,  
 Nor teach the Lusian bard to copy Moore.

(Byron, *English Bards*, 295-308)

The relation between Percy Clinton Sydney Smythe, 6th Viscount Strangford (1780-1855) and the Portuguese, besides diplomatic, was also literary. In 1803, through Strangford's translated volume *Poems from the Portuguese of Luis de Camoens*, the English readers learned that Luís de Camões - one of Portugal's most celebrated poets - was, apart from his national epic, a lyric poet. That became one of the most read books at the time. Byron, not very fond of Strangford personally, or his literary work, and addressing him as 'Hiberian Strangford', wrote those satirical lines in the *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*.

With the opening of Brazilian ports to world trade, free agriculture, the end of commercial restrictions that once forbade negotiations with foreigners, the declaration of the colony being part of a single kingdom with Portugal and the Algarve, and the creation of a royal press, the presence of the Crown significantly changed the economical and cultural life in the colony raising the living standards to a level similar to the ones in the mother country in Europe. The new situation attracted regular arrivals of Portuguese, French and English immigrants in greater numbers than before. A certain cosmopolitan atmosphere was then established in Rio de Janeiro - the new capital and home of the royalty in Brazil - now with residents such as political men, scholars, writers, and famous artists who demanded institutions and facilities for higher education. The historian Bradford Burns writes about this episode:

The desperate need for institutes of higher learning was partially answered: in 1808 a naval academy was established and in 1810 a military academy, both of which offered courses in engineering and drawing; a medical school opened in Salvador in 1808 and another in Rio de Janeiro in 1810; likewise, courses in economics, in 1808, agriculture, in 1812, and chemistry, in 1817, were offered; a library of sixty thousand volumes was inaugurated in Rio de Janeiro in 1814.<sup>11</sup>

In this new period for the reception of European ideas, a fascination for French culture led the Crown to invite a French cultural mission to Rio de Janeiro in 1816 and founded the Academy of Fine Arts. Hence, there arrived in Brazil - apart from the writer Ferdinand Denis (1798-1890), already resident in the country - important painters and instructors: Jean Baptiste Debret (1768-1848), Nicolas Antoine Taunay (1755-1830), Aimé-Adrien Taunay (1803-1828), Hercules Florence (1804-1879) and the German Johann Moritz Rugendas (1802-1858).

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<sup>11</sup> E. Bradford Burns, 'Nation Building', in *A History of Brazil*, New York, 1993, p.114.

The birth of a Brazilian Empire began soon after Liberal ideas<sup>12</sup> proliferated in Europe, causing a political disorder in Portugal where a peaceful revolution in 1820 proclaimed a constitutional government, endangering the Crown. Portuguese liberals, undertaking a rebellion, demanded Dom João VI - still living in Brazil despite the fact of being recognized as king of Portugal after his mother's death in 1816 - to return to Lisbon if he was to continue wearing the Portuguese crown. Once again the Portuguese monarch had to make a decision: should he remain in Brazil and through economic and administrative centralization, consolidate and develop the country in South America; or should he leave it behind as a colony and flee back to Europe to assure the Portuguese throne? In a decision that confirmed his disinterest in the land and the Brazilian people, he fled back to Portugal in 1821 with a few thousand of his courtiers leaving his son, Pedro (1798-1834), as the prince regent. The young prince would consolidate through almost two stormy decades, the political identity of a new Empire that, after all the transformations leading the Brazilians to a much more cosmopolitan life, could never be relegated to its former colonial condition again.

The Brazilian elites, worried about a possible re-colonization, joined their economic and political forces and, encouraged by the Enlightenment and a developing sense of cultural identity, discovered a sense of patriotism. The Portuguese king was aware of the situation in the New World and feared for the future of Portugal's domination over Brazil and requested his son in Brazil to travel incognito to Europe, to facilitate the country's return to its colonial status. Pedro was on a journey between the cities of Santos and São Paulo when he received a letter from his Minister José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva (1763-

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<sup>12</sup> Liberalism, different from today's current connotation, at the time was a synonym for democracy and therefore many monarchies were collapsing in Europe.

1838) - the first Brazilian to occupy a political position - warning him of the plans of his father in Portugal. The prince regent felt betrayed, after all the effort done to bring a sense of unity and progress in Brazil. In a picturesque and dramatic scene, now known as 'The Cry of the Ipiranga River' Pedro unsheathed his sword and removed the Portuguese colours from his coat, and declared: 'Independence or death!.' Brazil, on September 7, 1822, formally gained its independence from Portugal and, later on, Pedro was crowned Dom Pedro I, the 'Constitutional Emperor and Perpetual Defender of Brazil.'

The new Empire, inspired by the French idea of revolution and modernity, still needed recognition by the American and European nations. The USA immediately recognized Brazil's independence followed by the British and the French; but it was only in 1825, after Great Britain's military and economical threats to Dom João VI, that Portugal's recognition of the independence of Brazil was secured. Independence nonetheless meant neither structural nor significant institutional innovation in the new nation's politics. The Brazilian emperor still had close relations with his family's mother country - mainly due to a treaty with Great Britain - during the process of independence that implied that Pedro would inherit the Portuguese throne. This factor, combined with his concessions to end slavery (like the abolishment of the slave trade), the special commercial tariffs that favoured Great Britain, and his lack of political ability, made the image of Dom Pedro I unpopular in Brazil. In 1831, a few years after the foundation of the traditional Faculty of Law<sup>13</sup> in Sao Paulo in 1827, he abdicated the Brazilian throne to fight against Dom Miguel's absolutist government in Portugal and departed from Brazil, leaving his son Pedro de Alcântara - later Dom Pedro II - as his successor.

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<sup>13</sup> Faculdade de Direito do Largo de São Francisco (Universidade de São Paulo).

The years after independence, from 1830 to the Republic in 1889, were characterized not only by political confrontations in several Brazilian regions - with its agitators stimulated by the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, and enthused by the idea of a nationality - but also by intellectual agitation with a great national curiosity concerning the country: its history, its social, economic, and commercial life, its ethnology, its flora and fauna - resulting in the creation of the Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute in 1838<sup>14</sup>; all these combined factors affirmed the nationalistic sentiment that emerged in the period.

Another trace of a disguised Romantic Revolution in Brazil was the rise of the bourgeoisie. With the ports opened to international trade and liberal ideas being spread throughout the country, the social class that emerged through commercial activities, and intellectual and political professions became a powerful rival force of the decadent rural aristocracy. The bourgeoisie would replace the old aristocracy in the politics and achieve an influential and powerful position, setting the political, cultural and social structures in Brazil.

This general progress of the country during the residence of the Portuguese court and after independence had a corresponding cultural and literary expression. With freedom of the press, an intense political and literary journalistic movement developed throughout the country guiding and leading the Brazilian cultural sphere towards the greater foreign centres. The literary and political press - a very typical hybrid type of publication of the period - was represented by: *Correio Brasiliense* (1808-1822); *Aurora Fluminense* (1827); *As Variedades ou Ensaios de Literatura* (1812), the first literary paper in Brazil; O

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<sup>14</sup> The Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro or Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute was created with the patronage of the Emperor Dom Pedro II and had amongst its members the most notorious people in Brazil. People who were all interested in cataloguing and preserving the Brazilian history, culture, and geography.

Patriota (1813-1814); Anais Fluminenses de Ciências, Artes e Literatura (1822); O Jornal Científico, Econômico e Literário (1826); O Beija-Flor (1830-1831); Revista da Sociedade Filomática (1833)<sup>15</sup>; Niterói-Revista Brasiliense (1836); Minerva Brasiliense (1843-1845); Guanabara (1850).

As doors were opened wide to Illuminist, Encyclopaedist, Revolutionary, and Romantic ideas, England and France stood as models for cultural and idealistic inspiration; their philosophical and literary works, either read in the original language or in French translations, became very popular and strongly influenced the intellectual Brazilian milieu which since the abrogation of the Portuguese prohibition on intellectual importation experienced a renovation through foreign culture that quickly absorbed - even though evident - by the distinctive imaginary of writers and thinkers of the Brazilian Romanticism.

## Literary Historiography

Many were the European scholars interested in Brazilian literary historiography in the early nineteenth Century. Some of the most representative names of that time are Friedrich Bouterwerk (1766-1828), Sismonde de Sismondi (1773-1842), Ferdinand Denis (1798-1890) and Ferdinand Wolf (1796-1866), apart from the two Portuguese writers Almeida Garret (1799-1854) and Alexandre Herculano (1810-1877). However, amongst these many European who were interested in the cultural structures of an exotic land, the Frenchman, Ferdinand Denis was, perhaps, the most important scholar engaged with the study of Brazilian subjects in the first half of the nineteenth Century.

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<sup>15</sup> The Sociedade Filomática played an important role on setting up the peculiar Romanticism in the city of São Paulo. This subject will be developed further on in this thesis in a chapter about the secret and literary societies of the time.

In his most famous work entitled *Résumé de l'histoire littéraire du Portugal, suivi du résumé de l'histoire littéraire du Brésil* (Paris, 1826) or *Summary of the Literary History of Portugal, followed by the Summary of the Literary History of Brazil*, he recognizes the European influence in Brazilian writers but separates Brazilian literature from Portuguese enumerating the elements that would enable Brazil to have its own literature as an autonomous expression of its originality as both people and nation: political liberty, nature, and the natural disposition of people<sup>16</sup> as can be observed when he writes:

Brazil, which felt the necessity of adopting different institutions from those imposed by Europe, experiments with the need of seeking a poetical inspiration in the sources that really belong to itself.<sup>17</sup>

Furthermore he adds about the natural beauty stating that

In these beautiful countries, so favoured by nature, one's thought must spread wings to match the spectacle offered to it; majestic [...] it must remain independent [...] In sum, America must be free as much in her poetry as in her government.<sup>18</sup>

After political liberty, the concept of Nature is perhaps one of the most important for Brazilian Romanticism. Without the Romantic cherished contemplation and distinct perception of the landscape, it would be impossible to guarantee a vision of local colour that would express the independence of the land and the people who lived there. This concept is so important to the emerging country fulfilled of ancient traditions where, as Montaigne would say,

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<sup>16</sup> Nunes, 'The Literary Historiography of Brazil', p.17.

<sup>17</sup> A. S. Amora, *A Literatura Brasileira: O Romantismo 1833-1838/1878-1881*, São Paulo, 1967, p. 59.

o Brasil, que sentiu a necessidade de adotar instituições diferentes daquelas que lhe foram impostas pela Europa, experimenta já a necessidade de ir buscar sua inspiração poética a fontes que realmente lhe pertencem.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p.59.

Nesses belos países, tão favorecidos pela natureza, o pensamento deve engrandecer-se como o espetáculo que lhe é oferecido; majestoso [...] ele deve permanecer independente [...] A América, enfim, deve ser livre na sua poesia como no seu governo.

one could witness humanity in its infancy: the indigenous people who with their ancient customs represented the wellspring of the magical new reality proportioned by Nature, and from whom all that is genuinely Brazilian would flow.

Those characteristics would serve as touchstones for early Brazilian Romanticism, as can be noticed in the nationalistic traits given by Gonçalves Dias to the first literary productions of this period. For instance, the exaltation of the land:

Minha terra tem palmeiras,  
Onde canta o Sabiá;  
(Gonçalves Dias, 'Canção do Exílio', 1-2)

My homeland has many palm-trees  
and the thrush-song fills its air;

And the people who lived there:

São rudos, severos, sedentos de glória,  
Já prélios incitam, já cantam vitória,  
Já meigos atendem à voz do cantor:  
São todos Timbiras, guerreiros valentes!  
(Gonçalves Dias, 'I-Juca-Pirama', 7-10)

They are rough, severe, hungry for glory,  
In the incitation of a combat, they sing victory,  
Tenderly response to the voice of the singer:  
They are all Timbiras, brave warriors!

As depicted in the lines above, Brazilian writers would build their version of a national hero - the Indian - echoing Rousseau's concept of a noble native and the European Romantic model of a medieval hero. The Romantic notion of genius implied that the Brazilians were formed out of a melting pot of races, which combined many different levels of sensibility: 'the chivalry of the Portuguese, the boldness and fantasy of the Indian, and the credulity of the

black slave'<sup>19</sup>. This motif of miscegenation would persevere throughout the course of literary production as a strong and convincing argument on the development of a particular sensibility and character present in the Brazilian people.

Another European concerned with the Brazilian literary life was the prominent Portuguese Romantic Almeida Garret - one of the few Portuguese who appreciated Byron - who spent years exiled in England and France and assimilated the Romantic ideals en vogue in those countries. Concomitantly with Denis' work, Garret published in France the first anthology of poetry in Portuguese language - *Parnaso Lusitano* - and included in the introduction an account of the valuable role played by Brazilian poets in contribution to the poetry in Portuguese. To have a slightly better understanding of how Brazilian Romantic and nationalist conscience was helped and considered by another European, some of Garrett's words are here worthy of note:

And now [writes Garret referring to the eighteenth century] the Portuguese literature starts to grow and enrich with the productions of the Brazilian sugar plan mills. Certain it is that the new and majestic scenes of the nature in that vast region should have given more originality to its poets, more different images, expressions and style than what is shown by them: the European education removed their national soul [...].<sup>20</sup>

One can thus observe the insistence of the European point of view towards this new literature which had to emphasize the local colour, the

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<sup>19</sup> Nunes, 'The Literary Historiography', p.16.

<sup>20</sup> in Amora, 'A Literatura Brasileira', p. 68.

E agora [escreve Garret, referindo-se aos meados do século XVIII] começa a literatura portuguesa a avultar e enriquecer-se com as produções dos engenhos brasileiros. Certo é que as majestosas e novas cenas da natureza naquela vasta região deviam ter dado a seus poetas mais originalidade, mais diferentes imagens, expressões e estilo, do que nêles aparece: a educação européia apagou-lhes o espírito nacional [...].

American magical and primordial landscape and, thematic, furnishing the literary work with an identity.

There was also an enthusiasm for Walter Scott and his historical novels that were widely translated<sup>21</sup> and read among the Brazilian novelists. They worked as a model for the Romantic Brazilian novel with all its mythological and historical flavour. Ossian reaches a high influence with Junqueira Freire and Francisco Otaviano, the latter the translator of 'Song of Selma'<sup>22</sup> in 1872.

José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva (1763-1838), the 'Patriarch of Independence', famous for his political acting, man of a vast cultural and scientific knowledge, left us a work in which he clarifies his political thoughts concerning Brazilian issues such as the indigenous people and slavery. His poetical work was written in his early life when exiled in Bordéus. It is a transitory pre-Romantic poetry. In the dedicatory inscription for his verses he wrote:

Fui nêles assaz parco em rimas, porque a nossa bela língua, bem como a inglêsa, espanhola e italiana, não precisa, absolutamente falando, do zunzun dos consoantes para fixar a atenção e deleitar o ouvido; basta-lhe o metro e ritmo: e quanto à monotônica regularidade das estanças, que seguem à risca franceses e italianos, dela às vezes me apartei de propósito, usando da mesma soltura e liberdade, que vi novamente praticados por um Scott e um Byron, cisnes da Inglaterra.<sup>23</sup>

Bonifácio defends his poetry written sparsely in rhymes in a manner that glorified the natural musicality of languages like Portuguese, English, Spanish, and Italian, where the strict form of composition does not add to the meaning and melody of the poems. Then he mentions Scott and Byron as models for a

<sup>21</sup> The Brazilian Caetano Lopes de Moura translated many of Scott's novels, some like: O talismã, Quintin Durward and Ivanhoe.

<sup>22</sup> Translated as 'Cantos de Selma'

<sup>23</sup> Cited in José Aderaldo Castello. *A Literatura Brasileira*, São Paulo, 1960, I, p.218.

new type of poetry: free verse and imagination. It is a pre-romantic manifesto that indicates Brazilian Romanticism's primordial sources: Scott and Byron. Bonifácio translated Walter Scott, Byron, Ossian, Young, and Rousseau; paraphrased the Bible; impregnated himself with Voltaire; quoted Pope and Newton; and also translated Hesíodo, Píndaro and Vergílio.

However, it is generally agreed by modern literary historians and critics that the beginning of Brazilian Romanticism dates from 1836 and goes until 1880; with Romanticism always being renovated not in form but in theme, feelings, and tone. Thus, Brazilian Romanticism started with the publication in Paris - symbolically meaning France as the new source of artistic inspiration? - of an article entitled *Ensaio sobre a história da literatura do Brasil - estudo preliminar* or *Essay on the history of literature of Brazil - preliminary study* by the Brazilian Domingos José Gonçalves Magalhães (1811-1882) in the magazine *Niteroy*, edited by a group of Brazilians who lived in Paris consisting of M. Araújo Porto-Alegre (1806-1879), and Francisco Sales Torres Homem (1812-1876).

The essay by Magalhães was established as the Brazilian Romantic manifesto. The author's thesis in the essay was perhaps not of great originality, asking whether Brazil could inspire the poets' imagination and the indigenous create poetry. His answer was positive to both enquiries. In a certain way he reiterated the already expressed ideas of Denis and Garrett, saying that 'each people have their literature, as each man his character, each tree its fruit.' The main points for Brazilian Romanticism were then set: to abandon the European landscape and mythology in favour of the Brazilian nature and religion; to abandon the classical rules, now substituted by individual initiative.

A conception of Brazilian culture and literature was then defined by nationalist and anti-Portuguese feelings, it particularly assumed that it were the damages of a Portuguese colonization what mined the autonomous development of any cultural activity; and that if the various indigenous cultures had not been annihilated they would have immensely contributed for the concept of a national culture in Brazil. Also, they believed that the magnificent Brazilian nature was a source for the artistic genius and, that with Independence, Brazilian culture and literature could finally flourish.

As a nation politically independent and increasingly separate from the once oppressor and backward Portugal it was now the time for a new era in Brazilian poetry. This disconnection from Portugal - apart from the many nationalistic manifestos - can now be noticed in the new trait given to the poetical forms in Brazilian literature: the neoclassical formalism was abandoned (as a remaining link with Portugal) and Brazilian writers marched towards a Romantic 'revolution', notably substituting Portugal by France as the guide to cultural development.

## **The Epicurus Society and life in São Paulo**

### **São Paulo**

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, the city of São Paulo was a small and almost rural city with around 15,000 inhabitants. However, some changes began after the Independence in 1822 such as the appearance of the free press and the inauguration of the Faculty of Law. The modernity introduced by the main European capitals - especially France and its ideals - started to

emerge in São Paulo assured by the new and prominent social class in the Brazilian society: the law bachelor.

As an educational hub for the people that would - in most of the cases - take part in the government, the Faculty of Law of São Paulo soon became the place where the young Brazilians were sent for their high education. With such attitude there was a transposition in the main centre of education for the sons of Brazilian farmers and aristocrats: from Portugal to the city of São Paulo, in Brazil.

The first contribution of the Faculty of Law of São Paulo to the literary activity in Brazil was the establishment in 1933 - by students and professors of the Faculty of Law of São Paulo- of the Brazilian version of the French 'Société Philomatique de Paris.' Philomatic Societies were very popular in the nineteenth century; they were organizations where groups of academics, scientist or curious people would discuss science with a multidisciplinary approach.

This society somehow connected and united all the people interested in the development of sciences in Brazil, thus creating a favourable milieu for the development and growth of the literary activity in the country.

The second issue of the society's magazine figured a very interesting and important article to the history of the introduction of Romanticism in Brazil, the article was *Ensaio Crítico Sôbre a Coleção de Poesias do Sr. D. J. G. Magalhães* or *Critical Study on the Poetry of Mr. D. J. G. Magalhães*. Its author - Justianiano José da Rocha - recognizes the important role played by the literary critic, and having studied some poetical work written in Brazil he observed that in Brazilian poetry, love and voluptuousness would prevail:

Quando porém atendo à (sic) que nossas paisagens, os costumes de nossos camponeses, em uma palavra, a Natureza virgem d'América, inda oferecem quadros tão virgens como ela ao poeta que os quiser pintar: quando me lembro que o azulado Céu dos Trópicos ainda não foi cantado, que nem um só vate fêz descansar seus amantes à sombra amena de nossas mangueiras, atrevo-me à (sic) esperar que nossa poesia, majestosa, rica, variada, e brilhante, como a natureza que a inspira, nada terá que invejar às sedições descrições Européias dos Corydons, e Tircis, deitados sempre debaixo das cansadas faias.

Justiniano regarded that type of poetry as being the same type written by Byron; the kind of poetry that deeply touched people's hearts:

A tão sublimes influências não deixará de obedecer o sensível gênio Brasiliense; êle também simpatiza com o infortúnio, também detesta a opressão: sim, nossas musas também serão o ódio à tirania, o desejo de suavizar os males de suas vítimas, o amor da pátria, e da liberdade.<sup>24</sup>

The stage was set for the city to become the cultural capital of Brazil and São Paulo thus became a city full of students, with all their mischievousness and eccentricities. As noted by the critic Richard M. Morse in his article 'São Paulo since Independence: A Cultural Interpretation', São Paulo was a city:

whose [sic] life-centre was swinging from the rural and patriarchal into the urban domain. Their [the students] hedonism, mental lethargy and acts of violence gave way to a zealous pursuit of letters, journalism, and theatre that made São Paulo an intellectual springhead for the whole empire. They, like their professors, came from throughout Brazil and from abroad, bringing attitudes and needs that stirred the introverted community into foment: a chiding scepticism, ever ready to disjoint the narrow patterns of provincial life; political ideas and passions that transcended local issues; and a demand for theatre, reviews, newspapers, bookstores, dances and informal gathering-places such as cafés and restaurants.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *Revista da Sociedade Filomática* - Julho de 1833, n. 2, São Paulo, Tipografia do Nôvo Farol Paulistano, - (Biblioteca da Faculdade de Direito da Universidade de São Paulo) pp. 36-57. Cited in Castello, *A Literatura Brasileira*, São Paulo, 1960, pp. 228-234.

<sup>25</sup> Richard M. Morse, 'São Paulo Since Independence: A Cultural Interpretation', *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 34, 1954, p. 423.

It was in such a vaporous atmosphere of changes and cultural bloom as described above where the main intellectual societies and journals emerged. In this same environment, the 17 years old student Álvares de Azevedo enrolled for the course of Law in 1848.

Azevedo, at the age of 17, had already a remarkable education, with an outstanding performance in his studies. He read and wrote in French and English as proved by the letters he sent to his mother during the period when he studied in Rio de Janeiro. At the Faculty of Law he demonstrated a strong dedication to his studies driven by his intellectual genius: he wrote political and academic speeches, participated in the foundation of the *Ensaio Filosófico* society, and was a member of the Epicurean Society and Masonry<sup>26</sup>.

The opinion of Azevedo about the city of São Paulo can be seen not only throughout his work, but also in parts of his biography present in his own letters. His letters reveals to the reader how much his literary sensibility contributed in moulding São Paulo into a gloomier city, in the vein of the mythical European cities wrapped by the cold weather and the misty atmosphere.

In a letter written in the 20<sup>th</sup> of July 1848 to his friend Luís Antônio da Silva Nunes, Azevedo describes his impressions of the city:

E além, lá ao longe, se levantava a cidade negra; e os lampiões, abalados pela ventania, pareciam esses meteoros efêmeros que se levantam das paludes e que as tradições do norte da Europa julgavam espíritos destinados a distrair os viandantes, a correrem sobre o pântano imenso e preto... ou estrelas de fogo, faíscas de alguma fogueira do inferno semeadas sobre o campo negro.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Details on Azevedo's affiliation with the Epicurus Society and Masonry are given later in this chapter.

<sup>27</sup> 'Correspondência', in *Álvares de Azevedo: Obra Completa*, p.801.

Yet, after a year living in São Paulo, Azevedo writes to his sister in a letter dated August 1851 that his impressions of the city were:

O céu tem névoas, a terra não tem verdura, as tardes não têm perfume. É uma miséria! É para desgostar um homem toda a sua vida de ver ruínas! Tudo aqui parece velho e centenário... até as moças são insípidas como a mesma velhice!<sup>28</sup>

Azevedo's description of the city tell us of an almost Nordic place, immersed in the mist and marked by the *garôa* - the name by which is designated the common drizzle in São Paulo. The lexical choice in the two extracts above highlights the poet's predilection for a certain fixed jargon supposed to represent the European Romanticism. In a dark city with 'tradições do norte da Europa' or 'traditions from the North of Europe' where the stars are more like 'faíscas de alguma fogueira do inferno' or 'sparks of some fire from hell', Álvares de Azevedo will write his work through the prism of Byron.

To observe Azevedo's singular portrayal of São Paulo in one of his works, we have selected an extract from the play *Macário*<sup>29</sup>, at the moment when Satan leads Macário to the entry of the city of São Paulo:

MACÁRIO

[...] Falta-nos muitos para chegar?

SATAN

Não. Daqui a cinco minutos podemos estar à vista da cidade. Hás de vê-la desenhando no céu suas torres escuras e seus casebres tão pretos de noite como de dia, iluminada, mas sombria como uma essa de enterro.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p.834.

<sup>29</sup> 'Macário', in *Álvares de Azevedo*, pp. 523-524.

In the extract above, even though the city is illuminated - perhaps a sign of modernity - it is introduced by Satan as somewhere as shadowy as a tomb: 'iluminada, mas sombria como uma essa de enterro.'

The vision is also gothic: there are dark steeples and houses that are black day and night. The play continues and Satan keeps describing the city, now considering its inhabitants:

MACÁRIO

Tenho ânsia de lá chegar. É bonita?

SATAN (boceja)

Ah! é divertida.

MACÁRIO

Por acaso também há mulheres ali?

SATAN

Mulheres, padres, soldados e estudantes. As mulheres são mulheres, os padres são soldados, os soldados são padres, e os estudantes são estudantes: para falar mais claro: as mulheres são lascivas, os padres dissolutos, os soldados ébrios, os estudantes vadios. Isto salvo honrosas exceções, por exemplo, de amanhã em diante, tu.

MACÁRIO

Esta cidade deveria ter o teu nome.

SATAN

Tem o de um santo: é quase o mesmo. Não é o hábito que faz o monge. Demais, essa terra é devassa como uma cidade, insípida como uma vila, e pobre como uma aldeia. Se não estás reduzido a dar-te ao pagode, a suicidar-te de *spleen*, ou a alumiar-te a rolo, não entres lá. É a monotonia do tédio. Até as calçadas!

Above, while yawning<sup>30</sup>, Satan ironically tells to the young man of the amusing city and describes the diverse types of people who live there: the lascivious woman, the vicious priest, the drunken soldier, and the idle student. Those are characteristics of a degenerating world, given to madness and chaos.

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<sup>30</sup> Perhaps a sign of 'boredom'

It is also worth of note Satan's reservation by the end of his first speech: he says that there are exceptions among the idle students, perhaps telling Macário that it was possible to not be a part of that mad world.

Satan's second speech can enlighten the reader with regard to the interpretation of the Byronism in Brazil. Satan affirms that the only salvation to the monotony of the city of São Paulo is to give in - between other elements - to the spleen. The spleen appears therefore as an artificial element, to which the student appeals in order to survive the *tedium vitae* of São Paulo.

It is the same *spleen* referenced by Macário in the beginning of the play when he says:

Cognac! És um belo companheiro de viagem. És silencioso como um vigário em caminho, mas no silêncio que inspiras, como nas noites de luar, ergue-se às vezes um canto misterioso que enleva!

[...]

Quando não há o amor, há o vinho; quando não há o vinho, há o fumo; e quando não há o amor, nem vinho, nem fumo, há o *spleen*.<sup>31</sup>

In the paragraph above we can find all the elements needed for the Byronic lifestyle in Brazil, all of them associated in a very interesting order: the love, the wine, the tobacco, and at last the *spleen*. There are present two elements of the artificial paradises for the Romantic poet: the alcohol and the tobacco.

The next section will explore that thematic common to some of Azevedo's and Byron's poems.

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 510.

## Alcohol and Tobacco

Sublime tobacco!

[...]

Divine in hookas, glorious in a pipe,  
When tipp'd with amber, mellow, rich, and ripe;  
Like other charmers, wooing the caress,  
More dazzlingly when daring in full dress;  
Yet thy true lovers more admire by far  
Thy naked beauties - Give me a cigar!

(Byron, 'The Island', II, VI)

The presence of alcohol and tobacco in poetry and in other types of Brazilian texts during the Romantic period is part of a widespread idea by then that inebriety benefitted inspiration. There is a famous story about the Brazilian poets who - inspired by Byron - drank wine from human skulls, however, we must consider that as much as poetry itself, the idea was that alcohol opened the doors to a certain escape from reality; it was the element for a 'trance propício à criação artística'<sup>32</sup> or 'trance propitious to artistic creation.'

Alcohol and tobacco were fundamental in the life of both student and poet, working as a therapy for the spleen. In Azevedo's poems the references to cognac and wine are innumerable; below, two extracts of poems - 'Idéias Íntimas' and 'Spleen e Charutos' - that illustrate very well the occurrence of these elements:

Eia! bebamos!  
És o sangue do gênio, o puro néctar  
Que as almas de poeta diviniza,  
O condão que abre o mundo das magias!  
Vem, fogoso *Cognac!* É só contigo  
Que sinto-me viver.

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<sup>32</sup> J. Brito Broca, 'Dipsomania e Romantismo', in *Românticos, Pré-Românticos, Ultra Românticos: Vida Literária e Romantismo Brasileiro*, São Paulo, 1979, p. 151.

(AA, 'Idéias Íntimas', XIV, 248-253)

The poet evokes the *cognac* as the 'sangue do gênio' or 'blood of the genius'; it is an element that allows the divinization of the soul, opening it to a fantastic world. The following lines conclude the poem and confirm the creative power attributed to *cognac*:

Inda palpito,  
 Quando os eflúvios dessas gotas áureas  
 Filtram no sangue meu correndo a vida,  
 Vibram-se os nervos e as artérias queimam,  
 Os meus olhos ardentes se escurecem  
 E no cérebro passam deliriosos  
 Assomos de poesia... Dentre a sombra  
 Vejo num leito d'ouro a imagem dela  
 Palpitante, que dorme e que suspira,  
 Que seus braços me estende...

Eu me esquecia:  
 Faz-se noite; traz fogo e dois chaturros  
 E na mesa do estudo acende a lâmpada...

(AA, 'Idéias Íntimas', XIV, 253-265)

The effects of the alcohol flowing through the poet's blood are notable: they provoke the vibration of the nerves. The last three lines also include the tobacco and the lamp as a metaphor to creation and study.

Before concluding with this poem, it is still interesting to show the beginning of this next stanza:

Satã leve a tristeza! Olá, meu pajem,  
 Derrama no meu copo as gotas últimas  
 Dessa garrafa negra...

(AA, 'Idéias Íntimas', XIV, 246-248)

The extract above shows the poet asking Satan to take away his sadness and bring the precious alcoholic liquid. There is a clear relation between Satan and alcohol as agents that could change the poet's life.

In the poem 'Spleen e Charutos' or 'Spleen and Cigars', the third stanza is entitled 'Vagabundo' or 'Tramp' and starts:

VAGABUNDO

*Eat, drink, and Love; what can the rest avail us?*  
*BYRON, Don Juan*

Eu durmo e vivo ao sol como um cigano,  
 Fumando meu cigarro vaporoso;

(AA, 'Spleen e Charutos', III, 1-2)

The epigraph extracted from Byron's *Don Juan* is notable with all the ingredients that, for the poet, propitiate a life worth being lived: the feast, the alcohol, the love, and the tobacco as seen in the second line with 'cigarro vaporoso' or 'vaporous cigarette.' Also, the epigraph not only serves to show Azevedo's readings but also, in this case, reflects the image of Byron for Brazilian Romantics: associated with the excesses of life.

The cigar works not only as an aesthetic element, but also, the voices of the soul dwell in its smoke:

Numa fumaça o canto d'alma escuto...  
 Um aroma balsâmico respiro,  
 Oh! deixai-me fumar o meu charuto!

(AA, 'Soneto', 12-14)

It seems that for Romanticism and specially for Álvares de Azevedo, as illustrated in the examples above, tobacco and alcohol function as: symbols,

aesthetic elements, and mechanisms that work as mediums for poetical creation. While trying to reaffirm his Romantic aesthetic, Azevedo built in his poems the fashionable image of the dandy that had started with the Byronic heroes and would prevail in later poets such as the equally iconic the Frenchman Baudelaire.

Another work by Álvares de Azevedo of great significance to the study of the Brazilian Romanticism is *Noite na Taverna*<sup>33</sup> or *Night in the Tavern*, considered by the critics as a continuation to his play *Macário*. *Noite na Taverna* is a collection of five fantastic and gloomy tales (somehow close to the work of Edgar Allan Poe) related by five young men with Italian and German names: Solfieri, Bertram, Gennaro, Claudius Hermann, and Johann.

The book is set in a tavern where the young men drink, smoke, and speak of their infamous adventures; all in a very bohemian atmosphere. In the opening scenes of *Noite na Taverna*, a toast proposed to tobacco - Romantic symbol - preambles a vehement debate between Solfieri - a materialist - and Archibald - the believer:

– O vinho acabou-se nos copos, Bertram, mas o fumo ondula ainda nos cachimbos! Após os vapores do vinho os vapores da fumaça! Senhores, em nome de todas as nossas reminiscências, de todos os nossos sonhos que mentiram, de todas as nossas esperanças que desbotaram, uma última saúde! A taverneira aí nos trouxe mais vinho: uma saúde! O fumo é a imagem do idealismo, é o transunto de tudo quanto há mais vaporoso naquele espiritualismo que nos fala da imortalidade da alma! e pois, ao fumo das Antilhas, à imortalidade da alma!

–Bravo! bravo!<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> ‘Noite na Taverna’, in AA, pp. 565-608

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., pp. 565-566.

As seen above, tobacco and wine are constantly mentioned and praised; in the end, the tobacco is toasted with the immortality of the soul and appointed as the ‘imagem do idealismo’ or ‘image of the idealism.’ It is notable here how the whole set of Byronic elements were important in order to build a Brazilian Romantic ‘way’ of thinking and living according to what the Brazilian poets understood to be that of European and specially English Romanticism.

The opening scene carries on with some sort of philosophical discussion between the men, this discussion also tells us about the personality of each character:

Um conviva se ergueu entre a vozeria: contrastavam-lhe com as faces de moco as rugas da fronte e a rouidão dos lábios convulsos. Por entre os cabelos prateava-se-lhe o reflexo das luzes do festim. Falou:

—Calai-vos, malditos! a imortalidade da alma? pobres doidos! e porque a alma e bela, porque não concebeis que esse ideal posse tornar-se em loco e podridão, como as faces belas da virgem morta, não podeis crer que ele morra? Doidos! nunca velada levastes porventura uma noite a cabeceira de um cadáver? E então não duvidastes que ele não era morto, que aquele peito e aquela fronte iam palpitar de novo, aquelas pálpebras iam abrires, que era apenas o ópio do sono que emudecia aquele homem? Imortalidade da alma! e por que também não sonhar a das flores, a das brisas, a dos perfumes? Oh! não mil vezes! a alma não e, como a lua, sempre moca, nua e bela em sue virgindade eterna! a vida não e mais que a reunião ao acaso das moléculas atraídas: o que era um corpo de mulher vai porventura transformar-se num cipreste ou numa nuvem de miasmas; o que era um corpo do verme vai alvejar-se no cálice da flor ou na fronte da criança mais loira e bela. Como Schiller o disse, o átomo da inteligência de Platão foi talvez pare o coração de um ser impuro. Pôr isso eu vo-lo direi: se entendeis a imortalidade pela metempsicose, bem! talvez eu creia um pouco:—pelo Platonismo, não!

—Solferi! és um insensato! o materialismo e árido como o deserto, e escuro como um túmulo! A nos fontes queimadas pelo mormaço do sol da vida a nos sobre cuja cabeça a velhice regelou os cabelos, essas crianças frias! A nós os sonhos do espiritualismo!

—Archibald! deveras, que e um sonho tudo isso! No outro tempo o sonho da minha cabeceira era o espírito puro ajoelhado no seu manto

argênteo, num oceano de aromas e luzes! Ilusões! a realidade e a febre do libertino, a taça na mão, a lascívia nos lábios e a mulher seminua, tremula e palpitante sobre os joelhos.

—Blasfêmia—e não crês em mais nada: teu ceticismo derribou sodas as estatuas do teu templo, mesmo a de Deus?

—Deus! crer em Deus! sim como o grito intimo o revela nas horas frias do medo — nas horas em que se tiritava de susto e que a morte parece roçar úmida por nos! Na jangada do naufrago, no cadafalso, no deserto — sempre banhado do suor frio — do terror e que vem a crença em Deus! —Crer nele como a utopia do bem absoluto, o sol da luz e do amor, muito bem! Mas se entendeis por ele os ídolos que os homens ergueram banhados de sangue, e o fanatismo beija em sua inanimação de mármore de há cinco mil anos! não credo nele!

—E os livros santos?

—Miséria! quando me vierdes falar em poesia eu vos direi: ai ha folhas inspiradas pela natureza ardente daquela terra como nem Homero as sonhou — como a humanidade inteira ajoelhada sobre os túmulos do passado nunca mais lembrara! Mas quando me falarem em verdades religiosas, em visões santas, nos desvarios daquele povo estúpido—eu vos direi — miséria! miséria! três vezes miséria! Tudo aquilo e falso— mentiram como as miragens do deserto!

—Estás ébrio, Johann! O ateísmo e a insânia como o idealismo místico de Schelling, o panteísmo de Spinoza o judeu, e o crente de Malebranche nos seus sonhos da visão em Deus. A verdadeira filosofia e o epicurismo. Hume bem o disse: o fim do homem e o prazer. Dai vede que e o elemento sensível quem domina. E pois ergamo-nos, nos que amanhecemos nas noites desbotadas de estudo insano, e vimos que a ciência e falsa e esquiva, que ela mente e embriaga como um beijo de mulher.

Thus begins the series of stories in *Noite na Taverna*. Apart from the stories coloured by the macabre with themes such as necrophilia and incest, there is one story that draws parallels between what is told then and what was told in Byron's *Don Juan*. It's the tale recounted by Bertram that although inspired by *Don Juan*, starts with an epigraph from *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*:

But why should I for other groan,  
When none will sigh for me?

(Byron, *Childe Harold*, I, 9, 84-85)

Here we find a justification for the malady of the feeling of loneliness and rejection that infected that generation of poets in Brazil and furthermore a definition for the Brazilian Romantics' notion of Epicureanism. According to them Epicureanism's true philosophy was pleasure as a man's only purpose on earth. With a lifestyle based on the excesses of life - lust, alcoholism, gluttony, and vice - the 'evil' and 'sick' generation of Brazilian Romanticism would be moulded and named after Byron. The next section explores the Epicurus Society formed by these students and poets in São Paulo.

## The Epicurus Society

The critic Jamil Almansur Haddad in his book *Álvares de Azevedo, A Maçonaria e a Dança*<sup>35</sup> argues that there are interesting links between Romanticism, the Byronism phenomenon, the Epicurus Society, and the Freemasonry. The critic defends the thesis that the phenomenon of Byronism has been affiliated to Freemasonry due to its secret character and dark rituals. In the critic's words:

O Romantismo, caracterizado pela exacerbação do individualismo, a maçonaria, por esta mesma exacerbação, levando ao culto do homem divinizado, liberto de todas as peias temporais e espirituais, têm de serem necessariamente dois fenômenos coincidentes na evolução do espírito humano, nascidos que são da mesma psicologia e do mesmo condicionamento psicológico, sofrendo vicissitudes paralelas e dirigindo-se para um mesmo destino.<sup>36</sup>

Haddad strengthens the connection established throughout the years by literary history pointing out Byron's affiliation to Freemasonry - with him as the

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<sup>35</sup> Jamil Almansur Haddad, *Álvares de Azevedo, A Maçonaria e a Dança*, São Paulo, 1960.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67.

Grand Master of the society in Britain -, and the transposition of the Freemasonry ritualistic rules to São Paulo's Byronism and its Epicurus Society.

Considered as 'flor do Byronismo paulista'<sup>37,38</sup> or 'flower of the paulista Byronism', the society was founded in 1845. Its name derives from the Greek philosopher Epicurus, whose philosophy - here in short terms - of a life that should be lived to its maximum, and that death was nothing else but the end of body and soul - therefore, nothing to be feared -, fitted the purposes of the student society.

The philosophy might have been misinterpreted by the members of the Epicurus Society and it started to be a symbol of an eccentric view on life and sex, including the excessive pleasure for food, alcohol, and sex. Evidently, sex, alcohol, and tobacco appeared as important modern components of both Epicurism and Byronism.

Perhaps the most famous work about the Epicurus Society in Brazil, and responsible for the consolidation of the myth of the Lord Byron, is the book by Pires de Almeida, entitled *A Escola Byroniana no Brasil*<sup>39</sup> or *The Byronic School in Brazil*. Published in the form of small articles in the newspaper between the years of 1903 and 1905, it is one of the most valuable and informative documents about the Byronic aspects of Brazilian Romanticism.

The book is a mix of biographies, fiction, and literary study. It presents to its readers the generation known as Byronic Generation. Almeida writes a

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<sup>37</sup> Paulista is the name given to the inhabitants of the city of São Paulo.

<sup>38</sup> Haddad, *Álvares de Azevedo*, p. 86.

<sup>39</sup> Pires de Almeida, *A Escola Byroniana no Brasil*, São Paulo, 1962.

narrative in which the protagonist is a traveller that wanders through the city of São Paulo and, - after meeting an old inhabitant of São Paulo, Dona Chica, and listening to her stories -, learns about the Byronism in Brazil. The traveller gets in touch, through the stories he listens to, with the most relevant names of the Byronic Generation. Dona Chica's stories start with Tibúrcio Antônio Craveiro (1800-1844) as the probable introducer of Byron and Byronism in Brazil through his translation in 1837 of Byron's poem 'Lara', her account goes as far as the descriptions of the fantastic adventures of the Byronic law bachelors in São Paulo. However, Álvares de Azevedo occupies the main interest of Almeida's book, he is the 'Brazilian Byron' revived by the old lady who tells the traveller about the time she met Azevedo.

Below there is one of the descriptions extracted from the book by Pires de Almeida where during a conversation with Dona Chica, the traveller obtains the following picture of Azevedo's dark bedroom:

Era, relatou ela, uma sala deveras lúgubre, com uma única janela, que dava para o cemitério [...] A mesa de estudo ficava em frente e a pequena distância da janela; e como o poeta não compunha de dia, era indício de sua ausência quando aquela estava fechada. Em noite escura, ou de luar, porém, as valvas permaneciam abertas, devassando o byroniano paulista a morada dos mortos. E, não obstante a garoa, e não obstante o frio, envolvia-se em seu largo manto, e sentava-se no peitoril da janela, murmurando baixinho fragmentos poéticos seus e de outros.  
[...]  
Seu aposento era um completo museu mortuário. Nas paredes e no teto, forrados de preto, viam-se ornamentos singulares, bem como estrelas e lágrimas prateadas, e diabretes semelhante fogo.  
[...]  
Sua mesa de estudo era simplicíssima: por tinteiro, uma rótula cavada no centro, posta sobre duas clavículas em cruz; por castiçal, um osso longo, em que implantava a vela de cera de que se utilizava nas prolongadas meditações.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., pp. 54-55.

The only window in his room faced the cemetery, the walls were all painted in black and ‘interestingly’ adorned, and his study desk was not less morbid with a kneecap as an inkwell. The picture of Azevedo’s room seems more compatible with a Satanist than to a Law student. In that room we find all the elements associated to darkness and Satanism that contributed to the development of Byronism in Brazil through the iconic image of Álvares de Azevedo.

Another famous tale about the association of Byron with the macabre is due to the fact that Byron once found a human skull in the gardens of the Newstead Abbey, and related the fact to Medwin:

Observing it to be of giant size, and in perfect state of preservation, a strange fancy seized me of having it set and mounted as a drinking-cup. I accordingly sent it to town, and it returned with a very high polish, and a mottled colour like tortoise-shell;[...] I remember scribbling some lines about it;<sup>41</sup>

This story allied to Byron’s poem ‘Lines Inscribed upon a Cup Formed from a Skull’ would constitute a model for Byronic rituals to be followed by the students in São Paulo. Here, an extract of the poem:

I lived, I loved, I quaffed like thee;  
I died: let earth my bones resign:  
Fill up—thou canst not injure me;  
The worm hath fouler lips than thine.

Better to hold the sparkling grape  
Than nurse the earthworm’s slimy brood,  
And circle in the goblet’s shape  
The drink of gods than reptile’s food.

Where once my wit, perchance, hath shone,  
In aid of others’ let me shine;  
And when, alas! our brains are gone,

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<sup>41</sup> Lovell Jr., Ernest Y., ed., *Medwin’s Conversations of Lord Byron*. p. 65, in Barboza, *Byron no Brasil*, p. 27.

What nobler substitute than wine?

(Byron, 'Lines Inscribed Upon a Cup Formed From a Skull', 5-16)

In this poem above, what draws the Brazilian poets' attention can certainly be found in 'I lived, I loved...I died', 'Better to hold the sparkling grape', and 'And when, alas! our brains are gone,/ What nobler substitute than wine?.' The scene portrayed in the poem was taken by the Brazilian Romantics as a true fact and moreover, a precise description of Byron's way of life.

Further on, in his book, Pires de Almeida tells about the famous and macabre Byronic sessions:

- É realidade então o que por aí se propala, ou trata-se antes de uma lenda, lenda burlesca, como a das famosas orgias da Abadia de Newstead, hoje contestadas, porém que por dilatado tempo tornaram odiosa a memória do imortal Poeta?<sup>42</sup>

The Newstead Abbey was not only where all sorts of macabre events took place but also it was Lord Byron's residence. In one of the conversations with the traveller Dona Chica tells him her memories about one of the dark meetings organized by the students in São Paulo. The ceremony started at the cemetery with all the men dressed in black, holding a lantern in their hands, and awaiting for the women that would soon arrive in white dresses; on a gravestone inside a small chapel a feast was served and around it all the couples spread themselves over other graves; the bacchanal started with the banquet ceremoniously opened by the Master of the sect, reading the 'Ladainha a Satã' or 'Satan's Litany' out loud, then, the orgy could begin.

That was the picture of a society formed by students who aimed at bringing the life and work of Lord Byron into reality, making use of artificial forms of the

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<sup>42</sup> Almeida, *A Escola Byroniana*, p. 60.

macabre, Satanism, and also literary production. Such constant associations in the Brazilian nineteenth century of the macabre with Byron conferred great influence in the literary production and life of an entire generation.

Apparently, the Epicurus Society had a building as its headquarters called 'Chácara dos Ingleses' or 'The House of the English.' The 'English' in the name probably came from the fact that before the Society, the house was occupied by a family of English immigrants. The critic Veiga Miranda, author of the most interesting and complete biography on Álvares de Azevedo until now, writes about what used to happen in such house:

Uma vez estivemos encerrados quinze dias, em companhia de mulheres perdidas, cometendo ao clarão dos candieiros, por isso que as janellas eram perfeitamente fechadas desde que entravamos até sairmos, toda a sorte de desvarios que se póde conceber.

An excessive and unimaginable orgy took place when the members of the society remained confined inside the house with prostitutes for fifteen days.

But the scariest and most famous story about the eccentric Epicurus Society in São Paulo is called 'A Rainha dos Mortos' or 'The Queen of the Dead' which figures in the book by Pires de Almeida as the major example of the deadly excess that Byronism reached in Brazil.

The story is the account of a night when the young Byronic men of São Paulo, under the pretext of fighting against the *spleen*, plan a fantastic ritual in the cemetery Campo Santo in São Paulo. The Byronic night in São Paulo started as follows:

E assim, à noite, alta noite, os ponches de conhaque flamejavam na pluralidade das mesas de estudo, os livros eivados de cepticismo eram os mais percorridos, e daí as imprecações contra os cultos e o

fanatismo poético pelas mulheres sensuais, daí igualmente as reproduções, mais ou menos fiéis, dos festins, dos 'banquetes negros', no Campo Santo.<sup>43</sup>

In one of the nights of dark rituals, about thirty students were reunited and they all adopted the names of the heroes of Byron as their names: Manfred, Lara, Giaour, Marino Faliero, Beppo, Conrad, Sadanapalo, Mazeppa, Cain, and etc. The macabre feast would take place in the Cemitério da Consolação. At midnight, the password was transmitted - Haidee - and at the cemetery a profane disorder took place: graves were vandalized, human skulls ripped apart from the bodies, the nobles and aristocrats there buried with their titles were all mocked.

Nevertheless, the party did not seem to be sufficient. It was then that one of the members had the idea of proclaiming a Queen of the Dead, and for that they should choose one of the most beautiful ladies in the city of São Paulo to play a part in a burial according to the Byronic standards. The student Giaour asks who should be declared the Queen of the Dead:

Subitamente, idéia de louco atravessou o cérebro de um de nossos companheiros:

- Se aclamásemos uma Rainha dos Mortos? disse ele.

- Mas a quem aclamar? interrogou Giaour.<sup>44</sup>

In order to get all the things needed for the enterprise, the boys go through the aisles in the cemetery desecrating graves in search of a coffin still in good condition. Below is an extract of the fantastic tone granted to that scene:

A lua, rasgando sua túnica de neblina, projeta neste instante, sobre nossas frentes, a luz de sua lanterna de opalas! Eu vos conjuro, - ó duendes medonhos! - dançai em ronda, volteando abandonados túmulos, enquanto nos entregamos à profanação abençoada em o seio

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 199.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 202.

do silêncio e ao pio grasnante dos mochos no topo das casuarinas! À faina! à lida, pois! em memória das noites fantásticas do Chefe-lorde, da embriaguez clássica e dos bacanis no mosteiro de Newstead.<sup>45</sup>

Apart from the search for a good coffin, the boys also summoned creatures of the underworld to take part in dances around the graves. Every word is carefully chosen to give the scene the most macabre sensation possible: the moon, the mist, the gnomes, the dance, and the owls. Everything was always in memory of the Grand Master Lord Byron and his orgiastic adventures in Newstead.

With a perfect coffin on their shoulders, the students continue their course to the city in search of the chosen one: Eufrásia. On the way, while opening her windows, she is seen by the Byronic Heroes that salute her:

- Ei-la! bradamos a uma voz: a Rainha dos Mortos!<sup>46</sup>

At the same time, the students realized they were standing in front of a Freemasonry shop. According to them, in the shop they would find the most original and finest items for a macabre ritual: tokens, costumes, flags, shrouds, and any useful thing in a funeral.

With all the items in hands, they walk off to Eufrásia's window and call her. Eufrásia appears at the window but hesitates as soon as she notices the group of admirers bound to crown her as the Queen of the Dead. She is suddenly wrapped up in white bed linen and locked inside the coffin.

The procession goes in the direction of the cemetery with the students reciting verses by Schiller, Goethe, and Uhland. On that occasion, during the

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 203.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 204.

procession throughout the city, the favourite poem was one of the student songs by Goethe.

They finally arrive at the cemetery. As they walked throughout the graves a strange incident prolonged the procession to the coronation of the Queen: they saw a grave with a very recent inscription telling that there was buried a lady named Judith, dead at the age of 20. In desperation, one of the students - Faliero - falls on the grave while mourning for the poor Judith.

Meanwhile, the group proceeded and the flames of their torches conferred to the pilgrimage a certain mystic atmosphere from ancient legends of elves, werewolves, and crows that seemed to linger for the corpses of the miserable in the hospitals. But nothing in the darkness could scare those students accustomed to drinking wine from cups made from human skulls as Almeida recounts:

Mas, isso pouco nos abalava, a nós outros saturados da leitura da célebre noite Walpurges de Goethe, e da invocação de Manfredo na geleiras dos Alpes.

A morte, e tudo que é tétrico, podia acaso espavoiar aqueles que temperavam seus ponches em crânios ferventados?!<sup>47</sup>

Then, Lara was chosen as the bridegroom for the Queen and the wedding banquet began on the top of a cold gravestone. The ceremony was intercalated with bits of dancing and reading, something typical of that poetical school - 'características da escola poética'<sup>48</sup>. As Lara was getting ready to consummate his marriage with the young Eufrária and the silence was disturbed by an intense recitation in Portuguese and English of the poems of Lord Byron, astonished, the bridegroom realises Eufrásia is dead and cries:

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 211.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 213.

- É morta!  
- Morta! repetimos em grupo.  
- Osculei um cadáver! explicou-se afinal, desferindo convulsiva gargalhada.  
E a realidade era cruel: Eufrásia estava realmente morta. Apavorados e indecisos, mutuamente nos olhamos, refletindo nas conseqüências de tão tresloucada aventura.<sup>49</sup>

In their Byronic ritual, they had actually murdered the poor Young woman inside the tenebrous coffin. Extremely shocked by the catastrophic event, the members of the society went home and all they could think of was of how stupid and superfluous was the death of a beautiful young lady.

The final paragraph of Almeida's book is a final account of what Byronism ended up representing in their lives: 'É que julgávamos calmos, frios, egoístas quase, que o romantismo e byronianismo eram fúteis teorias de descabeladas extravagâncias; frenesis e insânias [...]'<sup>50</sup>. All the ideal Byronic fervour of the early times was now understood as a futile theory full of nonsense eccentricity, frenzy, and insanity.

That story - actually something more of a tale than a real fact - provides us with a rich and detailed account of that way of living of the students in São Paulo with their Byronism and, to what deadly extent their fanaticism had led them. To affirm whether such performances were real or not is rather difficult. Many accounts give the impression that the students who imitated Byron in their daily lives did it very unaware of any other factor beyond their literary daydreaming.

Everyone involved in the intellectual environment of São Paulo seemed to have been contaminated by the Satanic Lord Byron in such a way that their lives

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 218.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., pp. 223-224.

could never return to a socially acceptable real daily life; thus Byronism became both a social phenomenon and an aesthetic movement, in such a way that the line between the two was easily blurred.

The theatre critic Victor Turner seems to have an interesting point of view on the way rituals and life co-exist. He argues that the rituals interact with real life to provide a certain social change or cultural transcendence: 'There is an interdependent, perhaps dialectic, relationship between social dramas and genres of cultural performance in perhaps all societies' because 'life, after all, is as much an imitation of art as the reverse'<sup>51</sup>.

The Epicurus Society was and still is a subject surrounded with a lot of mystery and speculation, fed by the stories and works of those students which in their majority died at a very young age, although contributing a lot to developing and defining Brazilian Romanticism. However, the fact that accounts of midnight rituals dedicated to Byron exist alongside evidence of his literary influence underscores his importance as a mythical symbol in Brazil. The existence of Byronism in Brazil, as illustrated by Almeida's narrative, is the embodiment of the perfect encounter of the aesthetic and the real, it was life imitating art and vice versa.

The entire process of incorporating Byronism in São Paulo was always based on the myth of the man or hero represented by Lord Byron. The bohemian lifestyle intimately associated with Byronism is also seen in poems by Azevedo; here the poem represents the life experience provided by the bohemia:

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<sup>51</sup> Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play* (New York: PAJ Publications, 1982) p.72.

Oh não maldigam o mancebo exausto  
 Que no vício embalou, a rir, os sonhos  
 Que lhe manchou as perfumadas tranças  
 Nos travesseiros da mulher sem brio!

Se ele poeta nodou seus lábios  
 É que fervia um coração de fogo,  
 E da matéria a convulsão impura  
 A voz do coração emudecia!

(AA, 'Oh! Não Maldigam', 13-20)

The experience becomes the source of poetical inspiration, and poetry is the expression of the sensibility on a page where there is no place for reason. The poetical plenitude, according to the poems produced by Byronism, could only be reached through the ideal existence in a dissolute bohemian life. As per the critic Antonio Candido in his article 'Aspectos Sociais da Literatura em São Paulo' or 'Social Aspects of the Literature in São Paulo', the Epicurus Society was the 'point of encounter between literature and life, where the young attempted to make real their Romantic imagination'<sup>52</sup>.

## Byron and Álvares de Azevedo

The postcolonial relationship between Brazil and Portugal makes the explosion of interest in Byron an act of rebellion against Portugal and a move towards European modernity.

The Portuguese, with the exception of Garrett - who was in exile - disliked Byron profoundly as a result both of his visit there during his first European tour and the British government's interactions with the Portuguese during the Napoleonic wars. Therefore, until Brazil gained its independence and

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<sup>52</sup> Antonio Candido, 'Aspectos Sociais da Literatura em São Paulo', *O Estado de São Paulo*, 25 January 1954, p. 67. 'ponto de encontro entre a literatura e a vida, onde os jovens procuravam dar realidade às imaginações românticas'

began looking to France as the centre of the modern world, Byron was unheard of. In fact, in Brazil the first student journal of any kind was not in press until 1830, three years after the foundation of the Academy in São Paulo<sup>53</sup>.

The date of an official beginning of Brazilian Romanticism is still blurred in literary history, the most widely acceptable account points to the year of 1836 as the starting point of the Romantic Era in Brazil. But since Byron's image had become even more pervasive in the decades after his death than it was during his life, the Byronic hero easily became the icon of European Romanticism for emergent Brazilian poets from the early 1830s to the late 1850s.

There was a tendency of many Brazilian Romantics to imitate Byron's image to the extent of stifling their own creativity. Also captured in the catch phrase 'O Mal Byronico' or 'The Byronic Malady', Byron was both incredibly inspirational and yet in many ways problematic to Brazilian Romantics. Though most Brazilian critics refer to 'O Mal Byronico' as a movement in Brazilian Romanticism that demonstrates overblown Byronic sensibilities— disillusionment, attraction to death, tendency toward drunkenness, anti-social behaviour, and extreme sentimentality and despondency—, the problems that the popularization of Byron's image meant for Brazilian Romanticism extend beyond his individual influence on a few young poets.

As Pires de Almeida recounts in his book about the 'adventures' in the Byronic city of São Paulo, most of the young poets asked themselves which of the famous European poets should play the role of their muse or configure a model to be followed. Those 'inspirations' and 'poetic formulas' would not work

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<sup>53</sup> Brazil's apparent isolation as a result of Portugal's colonization, however, only further underscores the reason Brazilians would be wary of immediately opening up and adopting European ideologies.

in the formal aspect of the poem, but as themes to their lyrical or narrative poems.

An extract from Almeida's book relates the doubt of a poet in search for his 'own' voice:

Mas, qual dos gêneros afeiçoar-me? À byroniana, libérrima, cambaleante, ébria, e ao mesmo tempo altiva, arrogante, galgando com Manfredo os cimos nebulosos? enlevando-me na compreensão do remorso, personificado em Caim? comprazendo-me no tédio constante da vida, como em Childe Harold?

Ou pender-me-ei antes para o gênero satânico, doentio e bizarro, que imortalizou Baudelaire e Leopardi?

Não me conviria talvez ensaiar os assombrosos efeitos, os violentos lances das tragédias românticas de Victor Hugo? Quem sabe!

E o tirocínio dos famosos poetas do comêço do século passado, como tantos outros fachos acesos, cruzavam a minha imaginação com os deslumbramentos de que só é susceptível a ardente celebração da mocidade: viver tal como Byron, Shelley ou Musset, atravessar a vida tal como Edgard Poe, era todo o meu sonho.<sup>54</sup>

The poet vacillates while choosing between the rebel and melancholic models of Byron's Manfred and Childe Harold, or the violent tragedies of Victor Hugo. In the end, the only way to achieve the same burning imagination of his 'idols' seems to be by living and celebrating his youth as Byron, Shelley, Musset, and even Edgar Allan Poe.

However, Byron had always played a major role either through quotations of his works or simply by the mention of his name in the works of Brazilian

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<sup>54</sup> Almeida, *A Escola Byroniana*, pp. 35-36.

Romantics. Thus Byron had become the quintessential image of European Romanticism as its foremost dandy and dark hero.

## Byron's Image in Brazil

From Byron's death to the time of the first editions of his work to arrive in Brazil in English or translated into French, his image as an iconic leader of Romanticism grew in fascination among the Brazilian public. The critic William E. Leonard passionately explains Byron's vogue in North America:

Byron's vogue had much in common, as already admitted, with his vogue elsewhere; it is, indeed, in part to be explained on the one hand by the spirit of those times which were restless, stormy and gloomy, and on the other by the silliness of humanity which in every age will imitate a great leader, especially when there are in him the attractions of beauty and romance, or any suggestion of eccentricity.<sup>55</sup>

According to Leonard, Byron's leadership in America was due to the appeal of his poet's eccentricity as opposed to his appeal in Europe as a revolutionary hero. The same appeal appears to have had effect on Byron's readers in Brazil.

Father of the Brazilian Academy of Letters, the Brazilian novelist Machado de Assis (1839-1908) - wrote in 1866 - a few years after Azevedo's death - his account on the influence of Byron in the second Romantic generation in Brazil:

Houve um dia em que a poesia brasileira adoeceu do mal *byronico*; foi grande a sedução das imaginações juvenis pelo poeta inglês; tudo concorria nêle para essa influênciã dominadora: a originalidade, a sua doença moral, o prodigioso do seu gênio, o romanesco da sua vida, as

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<sup>55</sup> William Ellery Leonard. *Byron and Byronism in America*, Boston, 1905, p.109.

noites de Itália, as aventuras de Inglaterra, os amôres da Guiccioli, e até a morte.<sup>56</sup>

Assis's reflection demonstrates how Byron's life seemed to be more important than his own work in the Brazilian Romantic period, as his originality and genius were the only real literary matter. Byronism was a trend in Brazilian nineteenth century that 'infected' poetry with its malady full of darkness and spleen.

A few years later another Brazilian Romantic novelist, José de Alencar (1829-1877), in his *Como e Porque Sou Romancista* or *How and Why I Am A Novelist* written in 1873 but posthumously published in 1893, gives us a few lines about the general Byronic fervour of the young Romantics in Brazil in his days while a student at the São Paulo Faculty of Law:

Em 1845 voltou-me o prurido de escritor: mas êsse ano foi consagrado à mania que então grassava de *byronizar*. Todo estudante de alguma imaginação queria ser um Byron, e tinha por destino inexorável copiar ou traduzir o bardo inglês. . . . Assim é que nunca passei de algumas peças ligeiras, das quais não me figurava herói e nem mesmo autor, pois me divertia escrevê-las com o nome de Byron, Hugo, ou Lamartine nas paredes do meu aposento à Rua de Santa Teresa. . . . Era um desacato aos ilustres poetas atribuir-lhes versos de confecção minha. . . Que satisfação não íntima não tive eu, quando um estudante . . . releu com entusiasmo uma dessas poesias, seduzido sem dúvida pelo nome do pseudo-autor.<sup>57</sup>

Here Alencar tell us about the powerful image of Byron's name in those days in Brazil. Alencar used to write plays and credit them with the name of Byron. In a time when every student wanted to be a Byron by either copying or translating his works, Alencar saw one of the students in São Paulo read his poems attracted by the name of Byron as its author.

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<sup>56</sup> Cited in Raymundo Magalhães Júnior. *Poesia e vida de Álvares de Azevedo*, São Paulo, 1971, p.39.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p.40.

Byron's poetics would not be received separately from his particular biography. In fact, his narrative poems *Child Harold Pilgrimage* and *Don Juan* and others like *The Giaour*, *Manfred*, *The Corsair*, and *Sardanapalus* seemed to have proved to be notorious vehicles for Byron's mode of myth-making: the poet wearing some sort of mask behind the heroes of his narratives. Perhaps the fact that Byron had been travelling in most of the countries where he set his heroic tales plus the already existent image of him as a madman exiled from his home country, contributed to the associations between him and his heroes.

Some stanzas in Canto IV of *Don Juan* present a curious description of its hero because of the possibility of some biographical content:

### III

As a boy, I thought myself a clever fellow,  
 And wish'd that others held the same opinion;  
 They took it up when my days grew more mellow,  
 And other minds acknowledged my dominion:  
 Now my sere fancy 'falls into the yellow'  
 Leaf', and imagination droops her pinion,  
 And the sad truth which hovers o'er my desk  
 Turns what was once romantic to burlesque.

[...]

### IV

Some have accused me of a strange design  
 Against the creed and morals of the land,  
 And trace it in this poem every line:  
 I don't pretend that I quite understand  
 My own meaning when I would be very fine;  
 But the fact is that I have nothing plann'd,  
 Unless it were to be a moment merry,  
 A novel word in my vocabulary.

(Byron, *Don Juan*, IV, 17-24; 33-40)

It is known that Byron was someone with a 'strange design', he had a club foot that would be as much as mentioned by his critics and biographers as his poetry. Byron's wit and technique of perhaps masquerading himself in his heroes seem very evident in those extracts. Both author and hero share descriptions

that match themselves, they are 'clever' and of 'some strange design.' Whether true or not, the fact is that the mask Byron wears is a convincing likeness of his self and in the Brazilian Romantic circle his biography and work were very much considered as a single heroic tale.

In *Childe Harold Pilgrimage* the same type of possible analogy is present:

CXXXIV

And if my voice break forth, 'tis not that now  
I shrink from what is suffered: let him speak  
Who hath beheld decline upon my brow,  
Or seen my mind's convulsion leave it weak;  
But in this page a record will I seek.  
Not in the air shall these my words disperse,  
Though I be ashes; a far hour shall wreak  
The deep prophetic fullness of this verse,  
And pile on human heads the mountain of my curse!

CXXXV

That curse shall be Forgiveness. - Have I not -  
Hear me, my mother Earth! behold it, Heaven! -  
Have I not had to wrestle with my lot?  
Have I not suffered thing to be forgiven?  
Have I not had my brain seared, my heart rive,  
Hopes sapp'd, name blighted, Life's life lied away?  
And only not to desperation driven,  
Because not altogether of such clay  
As rots into the souls of those whom I survey.

CXXXVI

From mighty wrongs to petty perfidy  
Have I not seen what human things could do?  
From the loud roar of foaming calumny  
To the small whisper of the as paltry few,  
And subtler venom of the reptile crew,  
The Janus glance of whose significant eye,  
Learning to lie with silence, would *seem* true,  
And without utterance, save the shrug or sigh,  
Deal round to happy fool its speechless obloquy.

CXXXVII

But I have lived, and have not lived in vain:  
My mind may lose its force, my blood its fire,  
And my frame perish even in conquering pain,  
But there is that within me which shall tire  
Torture and Time, and breath when I expire;  
Something unearthly, which they deem not of,

Like the remembered tone of a mute lyre,  
Shall on their softened spirits sink, and move  
In hearts all rocky now the late remorse of love.  
(Byron, 'Child Harold', IV, 1198-1233)

Although there are hints of the idea of the unity between Byron and his hero, we have here the kind of heroic voice that would fascinate the Brazilian Romantics. There is some sort of desolation surrounding the hero as he speaks from the bottom of his heart. Also we can find words and expressions like 'Life's life lied away', 'desperation', 'living in vain', 'perish', and 'remorse' that would prevail in most of the Brazilian Romantics poems as necessary motifs or elements to the writing of a poem in the shape of Byron's.

It was in that type of emotional wasteland where most of Byron's heroes were seen and understood by Brazilian readers. Byron's heroes were all very attractive in attitude and manners although their stories usually led to the destruction of themselves as a consequence either of their actions or narcissism. The group of Byron's 'dark' heroes and types include the name of: Lara, Cain, Harold, Conrad, and Manfred. Don Juan was also a big source of inspiration as proved by the uncountable times the tale is cited within poems.

What were the main traits observed by Brazilian readers in Byron's heroes? Apart from the general idea of an anti-heroic construction present in all of them, they all had certain particularities.

Cain, for example, and his 'friendship' with Satan - after Goethe's *Faust* - was perhaps seen by Azevedo as a model for his own plays and poems; it is a character that not only negotiates with Satan but also learns from him about a series of aspects of life as observed in Azevedo's play *Macário*.

The Giaour and The Corsair constituted images of the exotic hero, they were portrayed with distinctive features of the type: the pale and gloomy brow, the searching and evil eye, the mysterious past, the touch of misanthropy, and the bitter smile; both characters worked more at the subconscious level for Azevedo, with hints of their presence or type appearing in the developments of the poems in the *Lira dos Vinte Anos* and also in his tale book *Noite na Taverna*.

Harold is a character divided and formed in the same way as the Cantos of the poem itself. In Cantos I and II, Harold is combination of heroic types: the child of nature, the gothic villain, the wanderer, and the gloomy egoist meditating on death and vanity of life. However, in Cantos III and IV there is a decline of the gothic element and Harold appears as the hero of sensibility after the merging of the gloomy egoist and the man of feeling. It is a more passive and self-analytic hero, a victim of the *spleen*.

With such distinct and heroic characters in mind, it would not be impossible to conceive of a tempestuous and plural image of Byron as well. Another extract of Almeida's book reveals how Byron was thought of at the time:

Um desiludido, e um descrente, sim; altamente elegíaco, Byron não era um saciado, um cínico: sua vida não implicava desdém pelos atrativos do mundo, a êle cuja imaginação pairava nas regiões siderais. Nesse fervilhar de seu espírito, nesse desconcerto de sua existência, o tresvairado poeta encontrava o objetivo de suas produções, que traçava incendiado com a pena ainda fumegante de álcool.

Nessas bacanais, o insensato buscava apenas no coração das mundanas a faísca divina que elas recatam sempre pura, e que, como um diamante, iluminava-lhe a alma no momento de suas criações.

Era crença entre os antigos que dentro da cabeça dos sapos se encontrava uma pedra talismânica, o bezoar; assim Byron, Musset e Álvares de Azevedo, enxafurdaram-se na escória social, atirando-se

inconscientes aos lupanares e à embriaguez, convencidos de que no fundo de todo êsse lamaçal, existia o seu encantado bezoar.<sup>58</sup>

It is a picture of Byron as a disbeliever, mournful and disenchanting with life. The account says that Byron was someone larger than life itself, whose creative power was ‘sidereal.’ Almeida continues by talking about Byron’s participation in orgies and finishes with the report of an antique belief that inside the heads of frogs a talismanic stone could be found. It is the sort of metaphorical precious stone searched for by Byron, Musset and Azevedo in their mundane vices.

Castro Alves wrote a poem entitled ‘O derradeiro amor de Byron’<sup>59</sup> or ‘The final love of Byron’ as a lyrical comment on Byron’s casual relationships. The first stanzas are:

## I

Num desses dias em que o Lord errante  
Resvalando em coxins de seda mole...  
A laureada e pálida cabeça  
Sentia-lhe embalar essa condessa,  
Essa lânguida e bela Guiccioli ...

## II

Nesse tempo feliz... em que Ravena  
Via cruzar o Child peregrino,  
Dos templos ermos pelo claustro frio...  
Ou longas horas meditar sombrio  
No túmulo de Dante – o Gibelino...

## III

Quando aquela mão régia de Madona  
Tomava aos ombros essa cruz insana...  
E do Giaour o lúgubre segredo,  
E esse crime indizível do Manfredo  
Madornavam aos pés da Italiana ...

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<sup>58</sup> Pires, *A Escola Byroniana*, p.36.

<sup>59</sup> ‘O Derradeiro Amor de Byron’, in *Jornal de Poesia*  
<<http://www.jornaldepoesia.jor.br/calves10.html>> [accessed 10 August 2007]

(Castro Alves, 'Amor de Byron', 1-15)

In those three stanzas we have an example of what a 'Byronic' poem was. What is important for the Brazilian Byron's aspirant is the citation of as many of Byron's heroes as possible. In 'O Derradeiro Amor de Byron' we find mentions to Childe Harold, the Giaour, and Manfred. Another point to be observed is the scenario for the poem: it is set in the intimacy of the bedroom of the 'errant Lord Byron', although a cemetery and Italy are mentioned as well. All aspects of the attitude of Byron and his heroes were imitated: the melancholy, the irony, the disillusionment, the scepticism, and apparent Satanism as seen below:

#### VII

– 'Queres saber então qual seja o arcanjo  
Que inda vem m'enlevar o ser corruto?  
O sonho que os cadáveres renova,  
O amor que o Lázaro arrancou da cova  
O ideal de Satã? . . . – 'Eu vos escuto!'

(Castro Alves, 'Amor de Byron', 31-35)

Who was the angel to inspire the poets being? Satan, who along with Byron were the Brazilian Romantic Ideal for the poets infected with the 'mal du siècle.'

The idea of linking Byron with all sorts of gothic elements has been affirmed in Brazilian Literary History not only by the poets of the Byronic Generation, but also by the critics occupied in discussing those views on Byron and his connection to Brazilian Romanticism. Byron's influence in Brazil was so powerful and controversial that he has been referenced in nearly every critical text and anthology of Brazilian literature at the heart of Brazilian Romanticism and through Brazil's national literature.

## Álvares de Azevedo

The most popular poet amongst his contemporaries, and also amongst twentieth Century Brazilian writers, and the foremost Brazilian Byronist is Azevedo. Álvares de Azevedo - of aristocratic origin - was born in a traditional wealthy family that featured amongst the high society in a Brazil facing social and political changes. He was the romantic par excellence, in his short twenty years of life he left us a relatively extensive body of work completed throughout his last four years in the Law School of the Largo São Francisco, situated in the capital city of São Paulo - headquarters of the Epicure Society, 'flower of São Paulo's Byronism'<sup>60</sup>. Azevedo represented his student life several times in poems which were written under the influence of European Romanticism, and included his most characteristic and famous poem, 'Idéias Intimas' or 'Intimate Ideas.'

His life and literary pieces can be related to all types of mysticism and curses associated with Byronism in Brazil. Álvares de Azevedo, in his dualistic view of poetry and life, contemplated the most sublime beauties of human existence in poems of the first part of the *Lira dos Vinte Anos* or *Lira of the Twenty Years* and, after that he explored blasphemy and Satanism in the second part of his *lira*, demonstrating to be one of the best interpreters of Byron, Musset, Goethe and Lamartine.

Azevedo is also interesting for his dualistic view of life in his work: the existence a certain 'conflict'. On the one hand he is the young man that dreams of his beloved arriving through the air as an angel; on the other hand he is a corrupt satanic type living and denouncing the mediocre life of the bourgeoisie.

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<sup>60</sup> Haddad, *Álvares de Azevedo*, p.86.

The conflict also appears in his book *A Lira dos Vinte Anos* which, perhaps because it was a posthumous publication without any revisions of selections by its author, appears at first sight as an agglomeration of poems and Romantic common places. The book reveals, however, a certain care in its division, with the first part of the *Lira* dedicated to the dream, the virgins, the beautiful evening, colourful Italy, the ideals; whilst the second part depicts the reality around the poet, expressed in tones of humour and irony echoing Don Juan's realistic humour.

The dualistic view in Azevedo's work is therefore related to the conflictive sensibility of Romanticism, a sensibility sometimes over exaggerated just like Azevedo himself, his work, and adopted language: 'pálpebra demente', 'matéria impura', 'noite lutulenta', 'face macilenta', 'anjo macilento', and 'leito pavoroso.'

If in the first part of the *A Lira dos Vinte Anos* we find poems written according to the style of the French seventeenth century (sentimental and innocent) as declared in its preface:

São os primeiros cantos de um pobre poeta. Desculpai-os. As primeiras vozes do sabiá não têm a doçura dos seus cânticos de amor. É a lira, mas sem cordas: uma primavera, mas sem flores, uma coroa de folhas, mas sem viço.

The ultra-Romantic lyricism of the first part of the *Lira* is present in poems like 'No Mar', 'Itália', 'Pálida à luz da lâmpada sombria', 'Lembrança de morrer', 'À minha mãe', 'Teresa', 'Se eu morresse amanhã', 'Malva Maçã', and 'Seio de Virgem.' An extract of some of the poems could best exemplify this first phase in Azevedo's book:

Era de noite - dormias,  
Do sonho nas melodias,  
Ao fresco da viração;  
Embalada na falua,  
Ao frio claro da lua,  
Aos ais do meu coração!

...

E que noite! que luar!  
E que ardentias no mar  
E que perfumes no vento!  
Que vida que se bebia  
Na noite que parecia  
Suspirar de sentimento!

(AA, 'No Mar', 1-6; 19-24)

Some important elements like the sea, the night, and the dream are present in this poem. They could serve as perfect elements for some Gothic scenery, however, in this poem the tone is different from the Byronic Azevedo from the second part of the *Lira*. It is a type of lyricism that involves the contemplation of nature and the adoration of the beloved who is never touched in real life but in dreams. None of the macabre tones figure in this poem and it is hard to see any Byronic influence in it.

Another poem, this one entitled 'Itália':

Lá da terra da vida e dos amores  
Eu podia viver inda um momento;  
Adormecer ao sol da primavera  
Sobre o colo das virgens de Sorrento!

(AA, 'Itália', 1-4)

An entire poem dedicated to Italy brings Azevedo closer to the Byronic tradition. Italy was somehow fashionable during Romanticism in Brazil, perhaps because of Byron's travels and residence in the country, but also because of the adventures of Childe Harold in Italy and some other dramatic poems that had the Mediterranean as background.

However, a promising link to Byron still cannot be clearly verified. But as the book reaches the end of its first half, a poem divided in three cantos surprises the reader with its Byronic content. The poem is 'Hinos do Profeta' or 'Hymns of the Prophet.' In the first canto - 'Um Canto do Século' - many Romantic elements are found: the tomb, the fever, the adventure, the desire, and the wandering; half-way through the first canto, some stanzas explicitly bring Byron into the poem:

Eu vaguei pela vida sem conforto,  
Esperei minha amante noite e dia  
E o ideal não veio...  
Farto de vida, breve serei morto...  
Não poderei ao menos na agonia  
Descansar-lhe no seio!

Passei como Don Juan entre as donzelas,  
Suspirei as canções mais doloridas  
E ninguém me escutou...  
Oh! nunca à virgem flor das faces belas  
Sorvi o mel, nas longas despedidas...  
Meu Deus! ninguém me amou!

Vivi na solidão - odeio o mundo,  
E no orgulho embucei meu rosto pálido  
Como um astro nublado...  
Ri-me da vida - lupanar imundo  
Onde se volve o libertino esquálido  
Na treva...profanado!

(AA, 'Hinos do Profeta', I, 67-84)

The first stanza above conveys the idea of a character's wanderings in search of his beloved. But he finds no clue of his 'ideal' and therefore laments the fact he will not be able to rest on her breast. After the echoes of Byron's tales in that stanza, the next two stanzas compare the poem's protagonist to the Byronic hero Don Juan 'Passei como Don Juan entre as donzelas...'; the last stanza presents and closes the poem with a very familiar and similar scene to Byron's opening verses in Childe Harold. There, the hero starts his journey wandering in the world, lonely and gloomy:

And now Childe Harold was sore sick at heart,  
And from his fellow bacchanals would flee;

...

And none did love him

...

'And now I'm in the world alone,  
Upon the wide, wide sea:  
But why should I for others groan,  
When none will sigh for me?

(Byron, *Childe Harold*, I, 46-47;73;182-185)

In the second part of the book, however, Azevedo changes and warns his reader about a macabre sort of world present in the poem from then on: 'Cuidado, leitor, ao voltar esta página!'<sup>61</sup>

Such warning takes the reader to the world of Cervantes and Shakespeare, Goethe and Musset. It is a world of lust, Satanism, suffering, and irony. Thus the poet starts dissipating the platonic and visionary world of the first part of his book. It is the antithesis of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, the opposites Ariel and Caliban corresponding to an angelic soul and an evil soul.

The titles of the poems also change. Differing from titles of poems of the first part figuring the sea, the angels, the dream, and the harmony, the new section celebrates images such as: the corpse of a poet, the bohemia, the spleen, money, and tobacco. In such mood, from the preface to the second part of his book - unique in Brazilian literature for its realism and sarcasm - Azevedo will rebel; deal with Satan and voraciously read books at the same time he feels his existence running through his inexperienced hands, all under the influence of Byron:

Qu'esperanças, meu Deus! E o mundo agora

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<sup>61</sup> Preface to the second part of the *Lira dos Vinte Anos* by Álvares de Azevedo.

Se inunda em tanto sol no céu da tarde!  
 Acorda, coração!...Mas no meu peito  
 Lábio de morte murmurou - É tarde!  
 (AA, 'Virgem Morta', 57-60)

and ironically representing his life as a student:

Parece-me que vou perdendo o gosto,  
 Vou ficando blasé, passeio os dias  
 pelo meu corredor, sem companheiro,  
 Sem ler nem poetar. Vivo fumando.

[...]

Ali na alcova  
 Em águas negras se levanta a ilha  
 Romântica, sombria à flor das ondas  
 De um rio que se perde na floresta...  
 Um sonho de mancebo e de poeta,  
 El-Dorado de amor que a mente cria  
 Como um Éden de noites deleitosas...  
 Era ali que eu podia no silêncio  
 Junto de um anjo... Além o romantismo!  
 (AA, 'Idéias Íntimas', 15-18; 39-47)

In a kind of ironic spleen, with free verses, Álvares de Azevedo defines the new inflection of his egotism when making sarcastic criticism of his own milieu: the Ultra-Romantics, somewhat, perhaps, in the manner of Byron when criticizing the so called Lake-poets. The poem reveals spleen; it is a journey around the self and its own space, minimal spaces in the existence of the individual. The poet reconstructs, from chaotic daily life, the bitter and disenchanted experience of life, expressing a cutting irony, formulated by blasphemy and Satanism:

Parece que chorei...Sinto na face  
 Uma perdida lágrima rolando...  
 Satã leva a tristeza! Olá, meu pajem,  
 Derrama no meu copo as gotas últimas  
 Dessa garrafa negra...  
 Eia! Bebamos!



In spite of the excellent example of Romantic irony, also developed in other poems, such as, the remarkable ‘Spleen e Charutos’ or ‘Spleen and Cigars’, it is important to notice the disenchantment in the style of the mythical Byronic tradition that in a poem like ‘Um Cadáver de Poeta’ or ‘A Poet’s Corpse’ operates in typically Romantic fashion, that is, death as the end of a life filled with pain and poetry:

De tanta inspiração e tanta vida  
 Que os nervos convulsivos inflamava  
 E ardia sem conforto...  
 O que resta? Uma sombra esvaecida,  
 Um triste que sem mãe agonizava...  
 Resta um poeta morto!

Morrer! E resvalar na sepultura,  
 Frias na fronte as ilusões - no peito  
 Quebrado o coração!  
 Nem saudades levar de vida impura  
 Onde arquejou de fome... sem um leito!  
 Em treva e solidão!

Tu foste como o sol; tu parecias  
 Ter na aurora da vida a eternidade  
 Na larga frente escrita...  
 Porém não voltarás como surgias!  
 Apagou-se teu sol da mocidade  
 Numa treva maldita!

(AA, ‘Um Cadáver de Poeta’, 1-18)

It is like the Baudelarian albatross and its gigantic wings. The poet sees himself as a unique and unadjusted human being that cannot live in society. As a result, the experience of life is desolating: vice and art are the only way to survive in a world of disbelief. His poetry gains in existential and critical depth, as it exposes the crisis of the self in modernity.

Azevedo refers to the influence<sup>62</sup> of Byron on Musset: mostly imitative and inspirational, explaining that Musset is neither a plagiarist nor an arid imitator. It is a brain fed by the ideas of others.

Could we perhaps state the same about Azevedo?

Azevedo read Byron in the original English, but according to Broca<sup>63</sup> in *Romantics, Pre-Romantics, Ultra-Romantics: Literary Life and Brazilian Romanticism*, the other Romantic poets generally read Byron in the French translations of Amédée Pichot (1795-1877). Goethe was also read in French. As Cilaine Alves writes, Azevedo was very well versed, a ‘menino prodígio’ or ‘prodigy child’, graduating with a baccalaureate in letters at the age of seventeen in Rio de Janeiro and then matriculating in the São Paulo Academy of Law. In his only and posthumous book of poetry - *A Lira Dos Vinte Anos* - he demonstrates his voracious literary appetite for the European literary canon, with allusions and references to authors including Bocage, Lamartine, Chateaubriand, Victor Hugo, Shakespeare, Ossian, Goethe, Dumas, Musset, Vigny, Moore, Shelley, and many others.

Barbosa’s remarkable study *Byron no Brasil: Traduções*, among other contributions, was the first to critically list the translators of Byron in Brazil. Her considerations about Byron in Brazil seen through the translated poems allowed her to place and define Byronism, affirming that:

um dos aspectos mais característicos do Romantismo que poderíamos chamar de *paulista* foi esse lúgubre gosto da morte, não simplesmente a morte abstrata, a morte-ausência, mas a morte concreta, diretamente associada a cemitérios, túmulos e cadáveres. Essa

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<sup>62</sup> Azevedo, *Obra Completa*, p.705.

<sup>63</sup> Broca, *Românticos*, p.64.

estética, que um crítico chamou de ‘estética de horrores’, ficou, no Brasil, ligada ao nome Byron. É o *byronismo* de *A Noite na Taverna* e de inúmeros outros pastichos que lhe seguiram.<sup>64</sup>

one of the most characteristic aspects of Romanticism that could be called native of the city of São Paulo was this dismal adoration for the death, not simply the abstract death, the death-absence, but the concrete death, directly associated to cemeteries, tombs and corpses. This aesthetic that a critic called ‘horror’s aesthetic’, was, in Brazil, associated to the name of Byron.

And in her conclusion:

É obvio que por trás de tudo isso está Álvares de Azevedo, cuja influência sobre os escritores que se seguiram, é incontestável, e por trás de Álvares de Azevedo paira certamente a sombra inconfundível de Byron. [...] O fato, porém, é que estabeleceu-se irremediavelmente o binômio *Byron - Álvares de Azevedo*, e as imaginações juvenis que se entregavam totalmente à influência deste último, aceitavam tudo que dele provinha como manifestação de byronismo.

It is obvious that in the background of everything is Álvares de Azevedo, whose influence on subsequent writers is undisputed, and in the background of Álvares de Azevedo hangs certainly the unmistakable shade of Byron. [...] The fact, however, is that the binomial *Byron - Álvares de Azevedo* was unquestionably established and the youthful imaginations surrendered to a total influence of this last one, accepted everything that came from him as manifestations of Byronism.

Apart from characterizing the Byronic movement in Brazil through the translations of Byron into Portuguese, Barbosa wisely suggests that the foundations of Brazilian Byronism were essentially connected to the name and work of Álvares de Azevedo.

Another interesting fact is the use Azevedo made of epigraphs in his poems. He constantly summoned the name of other European poets or characters in prefaces or epigraphs of some works. The epigraphs utilized by Azevedo add up

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<sup>64</sup> Onédia C.C. Barboza, *Byron no Brasil: Traduções*, p.24.

to a hundred and twenty-five, and works by Byron and Shakespeare are the most frequently cited. But it is in the second part of *A Lira dos Vinte Anos* that the name of Lord Byron or his heroes more constantly appear in the epigraphs. This could work as a way of setting a ‘mood’ for the work to follow:

**‘Prefácio’ *Segunda Parte da Lira Dos Vinte Anos***

Depois de Parisina e o Giaour de Byron vem o Cain e Don Juan - Don Juan que começa como Cain pelo amor, e acaba como ele pela descrença venenosa e sarcástica.

**‘Prefácio’ *O Conde Lopo***

A vós - clássicos como Horácio, Anacreonte e Ovidio, e a vós românticos como Byron - perguntarei, das noites de gozo monstruoso das luperciais, das orgias e tertúlias da Grécia e de Roma, desses cantos infames que marearam as liras dos três poetas da Antiguidade.

[...]

Não falarei de Byron. - Repito, não é essa uma obra de Moral, e para mim que quando leio e para apreciar o belo da imaginação do poeta, Don Juan é um pintor.

However, perhaps the most interesting element is the use made of excerpts from Byron’s works in many epigraphs of Álvares de Azevedo’s poems:

**‘Saudades’ or ‘Longings’**

‘Tis vain to struggle - let me perish young!’

(Byron, ‘Stanzas to the Po’<sup>65</sup>, 49)

**‘Vagabundo’ or ‘Tramp’**

‘Eat, drink and love; what can the rest avail us?’

(Byron, *Don Juan*, II, 1655)

**‘Sombra de D. Juan’ or ‘The Shadow of D. Juan’**

‘A dream that was not all a dream’

(Byron, ‘Darkness’, 1)

**‘Canto Primeiro’ *O Poema do Frade* or ‘First Canto’ The Friar’s Poem**

‘Man being reasonable must get drunk

The best of life is intoxication...’

(Byron, *Don Juan*, II, 1425-1426)

**‘Canto Segundo’ *O Poema do Frade* or ‘Second Canto’ The Friar’s Poem**

<sup>65</sup> refer to *The Works of Lord Byron*, 1994.

'And her head droop'd, as when the lily lies  
O'ercharged with rain.'

(Byron, *Don Juan*, IV, 467-468)

'Primeira Parte' *O Conde Lopo* or 'First Part' The Count Lopo  
'Eat, drink and love; what can the rest avail us?'

(Byron, *Don Juan*, II, 1655)

'Canto I, Vida da Noite' *O Conde Lopo* or 'Canto I, Night's Life'  
'And none did love him'

(Byron, *Childe Harold*, I, 73)

'Canto II, Febre' *O Conde Lopo* or 'Canto II, Fever'

'Hark! The lute  
The lyre, the timbrel, the lascivious  
Twinklings of beeling instruments, the  
Softening voices of women.'

(Byron, *Sardanapalus*<sup>66</sup>, act I)

'Segunda Parte' *O Conde Lopo* or 'Second Part'

'Our life is twofold'

(Byron, 'The Dream'<sup>67</sup>, I, 1)

'Canto IV, Fantasmagorias' *O Conde Lopo* or 'Canto IV, Phantasmagoria'

'A change came on the spirit of my dream'

(Byron, 'The Dream'<sup>68</sup>, III, 1)

'Terceira Parte' *O Conde Lopo* or 'Third Part'

'And thou fresh breaking day, and you, ye mountains,  
Why are ye beautiful? I cannot love ye.'

(Byron, *Manfred*, act I, 2, 9-10)

'Canto V, No Mar' *O Conde Lopo* (two quotes) or 'Canto IV, At the Sea'

'And now Childe Harold was sore sick at heart.

And from his fellow bacchanals would flee;

.....

.....

.....

And from his native land resolved to go,  
And visit scorching climes beyond the sea;  
With pleasure drugg'd, he almost long'd for woe,  
And e'en for change of scene would seek the shades below'

(Byron, *Childe Harold*, I, 46-54)

'.....

But I, who am of lighter mood,

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<sup>66</sup> Idem.

<sup>67</sup> Idem.

<sup>68</sup> Idem.

Will laugh to flee away.'

(Byron, *Childe Harold*, I, 172-173)

As seen above, the preferred works to be cited in epigraphs were: *Child Harold's Pilgrimage* and *Don Juan*, followed by *Caim*, *Darkness*, *Manfred*, *Mazeppa*, and *Sardanapulus* in fewer references. Apart from the epigraphs related to Byron, there seems to be very little in Azevedo's poems that could give evidence of the influence of Byron. In the work of Azevedo the epigraphs are used in the majority of the cases as a thematic introduction to a poem, and they were sometimes reframed and included in the poem as an original part of it. The use of epigraphs from French, German or English authors to introduce an original work, as most Brazilian Romantics did, became a form of appropriation of the European Romantic tradition in Brazil showing that use of epigraphs was not only a trend but also a sign of erudition.

Also, nearly all of the major Brazilian Romantics either reference Byron in the text of their poems or in epigraphs, especially second generation Romantics like Gonçalves Dias, Álvares de Azevedo, Fagundes Varela, and Castro Alves. This prevalence of references to Byron is significant because it demonstrates his overwhelming prestige.

In Azevedo's poem 'O Poema do Frade' or 'The Monk's Poem', the first verses are written in the mould of an Italian sonnet which was a form newly adopted for lyrical poems and no longer for the epic as traditionally done until then. It was a trend inaugurated by Byron when he used it in his poems *Vision of Judgement*, *Beppo*, and *Don Juan*. Apart from the form, the references to Byron's scenes are constant in Azevedo's poem, for example:

E pois que a meus heróis Morfeu namora  
 Também cansado vou dormir agora!  
 (AA, *O Poema do Frade*, II, 223-224)

And Byron's *Don Juan* ends its fifth canto with the lines:

Meanwhile, as Homer sometimes sleep, perhaps,  
 You'll pardon to my muse a few short naps.  
 (Byron, *Don Juan*, V, 1271-1272)

Azevedo's longest and perhaps most Byronic poem 'O Conde Lopo' demonstrates Byron's central position in Brazilian Romanticism and his exaggerated status as a Brazilian idol. It is a poem where the hero is portrayed with the most essential characteristics of Byron's Don Juan: adventurous, exotic, and fatal.

The third canto of 'O Conde Lopo' entitled 'Invocation' begins with the poet summoning the name of Byron as his muse:

I  
 Alma de fogo, coração de lavas,  
 Misterioso Bretão de ardentes sonhos  
 Minha musa serás—poeta altivo  
 Das brumas de Albion, fronte acendida  
 Em túrbido ferver!—a ti portanto,  
 Errante trovador d'alma sombria,  
 Do meu poema os delirantes versos.

II  
 Fôste poeta, Byron! A onda uivando  
 Embalou-te o cismar—e ao som dos ventos  
 Das selváticas fibras de tua harpa  
 Exalou-se o rugir entre lamentos!

III  
 De infrene inspiração a voz ardente  
 Como o galope do corcel da Ucrânia  
 Em corrente febril que alaga o peito  
 A quem não rouba o coração ao ler-te  
 Fôste Ariosto no correr dos versos,  
 Fôste Dante no canto tenebroso,

Camões no amor e Tasso na doçura,  
Fôste poeta Byron!

IV

A ti meu canto pois –cantor das mágoas  
De profunda agonia!—a ti meus hinos,  
Poeta da tormenta—alma dormida  
Ao som do uivar das feras do oceano,  
Bardo sublime das Britânicas brumas!<sup>69</sup>  
(AA, *O Conde Lopo*, III, 13-34)

No references to any of Byron's works are found in this extract, and a tone of praise runs throughout the poem: the focus of Azevedo is clearly in the image of Byron as the great Romantic poet. Azevedo made Byron into his own muse finding in him a mirror of his disillusionment and disbelief: 'Minha musa serás - poeta altivo.' To continue his evocative and praising verses, Azevedo concentrates in describing some of Byron's physical and intellectual characteristics: his 'alma de fogo' or 'soul of fire,' 'coração de lavas' or 'heart of flames,' 'altivo poeta' or 'high poet,' 'infrene inspiração' or 'unrestrained inspiration,' 'voz ardent' or 'ardent voice,' and 'fronte acendita' or 'brilliant brow.' He depicts Byron with the grandiosity of a prophetic bard - 'singer of

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<sup>69</sup> Soul of fire, heart of flames,  
Mysterious Briton of burning dreams  
My muse you will be - high poet  
From the mist of Albion, brilliant brow  
In troubled excitement - to you therefore,  
Errant bard of obscure soul.

You were a poet, Byron! The wave howling  
Rocked your thoughts - and by the sound of  
the winds  
of the wild fibres of your harp  
Emanated the roar amongst sorrow!

Of unrestrained inspiration the ardent voice  
As the galloping of the courser from Ukraine  
In a feverish flow that floods the chest  
Who is not touched when reading you  
You were Ariosto on the pursuing of verses,  
You were Dante on the tenebrous singing,  
Camões in love and Tasso in kindness,  
You were a poet, Byron!  
Since my song to you - singer of sorrows  
Of deep agony! - to you my hymns,  
Poet of torment - sleeping soul  
To the howling of the ocean beasts,  
Sublime bard from British fogs!

sorrows,' 'Briton with ardent dreams,' 'poet of torment.' Further on in the same poem, Azevedo writes:

Foi-te férreo o viver - enigma a todos  
 Foi o teu coração!  
 Da frente no palor fervente em lavas  
 Um gênio ardente e fundo:  
 O mundo não te amou e riste dele  
 - Poeta - o que era - te o mundo?  
 Fôste, Manfred, sonhar nas serras ermas  
 Entre os tufões da noite -  
 (AA, *O Conde Lopo*, IV, 1:40-47)

and,

As volúpias da noite descoraram-te  
 A frente enfebrecida  
 Em vinho e beijos - afogaste em gozo  
 Os teus sonhos da vida.  
 E sempre sem amor, vagaste sempre  
 Pálido Dom João!  
 Sem alma que entendesse a dor que o peito  
 Te fizera em vulcão!  
 (AA, *O Conde Lopo*, IV, 2:62-69)

The two extracts above further illustrate how Azevedo would transpose the mythical image of Lord Byron into his poetry, combining Byron and his heroes in a single person. In the first extract Azevedo makes reference to the lonely Childe Harold when he writes: 'O mundo não te amou e riste dele', and subsequently mentions the fact that Byron and Manfred are one, 'Foste, Manfred, sonhar nas serras ermas / Entre os tufões da noite.' The last extract pictures a scene of wine and kisses, very propitious to the hero Don Juan as soon confirmed in the line 'Pálido Dom João.' Thus, in the Romantic generation in Brazil, Azevedo blurs the line that separates Byron from his heroes, merging life and work in order to establish an errant lifestyle affected by the 'Byronic Malady.'

The ‘Byronic Malady’ did affect the subject, tone, style, and most apparently, the characters portrayed in Brazilian Romantic poetry. However, ‘juvenile imaginations’ were transfixed by the romance of Byron’s life, his affairs, and his heroic death; therefore, the influence Byron had on Brazilian literature come more from the legends of his personal life than from his writings. Furthermore, Byronism was far more than a stylistic innovation in Brazilian poetry. His influence extended far beyond the literary imagination to attain moral and practical following in which not only the poetry, but also the poets became ‘sick.’

In Brazil, Byron’s image and work were mythologized into the form of second-generation Brazilian Romantics’ notion of European Romanticism—a triple-step from the real Byron and an embodiment of a hegemony Byron’s text purposefully eludes.

## Byron translated

In a series of letters to a friend, Álvares de Azevedo mentions the writing of a new poem entitled *Conde Lopo* or ‘*Count Lopo*.’ Azevedo lets his friend know that this is one of his most Byronic poems and although he thinks that this type of poetry does not interest his friend, he goes on sending him extracts of it including a translation of *Parisina* after praising the poem as one of the best written works of Byron, and yet one of the most immoral. He goes on giving his friend an account of what the poem is about: ‘an adulterous stepmother with her stepson that Byron paints with the most Romantic colours.’<sup>70</sup> A following letter lets us know that Azevedo has sent his friend the original manuscript of his

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<sup>70</sup> Azevedo, *Obra Completa*, p.808-809. (27 August 1848)

new poem with a note under its title: ‘imitated from Byron’<sup>71</sup>. However, he explains further on that his poem is not entirely imitated from Byron. The only uses of Byron in that poem are the first lines of *Parisina* transcribed in his translation of ‘Byron’s twilight’<sup>72</sup>:

É a hora em que juras de amores  
 Soam doces nas vozes tremidas  
 E auras brandas e as águas vizinhas  
 Murmuriam no ouvido silente...  
 Cada flor, à noitinha, de leve  
 Com o orvalho se inclina tremente  
 E se encontram nos céus as estrelas,  
 São as águas d’azul mais escuro,  
 Têm mais negras as cores as folhas,  
 Desse escuro o céu vai-se envolvendo  
 Docemente tão negro e tão puro  
 Que o dia acompanha - nas nuvens morrendo,  
 Qual fina o crepúsculo - a lua nascendo.<sup>73</sup>

Byron’s original reads:

I  
 It is the hour when from the boughs  
 The nightingale’s high note is heard;  
 It is the hour when lover’s vows  
 Seem sweet in every whispered word;  
 And gentle winds, and waters near.  
 Make music to the lonely ear.  
 Each flower the dews have lightly wet,  
 And in the sky the stars are met,  
 And on the wave is deeper blue,  
 And on the leaf a browner hue,  
 And in the heaven that clear obscure,  
 So softly dark, and darkly pure,  
 Which follows the decline of day,  
 As twilight melts beneath the moon away.  
 (Byron, *Parisina*, stanza I)

The lines above mostly in iambic tetrameter were not transposed into the Portuguese translation and Azevedo’s solution was in dactylic trimeter: a line

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p.809. (4 September 1848)

<sup>72</sup> Idem.

<sup>73</sup> Idem.

with nine syllables accentuated on the third, sixth and ninth. This change, however, produces a more interesting musicality to the poem if compared to the original. Moreover Azevedo reaches an impressive result - closer to the effect produced by Byron when changing the meter to pentameter - in his translation of the last two lines of the poem, adopting a longer rhythm and preserving the parallel rhymes.

Despite minimal formal differences, Álvares de Azevedo translates the first stanza of *Parisina* with reasonable fidelity without abandoning the Byronic spirit in vogue. Thus his twilight is certainly darker than Byron's. Azevedo employs five words explicitly relating to the night: 'noitinha' or 'dusk', 'escuro' or 'dark', and 'negro/negras' or 'black.' Byron never uses 'black' but nuances of it: 'deeper', 'brownier', and 'softly dark.' The conclusion of the first stanza of *Parisina* is of a beautiful image: 'the decline of day / as twilight melts beneath the moon away', but the Byronic version of Azevedo brings out a scene where the day 'dies' amongst the clouds in a sky which is 'black' and not merely 'dark' as Byron's.

From the time of Byron's death, editions of his works were widely available in Brazil mainly in both English and French (as attested by the translations of the French Amédée Pichot, popular in Brazil by then). Translations into other languages such as Spanish and German could also be occasionally found, and thus Byron's complete works were available to Brazilian readers. Since Byron's repertoire is so varied in terms of themes, styles, and genres, the choices Brazilian Romantics made in selecting works to translate and publish represent the aspects of Byronism that were the most representative of their notion of the Byronic.

The critic Onédia Barbosa, in her study of Byron's translations in Brazil, records over thirty Brazilian translators of Byron whose published translations she could still find in Brazilian libraries as late as 1975. She also notes about the fact that it was impossible at the time to find some of the translations:

Além disso, temos indicações de numerosos outros autores que teriam também se dedicado a verter o poeta inglês, mas cujos trabalhos não nos foi possível localizar.

Besides that, there are indications of numerous other authors who had also dedicated themselves to translating the English poet, but whose works we could not find<sup>74</sup>.

Barbosa records twenty-one other translators of Byron of whose translations there is printed evidence, but the actual documents could not be found in Brazilian libraries. The impulse among Brazilian Romantics to translate Byron was impressively extensive: more than fifty translators, and most of the major figures of Brazilian Romanticism not only reading and referencing but also translating Byron.

For the purposes of this thesis, we would focus not only on the two translations done by Álvares de Azevedo: *Parisina*, translated in 1848, and the stanzas II and III of the Canto I of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*; but also on other representative translators of Byron who will often be cited in this chapter and, therefore, a brief list of names and translations is given below:

Tibúrcio Antônio Craveiro: *Lara* (1832).

Álvares de Azevedo: *Parisina* (1848); *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage - Canto I, st. II and III* (1850).

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<sup>74</sup> Onédia Barbosa, *Byron no Brasil*, p.45.

Castro Alves: *À uma taça feita de crânio humano - Lines Inscribed upon a Cup Formed From a Skull; As Trevas - The Darkness; O Prisioneiro de Chillon - The Prisoner of Chillon* (1869).

Fagundes Varela: 'Imitação de To Inez' - *To Inez: Song of the Canto I of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1861).

Francisco Otaviano de Almeida Rosa: 'O Crepúsculo da Tarde' - *Don Juan, Canto III, st. CI-CVIII*; 'À Maria' - *To M.S.G.* (1842-1845); 'Childe Harold's Goodnight' - *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Canto I; Eutanásia - Euthanasia* (1853); *O Sonho - The Dream* (1852).

Craveiro's translation of *Lara* is the first known translation of Byron into Portuguese in Brazil. Craveiro translated Byron very carefully - even the number of verses are equal in both versions - and although his poem may have been the inaugural to a series of translations of Byron in Brazil, it certainly did not contain all things Byronic that would consume the minds and verses of later poets in Brazil. As for the others translators, all relatively immersed in the *Zeitgeist* of a dark Byron, the literary production of the period shows that translations of Byron's works were often translated as part of a larger volume including, in most cases, the translator's own verse.

In many cases translations of the works of other European poets were published together with Byron's, and the selection of poets who were published alongside Byron provides a good idea of what the Brazilian Romantics' European canon consisted of. Some of the most prominent authors published with Byron include Victor Hugo, Spronceda, Heine, Racine, Pope, Schiller, Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Vigny, Musset, Thomas Moore, Dante, Shakespeare, Longfellow,

Uhland, Baudelaire, and Shelley. As well as illustrating the Brazilian Romantics tastes, this canon represents an after-the-fact take on both general European Romanticism and British Romanticism.

If compared with the traditional Wordsworth-Coleridge criterion that Britain used to define its Romanticism in the second half of the nineteenth century, this Brazilian list of key Romantics overturns the traditional English canon. Byron clearly figures as the most important English Romantic, as he continues to be translated in Brazil throughout the nineteenth century; Shelly appears in only a few translations; but Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Keats never appear, at least in works that feature Byron.

However, only considering the authors translated alongside Byron does not provide a completely accurate reflection of Brazil's notion of the European Romantic canon; it gives an unfair preference to poetry. The traditional notion of English Romanticism has also, arguably, distorted the predominance of poetry over other contemporary genres. During Brazil's Romantic period, prose fiction was very popular, and Walter Scott's influence in Brazil should not be ignored, for instance. Translations of European fiction into Portuguese played an essential role in the rise of the novel in Brazil. According to Antonio Candido, the significant influence of European prose in Brazil 'is proven in the quantity of translations and abundance of publications of serials in the journals, not only in Rio, but in the entire country'<sup>75</sup>. Between 1830 and 1854 over one hundred novels were published serially.

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<sup>75</sup> Antonio Candido, *Formação*, p.107.

Besides serial publications, many European works were translated as volumes, including most of Scott's romances, translated by Caetano Lopes de Moura. In terms of number of pages published, therefore, Walter Scott's presence in Brazil dwarfed most other Romantics, including Byron. Despite his proliferate writings, Scott did not inspire a cultural movement the way Byron did. Scott's ability to interest but not inspire, in fact, is further evidence of the role Byron's celebrity image played in the spread of his works' popularity. Scott's works include many of the same themes that attracted Brazilian Romantics, but Scott himself did not appeal to the image of a Romantic icon to be idolized the way Byron did.

In addition to the number of translations made of various European Romantics, there are also references made to them in Brazilian poets' original works and their epigraphs. This provides further evidence of the European works that influenced them and reflected their view of European Romanticism, as demonstrated in Chapter 4 in relation to Byron and Álvares de Azevedo. A look at some of Brazilian Romantic poetry shows that there are references to the figure of Byron in almost every poet, either in the content or in epigraphs of their poems, more than any other European poet. Byron was then clearly the most important English Romantic. He is followed by Shakespeare, Ossian, Thomas Moore, Cowper, and Shelley, whereas Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Keats do not appear. Péricles Ramos's anthology of the poetical works of the major Brazilian Romantics, *Grandes Poetas Românticos do Brasil*, is one of the many anthologies to confirm this fact.

How little influence certain popular icons of canonical British Romanticism had played in Brazilian Romanticism is further demonstrated by a

lack of treatment of them in Brazilian scholarly works. In the authoritative *Formação da Literatura Brasileira* by the critic Antonio Candido, Byron is referenced over twenty times; Shelley is referred to six times; Wordsworth is referred to four times - three of which are in lists and once in a quote by Álvares de Azevedo in which he is compared as a negative example to Byron; Keats is mentioned twice; and Coleridge is never mentioned.

The most common approach by European scholars to Byron's poetry was to treat him as a satirical and subversive voice, placing him apart from the main Romantic ideology as expressed by, for example, Wordsworth or Coleridge. The key male Romantics who have garnished the critical focus in America and Britain as monumental influences in the development of Romanticism had virtually no voice in Brazil. But the primary Brazilian notion of European Romanticism has since long revolved around the influential figure of Byron and his image of the rebel and satanic being. Furthermore, during Brazil's Romantic period, Byron's image as the embodiment of European Romanticism was more influential, and carried more 'social energy,' than even Shakespeare.

## Translations

As discussed in previous sections of this thesis, many cultural and political factors influenced the way Brazilian Romantics viewed Europe, providing them with particular concepts that shaped their perceptions of European Romanticism. Byron's image had become so mythic in its proportions and so mutable, that even though in theory he was the icon of European Romanticism, in practice that icon was formed after the likeness of Brazil's own alter-Romanticism. Brazil's perspective on European and English Romanticism can,

however, raise questions about the methods of canon formation and periodization of the English-speaking critical tradition.

The translations provide a vivid picture of the ways Byron's image as a Romantic developed in Brazil. The large number of translations allows an extra degree of scrutiny because most of the works translated were translated more than once. The most popular were translated several times. Therefore, the frequency of the works' translations can also reflect the Brazilian notion of the Byronic.

In terms of omissions and inclusions, the Brazilian translators have avoided Byron's satire. Practically none of *Don Juan* or Byron's other satirical work was translated. The only translations of *Don Juan*, in fact, are a prayer in Canto III and a song in Canto XVI, neither of which reflects the general tone or themes of the poem. Barbosa notes that compared to other aspects of Byron's popular image, 'the author of the brilliant *Beppo*, *The Vision of Judgement*, and *Don Juan* - Byron's more satirical works - did not have the same significance<sup>76</sup>. Reasons for the avoidance of Byron's satire may have lain in some factors such as: translation difficulty, lack of interest about British politics and figures, and perhaps simply because it did not fit with Byron's image in Brazil. Despite claims that Byron was generally easy to translate, at least one anonymous translator in Barbosa's study alleges that he translates Byron into prose because the verses of Byron could not be translated into verse.

*Don Juan* has a particularly more colloquial feel than most of Byron's narrative poetry, making it harder to translate; and Byron's allusions would have

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<sup>76</sup> *Ibid*, p.265.

also been difficult to translate and hard for Brazilian readers to relate to. Brazilian translators may also have avoided Byron's satire because of its political nature. Even though Byron was in favour of South American liberty and autonomy from Europe, and even though he lived in self-imposed exile from England, the sentiment in Brazil throughout the nineteenth century was against British politics, and Byron was still a Briton. With all the political movements in Brazil related to its independence from Portugal, most Brazilian Romantics would have felt at home with Byron's political philosophy. However, as Castro Alves demonstrates with his choice of translating Byron's 'Darkness' and 'Lines Inscribed upon a Cup Formed from a Skull,' Byron's revolutionary political poetry that was so praised in Europe did not penetrate the bastion of anti-British political prejudice in Brazil. Then, of course, the final and main reason for avoiding Byron's satire relates to the Brazilian Romantics' notion of Byronism, which apparently did not include a satiric mode. The fact that Brazilians ignore Byron's satire is also significant because it again opposes the traditional British critical notion of Byron's role in Romanticism as a subversive or satirical self.

The selections made, just in terms of number of translations, reveal a Brazilian preference for *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and Byron's narrative poems. Parts of *Childe Harold* were translated at least sixteen times, with two complete translations by Francisco Gumarães and Francisco Otaviano. Canto IV was translated twice apart from the complete translations, but the selections most translated all come from Canto I such as: the first stanzas of the canto (4 translations), the song 'To Inez' (9 translations), and 'Childe Harold's Good Night' (5 translations). Why the focus on 'To Inez'? With the exception of the first two paragraphs of *Parisina*, 'To Inez' is translated more than any other selection. Barbosa writes, 'We find no less than eight Brazilian translations of

'To Inez' (not counting Pinheiro Guimarães's that is included in his complete translation of *Childe Harold*), that prove eloquently the attraction that this little Romantic manifesto exercised over our poets'<sup>77</sup>. Barbosa suggests that 'To Inez' captures the meaning of the entire poem, and therefore makes a good representative piece to translate. Other critics, however, have not given 'Inez' the importance Barbosa does.

An entire translation of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* would have been a formidable task for the Brazilian 'libertine poets,' however, and not many short selections from the poem make sense out of context. Translators may also have shied away from translating the entire poem because of its inherent ties to Europe as a location and European politics and history as a philosophical context. 'To Inez' and 'Childe Harold's Good Night' serve as short, relatively universal poems within the poem that are much more accessible in terms of translation and thematic content. Not all the other sections of *Childe Harold* are impossible to translate on their own, however, so both 'To Inez' and 'Childe Harold's Good Night' also represent sections of *Childe Harold Pilgrimage* that were the most representative Romantic parts of the poem to Brazilian readers. Neither is overtly political or satirical, but they represent Harold as the epitome of Romantic disillusionment in all its paradoxes: self-exiled, melancholic, mysterious, misunderstood, fearless, sorrowful, scorned, and lonely wanderer.

1

Nay, smile not at my sullen brow,  
 Alas! I cannot smile again;  
 Yet heaven avert that ever thou  
 Shouldst weep, and haply weep in vain.

2

And dost thou ask, what secret woe

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<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p.137.

I bear, corroding joy and youth?  
 And wilt thou vainly seek to know  
 A pang, ev'n thou must fail to soothe?

3

It is not love, it is not hate,  
 Nor low Ambition's honours lost,  
 That bids me loathe my present state,  
 And fly from all I priz'd the most:

4

It is that weariness which springs,  
 From all I meet, or hear, or see:  
 To me no pleasure Beauty brings;  
 Thine eyes have scarce a charm for me.

5

It is that settled, ceaseless gloom  
 The fabled Hebrew wanderer bore;  
 That will not look beyond the tomb,  
 But cannot hope for rest before.

6

What Exile from himself can flee?  
 To Zones, though more and more remote,  
 Still, still pursues, where-'er I be,  
 The blight of life -- the demon, Thought.  
 (Byron, *Childe Harold* 'To Inez,' 837-860)

The morose, hopeless, fundamentally victimized aspect of the Byronic hero evidenced in these lines above is exactly the image of the Romantic character that second generation Romantics like Álvares de Azevedo and Fagundes Varela, reproduced religiously in their own works and imitated dramatically in their own lives. So the most likely reason for the disproportionate number of translations of 'To Inez' and 'Good Night' is that those excerpts reflected the Brazilian's notion of the Byronic better than any other part of the poem. To better illustrate this point and furthermore to observe the transmogrification of the original poem by its translator, here is a version by Varela of *To Inez*:

1

Não te rias assim, oh! não te rias,

Basta de sonhos de ilusões fatais!  
 Minh'alma é nua, e do porvir às luzes  
 Meus roxos lábios sorrirão jamais!

2

Que pesar me consome? Ah! não procures  
 Erguer a lousa de um pesar profundo,  
 Nem apalpares a matéria lívida  
 E a lama impura que pernoita ao fundo!

3

Não são as flores da ambição pisadas,  
 Não é a estrela de um porvir perdida  
 Que esta cabeça coroou de sombras  
 E a tumba inclina ao despontar da vida!

4

É este enojo perenal, contínuo  
 Que em toda a parte me acompanha os passos,  
 E ao dia incende-me as artérias quentes,  
 Me aperta à noite nos mirrados braços!

5

São estas lavras de martírio e dores  
 Sócias constantes do judeu maldito,  
 Em cuja testa, dos tufões crestada  
 Labéu de fogo cintilava escrito!

6

Quem de si mesmo desterrar-se pode?  
 Quem pode a idéia aniquilar que o mata?  
 Quem pode altivo esmigalhar o espelho  
 Que a torva imagem de Satan retrata?<sup>78</sup>

The original poem was beautifully translated by Varela, leaving Byron far behind in matters of powerful imagery and feeling. As observed by Barbosa, it is important to notice the translator's note for the poem where it reads: 'Child Harold imitated from the song - To Inez - in the poem of same name by Byron'<sup>79</sup>; the author gives a clue about his intentions towards the translation of the poem: it was to imitate rather than literally translate the poem, which allowed Varela to enrich and flavour the poem to his own liking. The translation gains in

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p.199-200.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p.199.

'Child Harold, imitado do canto a - Ignez - no poema do mesmo nome, de Byron'

dramatic power and it is given a macabre tone with some images related to death such as: 'roxos lábios', 'matéria lívida', 'lama impura', and 'a tumba inclina.' Furthermore, instead of simply translating the original 'demon' by 'demônio' in Portuguese, Varela chooses to use 'Satan' as a translation and, again, places the poem in the core of all things Byronic to Brazilian readers. Thus the choice of the poem and its translation certainly serves to illustrate the full extent of Byronic fever in Brazil.

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

The Brazilian Romantics' expressed interest in the 'Oriental and Byronic Tales' speaks to the fact that their primary interest in Byron's works was Byron himself, or the myth of Byron at any rate. Barbosa notes,

Therefore, for the majority of our translators, the poem of Byron resolved itself in the Romantic figure of his hero and in his morose cantos. The beautiful landscapes, the picturesque descriptions, the preoccupation with Europe and with history, the attitude of the poet towards nature, did not seem to be of much interest to them.<sup>80</sup>

Thus an examination of the works selected for translation and the number of translations each work underwent demonstrates that, generally speaking, the

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<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p.262.

Brazilian Romantics focused on the 'Byronic Hero' and deemphasized the satirical, political, historical, and natural aspects of Byronism.

## **Byron reconstructed**

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

Although a few translators were particularly faithful to the original work, most were qualmless in completely altering Byron's originals in order to better accomplish what they thought Byron should be like. For example, Francisco

Otaviano was especially liberal in altering Byron's original verse order and stanzas; his versions were more like adaptations than faithful translations. In Otaviano's translation of 'Childe Harold's Good Night,' he craftily divides and combines several stanzas - in the end, stanza 10 is entirely omitted. Also in his version of 'To M. S. G.,' the stanza 5 is completely replaced with his own verse.

The original reads:

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No! for thou never canst be mine,  
 United by the priest's decree:  
 By any ties but those divine,  
 Mine, my belov'd, thou ne'er shalt be.  
 (Byron, 'To M.S.G.', 17-20)

And Otaviano's version:

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Não, anjo meu! além escuto as vozes  
 De censura da vã sociedade:  
 Ouvi-las sem sofrer não poderias...  
 Abandonar-te devo por piedade.<sup>81</sup>

No, angel of mine! I hear the voices  
 Of the censorship of vain society:  
 You could not hear then without suffering...  
 I must leave you for mercy.

Otaviano's verses are more dramatic than the original. He elevates the tone of the poem when including the word 'angel' to refer to his lover and when criticizing society in the style of Byron, he adds the adjective 'vain' to describe it. The ending is flavoured by an unwanted farewell, as common in much of the lyric poetry of his epoch.

Also, most translators struggled with the meters and rhyme schemes that could not be translated directly into Portuguese. Otaviano translates the poem

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<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p.131.

above into decasyllabic verse, while Byron's original was written in iambic tetrameter verse. Guimarães's translation of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, for instance, uses generally ten or eleven lines to translate the nine original lines in the Spenserian form. Then, in many cases, translators were more comfortable translating from French than English, which was not a problem since French versions of Byron's complete works were widely available in Brazil. Unfortunately, the French versions many translators used already distorted the original meaning and form significantly, which only intensified the departure from the original in the Brazilian versions.

Examining the Brazilian translations that were based on French versions of Byron's originals can demonstrate a considerable influence of the French translators. The majority of translations of English works into Portuguese that were not made from the original, almost certainly would reproduce the errors and particular nuances introduced in the French translations. Barbosa demonstrates the effects of the French influence by often comparing the English originals with the French translations and the Portuguese translations. One particularly poorly translated example is Eleutério de Sousa's translation<sup>82</sup> of Byron's 'The First Kiss of Love.' The first stanza in English reads,

Away with your fictions of flimsy romance,  
 Those tissues of falsehood which Folly has wove;  
 Give me the mild beam of the soul-breathing glance,  
 Or the rapture which dwells on the first kiss of love.

The French version of Louis Barré, from which the Brazilian author would refer to when translating, reads,

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<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p.196.

Arrière les pales fictions de vos romans,  
 tissus de faussetés dont la folie a fourni la trame!  
 A moi le doux rayon d'un regard qui vient du coeur,  
 ou le ravissement qui naît Du premier baiser d'amour!

And the modified version in Portuguese reads,

Não quero as pálidas ficções dos vossos romances,  
 tecido de ilusões que a fantasia cria!  
 Desejo antes o transparente raio de um olhar que vem do coração,  
 ou enlevo que nasce de um primeiro beijo de amor!

The word 'flimsy' is translated into French as 'pale' and the Brazilian translator does not ignore that when he probably translated 'flimsy' into 'pálida' after the French version. This particular change of adjectival nuance during the translation can probably be explained, once again, if we take into account what was in vogue at the time: a predilection for images related to the mysterious, the beautiful, and the ideal of a shy and pure virgin. The French translator took some liberties in his work, and therefore a Brazilian translation based on the French results in a version that is even more distant from the original.

Apart from adding adjectives and emphasis, many French translations add other significant content that is reproduced in Brazilian translations. João Cardoso de Meneses's translation of *Oscar of Alva*, is based on Amédée Pichot's French version, and all the mistakes Pichot makes are only multiplied by Meneses. Barbosa records the French, English, and Portuguese versions of one stanza in which Pichot adds a castle and clouds to the scene in the French version, and Meneses foregrounds the foreign elements by placing them at the end of the lines in the Portuguese version. Of the three main French translations used by translators, Louis Barré's is the most unfaithful, with Amédée Pichot's only slightly better, and Benjamin de Laroche's, perhaps, the best. Barré's, however, seems to be the most widely used.

The height of alteration for Brazilian translators was either absolute plagiarism or publishing an original work under one of Byron's titles, both of which imply a complete co-opting of Byron's image in Brazil. Similar to José de Alencar, who signed Byron's name on his own poetry, Brazilian Romantics that put their own names on Byron's work or published their own verses imbedded in his works used the 'social energy' embodied in Byron's fame, his popular image, to give to their own works or their own names the power to fascinate. These would-be poets borrowing Byron's energy in such a mimetic way illustrate again the subversive function Byron played in Brazil. Masquerading as Byron, they could publish content they would otherwise not be able to publish, or obtain a readership they would otherwise not have. Alencar, after signing Byron's name on his own mediocre poetry noted, 'What intimate satisfaction did I not have, when a student . . . reread with enthusiasm one of these poesies, seduced without doubt by the name of the pseudo-author.'<sup>83</sup> While in some ways liberating, this type of subordination to Byron's image disfigured true Brazilian Romanticism in similar ways to those in which Brazilian Romanticism disfigured Byron, giving it aspects that were not natural to it.

Examples of such appropriations and egregious modifications are prevalent throughout Brazilian translations of Byron. In 1855 an anonymous author published what he claimed to be a translation of 'Jephtha's Daughter,' one of Byron's *Hebrew Melodies*, but when compared with the original, it is apparent that the so-called translation is not even an adaptation or imitation. It is a completely different composition from start to finish. This type of complete appropriation is difficult to track, especially since the poems no longer approximate Byron's. On the other hand, a more identifiable practice,

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<sup>83</sup> Raymundo Magalhães Júnior, *Poesia e Vida de Álvares de Azevedo*, p. 40.

exemplified especially by Francisco Otaviano, was to alter the form of the translation to better fit the translator's idea of the Byronic and to add words to clarify the meaning or accentuate the emotion. Changing the form or rearranging and adding words usually altered the meaning of the poem significantly and made the translator's ideologies a significant part of the composition.

Alterations in style and meter can completely change the mood of the poem and the meaning, almost as much as adding words. For example, in Otaviano's 'To Inez,' he changes the meter to an Alexandrine form that slows the poem down and, according to Barbosa, gives it a 'tragic rhythm that we don't find in the original.' Also, Álvares de Azevedo's translation of the first paragraph of *Parisina* makes the meter much more musical and rhythmic, thereby giving it some of the characteristics of his own poetry. A. C. Soido's translation of *The Corsair* ends up adding 746 lines to the original, which Barbosa blames on 'his imagination being even more ardent than that of the author'<sup>84</sup>. In Soido's translation, Byron's text becomes much more emphatic, sentimental, sublime, and morose. For example<sup>85</sup>, 'the guilty' becomes 'a troop of bandits,' 'the rushing deep' becomes 'thundering shocks of the angry waves,' and 'him' becomes 'tortured cadaver,' and so on.

Results of the alterations include de-politicizing the work, sexualizing the work, and, in general making the poems more intense—more macabre, more emotional, more sentimental, or more shocking. For example, Otaviano's additions to Byron's verse make 'Childe Harold's Good Night' much more

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid, p.181.

<sup>85</sup> Idem.

melodramatic and sentimental. 'My father' becomes 'my *old* father'; 'a mother' becomes 'my *poor* mother' (and he adds a '*sad tear*' to her face); 'did not much complain' becomes 'with all the anguish of the extreme moment'; 'but thinking on an absent wife' becomes 'but leave my wife *and my little children*'; and 'what answer will she make' becomes 'what will she tell them the poor abandoned one?.' Even without adding lines, translators can alter the poem's meaning by picking words they think are more in line with the true meaning of Romanticism.

Azevedo's translation of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* can reveal the extent of the Brazilian Byronism introduced through translations. The translation figures in an essay on Alfred de Musset, and there Azevedo compares Rolla to the Byronic heroes: Giaour and Childe Harold. At almost all times Azevedo speaks of Byron in his defence of a Romantic and libertine construction of Musset's Rolla. After a little work on Musset, Azevedo says: 'Who does not remember those verses of his [Byron's] *Wandering* outlaw that start in this way?,'<sup>86</sup> and presents his translation of an extract of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. In order to compare the original and Azevedo's translation, below is a transcription of both versions:

## II

Whilhome in Albion's isle there dwelt a youth,  
 Who ne in virtue's ways did take delight;  
 But spent his days in riot most uncouth,  
 And vex'd with mirth the drowsy ear of Night.  
 Ah, me! in sooth he was a shameless wight,  
 Sore given to revel and ungodly glee;  
 Few earthly things found favour in his sight  
 Save concubines and carnal companie,  
 And flaunting wassailers of high and low degree.

## III

Child Harold was he hight: - but whence his name  
 And lineage long, it suits me not to say;

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<sup>86</sup> Azevedo, *Obra Completa*, p.681.

Suffice it, that perchance they were of fame,  
 And had been glorious in another day:  
 But one sad losel soils a name for aye,  
 However mighty in the olden time;  
 Nor all that heralds rake from coffin'd clay,  
 Nor florid prose, nor honied lies of rhyme  
 Can blazon evil deeds, or consecrate a crime.  
 (Byron, *Child Harold*, I, 10-27)

And Azevedo's reads,

Nessa ilha de Albion houve um macebo  
 Que nunca amara da virtude o trilho:  
 Porém na perdição gastava os dias  
 Cansando entre alarido à noite os sonos:  
 Ai! Na verdade - que era um ser perdido.  
 Chegado ao crime em júbilos malditos!  
 Pouco da vida lhe acordava um riso  
 Exceto amantes, e carnais orgias  
 De todo o grau - altivos bebedores!

Era nobre Child Harold - donde o nome  
 E a longa estirpe - não me cabe a lenda -  
 Disse-os a fama por ventura outr'ora -  
 Foi-lhes glórias talvez em outros dias  
 Mas deslustra um brasão infâmia eterna  
 Valente embora os perpassados tempos;  
 Nem os roubos da heráldica aos sepulcros  
 Da prosa as flores, falsos méis de rimas  
 Podem manchas doirar, sagrar um crime.  
 (AA, *Obra Completa*, p.681)

Azevedo's version sounds more macabre and dark than the original. For example, he translates 'revel' as 'crime', 'ungodly' as 'maldito'<sup>87</sup> which is a word closer in meaning to all things from hell, and 'companie' as 'orgias' or 'orgies' in English. Another remarkable fact here is that Azevedo changes the original meaning of 'hight' - to be called, named - to a sense of royalty in his translation, approaching the hero to the image of a noble being.

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<sup>87</sup> The expression *Poète Maudit* in French has been commonly employed in Brazilian scholarship to name the generation of Byronic poets in Brazil.

Thus, the feature of Byronism most radically altered and magnified through Brazilian translation is the focus on the macabre, also evidenced in the works of many Brazilian Romantics including Castro Alves' translations examined further on in this chapter. Of all the aspects of the Byronic, death, darkness, cemeteries, tombs, and a sense of fatality were the most representative of Byron's image and European Romanticism for Brazilian Romantics. In Otaviano's translation of 'To M. S. G.,' he translates the line in stanza 8, 'I bid thee now a last farewell,' to 'The pain will be short, soon I shall die!'; Azevedo also transforms the first paragraph of *Parisina* into a much graver piece, for example where Byron 'alludes to the *decline of the day*,' for Azevedo it becomes its death. Fagundes Varela's version of 'To Inez' is perhaps the most exaggerated example of the Brazilian infusion of the macabre into Byronism. By inserting 'death,' 'kill,' 'funeral,' 'Satan,' 'tomb,' and 'cold flesh' into his drastically altered rendition of 'Inez,' Varela refers to death in nearly every stanza, whereas in the original Byron refers to death only once.

The works of Castro Alves are numerous and they are usually classified as belonging to a late Romantic generation in Brazil, a generation preoccupied with expressing social themes in their work such as slavery and freedom. Therefore the choices Alves makes when translating Byron's works provide a good example of the perspective on Byronism adopted by Brazilian Romantics. The original version of 'Lines Inscribed upon a Cup Formed from a Skull' is transcribed below following Alves' translation:

Start not-nor deem my spirit fled:  
 In me behold the only skull,  
 From which, unlike a living head,  
 Whatever flows is never dull.

I liv'd, I lov'd, I quaff'd, like thee:

I died: let earth my bones resign;  
 Fill up-thou canst not injure me;  
 The worm hath fouler lips than thine.

Better to hold the sparkling grape,  
 Than nurse the earth-worm's slimy brood;  
 And circle in the goblet's shape  
 The drink of Gods, than reptiles' food.

Where once my wit, perchance, hath shone,  
 In aid of others' let me shine;  
 And when alas! our brains are gone,  
 What nobler substitute than wine?

Quaff while thou canst: another race,  
 When thou and thine, like me, are sped,  
 May rescue thee from Earth's embrace,  
 And rhyme and revel with the dead.

Why not? since through life's little day  
 Our heads such sad effects produce;  
 Redeem'd from worms and wasting clay,  
 This chance is theirs, to be of use.

Newstead Abbey, 1808.

(Byron, *Lines Inscribed Upon a Cup Formed from a Skull*)

By the time Alves arrived in São Paulo, at least two generations of Byronists had been through the Academy of São Paulo, which was a center of Byronism. Legends of Byronic midnight rituals were still common. Alves's choice to translate 'Lines,' again reflects the Brazilian interpretation of Byron's mood in his poems as the 'Byronic School' in Brazil read the poem and stories of Byron and his compatriots drinking from the cup absolutely seriously:

Não recues! De mim não foi-se o espírito...  
 Em mim verás-pobre caveira fria -  
 Único crânio, que ao invés dos vivos,  
 Só derrama alegria.

Vivi! amei! bebi qual tu: Na morte  
 Arrancaram da terra os ossos meus.  
 Não me insultes! embina-me!... que a larva  
 Tem beijos mais sombrios do que os teus.

Mais val guardar o sumo da parreira

Do que ao verme do chão ser pasto vil;  
 - Taça - levar dos Deuses a bebida,  
 Que o pasto do réptil.

Que este vaso, onde o espírito brilhava,  
 Vá nos outros o espírito acender.  
 Ai! Quando um crânio já não tem mais cérebro  
 ... Podeis de vinho o encher!

Bebe, enquanto inda é tempo! Uma outra raça,  
 Quando tu e os teus fordes nos fossos,  
 Pode do abraço te livrar da terra,  
 E ébria folgando profanar teus ossos.

E por que não? Se no correr da vida  
 Tanto mal, tanta dor aí repousa?  
 É bom fugindo à podridão do lodo  
 Servir na morte enfim p'ra alguma cousa!...

(Castro Alves, *A uma Taça Feita de um Crânio Humano*)

Alves' version is richer in adjectives that enhance the dramatic appeal of the poem: in the first stanza he adds 'pobre' for 'unfortunate,' and 'fria' or 'cold' to the description of a skull in Byron's original. In the second stanza a verb indicating a fierce movement is also added changing the original 'I died: let earth my bones resign' to '...Na morte/ Arrancaram da terra os ossos meus,' indicating that death was abruptly disturbed by the one who now uses the skull as a wine glass. The translation goes on fairly faithful to the original until its conclusion when Alves changes the poem's 'sad effects' produced by life to 'Tanto mal, tanta dor' or 'so many wrongs, so much pain,' another adjectival interference to the poem. As a result, all of the playfulness of the original is replaced with a tone of seriousness that has an element of tragic eloquence absent from the original above.

For further evidence of the Brazilian Romantics fascination with the macabre and its intrinsic relation to Byron, a look on two translations of Byron's *The Darkness* into Portuguese by translators from different epochs can be

helpful. The first one is by Castro Alves and it was written during the Romantic fervour of the students of Faculty of Law in São Paulo, and the following translation is by the critic Péricles Eugênio da Silva Ramos<sup>88</sup> in his own volume of translations of Byron's verses. Firstly an extract from Byron's original:

A fearful hope was all the world contain'd;  
 Forests were set on fire - but hour by hour  
 They fell and faded - and the crackling trunks  
 Extinguish'd with a crash - and all was black.  
 The brows of men by the despairing light  
 Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits  
 The flashes fell upon them; some lay down  
 And hid their eyes and wept; and some did rest  
 Their chins upon their clenched hands, and smiled;  
 And others hurried to and fro, and fed  
 Their funeral piles with fuel, and looked up  
 With mad disquietude on the dull sky,  
 The pall of a past world; and then again  
 With curses cast them down upon the dust,  
 And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd: the wild birds shriek'd,  
 And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,  
 And flap their useless wings; the wildest brutes  
 Came tame and tremulous; and vipers crawl'd  
 And twined themselves among the multitude,  
 Hissing, but stingless - they were slain for food:  
 And War, which for a moment was no more,  
 Did glut himself again; - a meal was bought  
 With blood, and each sate sullenly apart  
 Gorging himself in gloom: no love was left;  
 All earth was but one thought - and that was death,  
 Immediate and inglorious; and the pang  
 Of famine fed upon all entrails - men  
 Died, and their bones were tombless as their flesh;  
 (Byron, *The Darkness*, 18-45)

Then, the translation by Castro Alves of the extract above:

Hórrida esp'rança acalentava o mundo!  
 As florestas ardiam!... de hora em hora  
 Caindo se apagavam; crepitando,  
 Lascado o tronco desabava em cinzas.  
 E tudo... tudo as trevas envolviam.

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<sup>88</sup> P.E. da Silva Ramos, *Byron: Poemas*, São Paulo, 2008, p.97-99.

As frentes ao clarão da luz doente  
 Tinham do inferno o aspecto... quando às vezes  
 As faíscas das chamas borrifavam-nas.  
 Uns, de braços no chão, tapando os olhos  
 Choravam. Sobre as mãos cruzadas - outros -  
 Firmando a barba, desvairados riam.  
 Outro correndo à toa procuravam  
 O ardente pasto p'ra funéreas piras.  
 Inquietos, no esgar do desvario,  
 Os olhos levantavam p'ra o céu torvo,  
 Vasto sudário do universo - espectro -,  
 E após em terra se atirando em raivas,  
 Rangendo os dentes, blasfemos, uivavam!  
 Lúgubre grito os pássaros selvagens  
 Soltavam, revoando espavoridos  
 Num vôo tonto co'as inúteis asas!  
 As feras 'stavam mansas e medrosas!  
 As víboras rojando s'enroscavam  
 Pelos membros dos homens sibilantes,  
 Mas sem veneno... a fome lhes matavam!  
 E a guerra, que um momento s'extinguira,  
 De novo se fastava. Só com sangue  
 Comprava-se o alimento, e após à parte  
 Cada um se sentava taciturno,  
 P'ra fartar-se nas trevas infinitas!  
 Já não havia amor!... O mundo inteiro  
 Era um só pensamento, e o pensamento  
 Era a morte sem glória e sem detença!  
 O estertor da fome apascentava-se  
 Nas entranhas... Ossada ou carne pútrida  
 Ressupino, insepulto era o cadáver.

(Castro Alves, *As Trevas*, 21-56)

And finally Ramos' translation:

Expectativa apavorada era a do mundo;  
 Queimavam-se as florestas - mas de hora em hora  
 Tombavam, desfaziam-se - e, estralando, os troncos  
 Findavam num estrondo - e tudo era negror.  
 À luz desesperante a frente dos humanos  
 Tinha um aspecto não terreno, se espasmódicos  
 Neles batiam os clarões; alguns, por terra,  
 Escondiam chorando os olhos; apoiavam  
 Outros o queixo às mãos fechadas, e sorriam;  
 Muitos corriam para cá e para lá,  
 Alimentando a pira, e a vista levantavam  
 Com doida inquietação para o trevoso céu,  
 A mortalha de um mundo extinto; e então de novo  
 Com maldições olhavam para a poeira, e uivavam,  
 Rangendo os dentes; e aves bravas davam gritos  
 E cheias de terror voejavam junto ao solo,  
 Batendo asas inúteis; as mais rudes feras

Chegavam mansas e a tremer; rojavam víboras,  
 E entrelaçavam-se por entre a multidão,  
 Silvando, mas sem presas - e eram devoradas.  
 E fartava-se a Guerra que cessara um tempo,  
 E qualquer refeição comprava-se com sangue;  
 E cada um sentava-se isolado e torvo,  
 Empanturrando-se no escuro; o amor findara;  
 A terra era uma idéia só - e era a de morte  
 Imediata e inglória; e se cevava o mal  
 Da fome em todas as entranhas; e morriam  
 Os homens, insepultos sua carne e ossos;  
 (Ramos, *Trevas*, 18-45)

*The Darkness* is one of the few poems by Byron that deserves to be placed in the Brazilian notion of Byronic Romanticism. The poem is a vision about the end of the world; its theme, mood, and lexical choice correspond to what characterized the macabre aspect in Byron's poems: a sense of desolation, darkness, madness, the fear, the cold, the bones, the blood, and the tombs. Yet the translation by Castro Alves alters significantly the original by adding more powerful adjectives and nouns as well as extra lines. Where the original reads 'a fearful hope' Alves translates fearful to 'hórrida' or 'horrid'; 'all was black' turns to 'tudo as trevas envolviam' or 'all was enveloped in darkness.' Byron opts to use 'unearthly aspect' to describe what was of a bizarre aspect whereas Alves translates it into 'do inferno o aspect' or 'the aspect from hell' emphasizing the damned and hellish aspects of the scene presented in the poem.

Ramos, in his twentieth century translation, puts aside the Romantic passion for the macabre thus his translation is the closest to the original. Where Alves uses horrid, the darkness and hell, Ramos is more faithful to Byron's using 'apavorada' or 'fearful/terrified', 'tudo era negror' or 'all was blackness', and 'aspecto não terreno' or 'unearthly aspect.' The difference between translations is evident in their lexical modulation probably attributable to the 'spirit of the

time' or 'Zeitgeist.' For Alves even the shriek of wild birds must have a tone of lugubriousness and therefore the original 'the wild birds shriek'd' is translated by 'Lúgubre grito os pássaros selvagens soltavam' or 'lugubrious scream the wild birds gave,' and to Ramos, the birds instead had angry screams 'aves bravas davam gritos.' The nineteenth century translation continues with its popular vocabulary and imagery until the final two lines that are unmistakably painted with the colours of Brazilian Byronism: 'ossada ou carne pútrida/ ressupino, insepulto era o cadáver' or 'skeleton or putrid flesh/ on its back, unburied was the corpse,' while Byron's simply writes 'men/ died, and their bones were tombless as their flesh' as does the modern translation by Ramos.

Apart from being an excellent example of a modern translation in Portuguese of Byron, the translation by Ramos in its essence attests Byron's popularity through time in Brazil. Almost everything from Byron was translated in Brazil apart from a few pieces that perhaps did not have themes or topics that interested Brazilian Romantics such as: the Romantic hero - his lonely laments and troubled life -, the descriptions of the twilight, and the proximity to the elements of death. The label put on that generation of Romantics in Brazil that suffered a sort of illness known as 'Byronic Malady' is explained by the series of poems by Byron that were many times translated, modified and imitated. The line separating Byron from his work seemed tenuous or inexistent to those Brazilian poets who saw in Byron's 'dark' Romanticism the metaphor of their own time and experiences: living, writing, and 'suffering' as Byron.

The analysis of the translations in this chapter showed that it was the morbid aspect that appealed to Brazilian Romantics unlike what occurred in European Romanticism where the preoccupation seemed to be more political

and even metaphysical in the sense of the study of poetry itself. This focus on the darker side of Byron when most of his work had nothing of the macabre was then, apparently, disproportionate to the power and quantity of 'Satanic' or gothic poetry in the whole of Europe. Nonetheless, Byron's mythical image in Brazil provided a cultural frenzy rarely seen in the history of the country.

The previous Romantic generation and their project of building a national literature coloured by national elements seemed frustrated by the cosmopolitan, dark, and European aspects of Romanticism so much prized by the following generation. But that second generation ended becoming as mythical in Brazilian literature as Byron once did as their icon and, perhaps, it is that fact that attests the success of their Byronic 'project.'

Through translations, Byron suffered a complete metamorphosis in order to correspond to the tone of macabre that was usually associated with him and not the opposite as expected. Byron's image and writing took on the aspect of the Romantic poets of the second generation in Brazil, most of whom had the 'spleen' as their ideal. In doing so, the Brazilian poets applied to themselves their perspective on Byron as the rootless, melancholic, macabre, and fatal hero.

## **Conclusion**

This research was interested in the influence of Byron in Brazilian Romantic poetry, and more specifically on Álvares de Azevedo. The overall aim was to advance thinking about, and shed new light on the understanding of the cultural frenzy that was the Byronic movement in Brazil and its traces in the

work of Azevedo. The study also wanted to contribute to the record of Brazilian Romanticism as a notorious literary movement that well deserves the attention of an international canon that has somehow neglected it.

To achieve its objectives this thesis discussed the reasons and methods for establishing a clear understanding of the connection between the poetical movement known as 'Byronic movement' in Brazilian Romanticism and its motivations through the work and life of Byron. It pointed out some of the critical works that have influenced the vision modern scholars and readers have on the work of Azevedo. It discussed some of the most representative poems written during the Byronic generation in Brazilian Romanticism, explaining how an apparently dark and macabre European artistic and philosophical thought was received, adapted and practiced in a transatlantic tropical country. Furthermore it investigated what Brazilian translations, especially Azevedo's and some of his contemporaries, could tell us about their literary practice and its implications for the general notion of what constituted the European Romanticism through the prism of Byron.

The social context in Romantic Brazil discussed in the first chapter of this thesis showed how the first politically stormy decades in Brazilian modern history led to a bourgeois fascination with European Romanticism and a desire to adapt it to a Brazilian context. It highlighted how the Independence of the country was fundamental to the constitution of a more developed and autonomous society and allowed the foundation of its first academic institutions, and presses. It was the time of cultural effervescence never seen in the country before with the flourishing of nationalistic ideals and the debate of the meaning and authenticity of its history and literature.

A chapter on literary Romanticism in Brazil helped to better map and define the limits and differences between the three generations of Romantics in Brazil. It showed that the first generation was essentially preoccupied in defining a national literature for the country and they produced a type of poetry that was very similar to that of early Romantics in Britain like Wordsworth when he looked for themes in the country's landscape. The arrival and growth of Romanticism in independent Brazil seemed to have developed nationalistic theories and stimulated the arts focused on the most evident characteristic of Brazil: nature.

The second generation of Romantics in Brazil known as the Byronic generation, on the other hand, demonstrated how unique and yet national and cosmopolitan a country's literature could be while disregarding a poetry only based on nature and still looking to Europe as a model. Although the Romantic period in Brazil began with strong emphasis on politics and nature, neither was significant to the second generation's ideal of Byron and Romanticism. The Byronic generation had a very particular project that somehow developed and created a national literature that was, in fact, very particular to Brazil: it involved a different approach to European Romanticism that was based on themes that were predominantly gothic, exotic and highly sentimental. Those themes were at the core of a form of expression that enclosed not only what one wrote but also how one lived, and imitating a creative image of Byron was far more important than having one's verses inspired by Byron's work.

The chapter that followed illustrated and discussed how the existence of a 'secret society' in São Paulo, named after Epicurus, played an important role in creating and disseminating the way of life of a true Romantic in Brazil under the

shadow of Byron and his heroes. It demonstrated how Byron was socially interpreted by the students in the Faculty of Law of São Paulo who moulded the British poet into their mythical form of Byronism and later incorporated that image into their own literary production. A sub-chapter on alcohol and tobacco indicated that those two elements figured in Byron's poems, and therefore they constantly appeared as key elements in the poems of Byronic Brazilian writers unlocking the creative and sentimental inner world of the poet in the style of Byronic heroes. In this way I have explained how that life pursued by the members of the Epicurus Society became the image of a dynamic generation of poets in Brazil: bohemian, dissolute, and Satanic.

But, how would it be possible that so much drinking and midnight wandering would not affect their studies at the Faculty of Law or even jeopardize a brilliant literary career? It is known that Azevedo - apart from writing a considerable amount of literary work in a period of only four years - was an extraordinary student while at the Faculty of Law. There would not be much space for alcoholism and nights awake in cemeteries in such an intellectually bright life. But what still inspires Azevedo's readers is not what he really was, but what he represented in Brazilian Romanticism: the bohemian and mysterious poet that existed as a national version of Lord Byron.

This was further verified in the following chapter more focused on the works of Byron and Azevedo. The basic intention was to verify to what extent the poems of Byron were a real influence on Azevedo as it had been said in practically every critical study of his work. By comparing poems that seemed closer in theme rather than in intention or form, I could observe that the extent of Byron's influence went rarely beyond his mythical image that was created by

the Brazilian writer. Azevedo wrote poems that were full of irony and disillusion at the same time that they were coloured by the daily scenes of Brazilian life. The political aspect of Byron's poetry never had any influence on Azevedo, the only remarkable elements that feature in his poems were the enhanced feeling of melancholy, inaccessible love, and the desire for death or oblivion which indeed characterized Byron's heroes but were far from being the main subject of the poems.

In terms of forms, Azevedo seems to fail in producing meaningful poetical narratives like those of Byron, his attempts such as *O Conde Lopo* and *O Poema do Frade* are very laboured works that even though not very interested in discussing political and moral issues such as Byron's *Don Juan* and *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* proved to be of much less interesting to a modern reader, for example. But Azevedo's preferred forms were the sonnet and the lyrical poems. In their making he, at times, succeeded as much as the best European Romantic poems that feature in so many anthologies. His success posed questions that could not be discussed in this thesis but that could certainly be developed in other research.

One of the most interesting new hypothesis suggests a connection between Azevedo and not only Byron, but also Manuel Maria Barbosa du Bocage (1765-1805) - one of the main Romantics in Portugal - who even deserved a few but very fascinating pages of study by Azevedo in his critical writings. Azevedo wrote a study entitled *Literatura e Civilização em Portugal* or *Literature and Civilization in Portugal* where he exposes his views towards the literature written in Portugal and Brazil arguing whether they should or should not be considered as a single and common literature to both Brazil and Portugal - this

statement could also be developed in future research considering Azevedo's study as a point of view for a discussion of the validity of the notion of a common Romantic identity in Brazil and Portugal.

It is the existence of a chapter in the previously mentioned study by Azevedo that caught my attention. The chapter entitled 'Fase Negra' or 'Dark Era' is dedicated to the praise of Bocage as the exceptional man who brought to Portuguese literature, the contrasting feelings of dark melancholy and sweet contemplation, sometimes mingled with irony and ordinary elements of the urban and bourgeois society. Those are elements in Bocage's poetry that find echoes in Azevedo's dualistic *Lyre*, certainly a subject for further research.

Still on the same chapter I discussed the use of epigraphs of Byron in Azevedo's poems. Using epigraphs from French, German or English authors to introduce one's work, as most Brazilian Romantics did, became a form of - or at least a representation of - the appropriation of the European Romantic tradition in Brazil. Nearly all of the major Brazilian Romantics either referenced Byron in the text of their poems or in epigraphs, especially in the later generations of Romantics like Álvares de Azevedo, Fagundes Varela, and Castro Alves.

In the final chapter I examined the translations of Byron into Portuguese and its implications for the making and diffusion of his iconic image. By presenting and analysing key translations by significant authors I could demonstrate that the translations were important for the development of the Byronic in Brazil and that it was due to the transformation suffered by them in the hands of Brazilian poets. Azevedo read Byron in English and most certainly translated from the original too but his contemporaries probably based their versions on French translations of Byron. The implications of a third translation

circulating amongst the young poets in Brazil were that they did not faithfully present Byron's poetry but an adapted version that corresponded to the preferences of the generation after Azevedo.

During this stage in my research I learned about which poems were the favourites of Byron's translators. An account of the works that were translated in Brazil proved to be valuable in the sense that it represents what formed the Byronic-Romantic canon to Brazilian readers. *Parisina, To Inez, Child Harold's Pilgrimage, The Corsair, The Giaour, and Lara* were the poems that - not surprisingly - deserved the greatest number of translations for in them Brazilian Romantics could find the lonely and damned heroic figure that had so much appeal to them.

Finally I hope that this thesis could serve as the starting point to further investigations on Brazilian Romanticism and its importance and relevance to literary history. Apart from the more evident problems concerning Byron's works and life, the influence of Byron in Brazil leads to many other questions including the better understanding of Brazil's society, culture, and literature. There is certainly much more to be researched about Azevedo's connection with Byron and his association with a special type of Romanticism that was built on the icon of Byron but without his 'active' participation. I have mapped through social context, literary history, poetry, and translations the ways in which literary criticism in Brazil had always linked the names of Azevedo and Byron and developed my own arguments perhaps placing Azevedo as a poet who deserves more study and recognition of his work; the poetry of Azevedo is not merely a copy of the Europeans who inspired him, and Byron existed in Brazil as a cultural metaphor that defined what Romanticism meant at the same time that the

Romantic notion of a conflicted existence nurtured by spleen and beauty was inspired by the writings and the myth of Álvares de Azevedo.

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