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## Rewriting the Faust Myth within Romantic Dualism of Existence in Byron's *Manfred* and *Cain*

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### Abstract

*Among the myths revived and rewritten by the romantics – Prometheus, Orpheus, Psyche, Apollo, and so on – the myth of Faust would provide one of the most congenial ways of textualization of the romantic rise of individualism, in general, and of some of its individual thematic perspectives, such as dualism of existence, escapism, and rebelliousness, in particular. George Gordon, Lord Byron's impressive literary masterpieces, the lyrical plays *Manfred* and *Cain* are among those works that contributed to the rise of the romantic hero in English literature by building up one of its particular as well as most interesting versions, which is known as the Byronic hero. Solitary, inadaptable, arrogant, misfit, escapist or rebellious, whatever would be the common features of the many characters that are labeled as "Byronic hero", they still reveal certain distinct features and perform various deeds that allow them to be regarded as particular hypostases of the Byronic hero, among which Childe Harold, *Manfred*, *Don Juan*, *Cain*, and others. Among these, *Manfred* and *Cain* are at once hypostases of the Byronic hero and Faustian figures making possible the reconstruction of the Faust myth within the new attitudes and the thematic complexity of the Romantic Movement. In this respect, the present study embarks on a critical endeavour to disclose and compare the ways in which the two dramatic works revive and reshape the myth, and make it a vehicle for both romantic and, as we will see, anti-romantic literary expression.*

**Keywords:** myth; literature; comparison; Faust; Goethe; romanticism; Byron; dualism of existence; escapism; rebelliousness.

### Introduction

The romantic dualism of existence, as a particular type of dualism, is linked to the rise of individualism in romanticism. The romantic dualism of existence refers to a number of binary oppositions, of which first and foremost is mind – body dualism, or spirit – corporeality, or psychology – physiology in Coleridge, or soul – body, good – evil, and freedom – system dualities in Schelling, and, by extension, to other dichotomies such as subject – object, culture – nature, history – nature, individual – society, reality – dream, reality – illusion, which are essentially various forms of reality (human, real and actual world) versus non-reality (spiritual, imagined and dream-world). Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Byron and Keats create dream-worlds following the general and deliberate romantic

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trend “to project an imaginative world which is clearly distinct from the actual world”, where the source is again German: Hoffmann “evokes a mysterious universe, in which events are inexplicable, unwilled by man; if the world is ultimately coherent, its ordering is divine and not human” (Butler, 1981: 124).

Coleridge and other romantics, conceiving both elements in dualism as inseparable, lament and wish to overcome the Cartesian and post-Cartesian division between them, since separation would deprive them of all meaning, root, living essence, and objective truth. Coleridge, in particular, coining the term “psychosomatic”, declares body to be the fixture of the mind, and, in his essay *On the Passions* and other late works, Coleridge “works toward a physiological psychology that gives primacy to mind and makes the body its expression” (Richardson, 2001: 63). Blake also in a Neoplatonist way asserted the supremacy of the spiritual world over the physical and advocated the central importance of the presence of divine in human being.

### **1. Romanticism and the Romantic Dualism of Existence**

Romanticism emphasised and exalted individual experience, emotional, instinctual, psychological, consciousness as well as subconscious, and made it the focus of writer’s attention and provided it with the status of literary concern. With regard to literary doctrine and theory on art, romanticism developed the expressive theory of authorship, proclaimed the authority of the author, and in literary practice the author’s own subjectivity became the subject matter of the text, which “gives rise to the expressive subject, that is, to the modern idea of expression as self-shaping and self-creation, i.e. the idea of self-development” (Murphy and Roberts 43), as in Wordsworth’s *The Prelude* and *Tintern Abbey*.

In more general terms, romanticism is a movement consisting of both literary practice and literary theory, producing poetry, fiction, drama, essay, letters, confessions, memoirs, aesthetic doctrine and literary criticism, all based on a solid philosophical foundation and having its origin in Germany. A predecessor in literature is “Sturm und Drang” with Goethe promoting sentimentalism, Schiller differentiating between naïve poetry of the ancients and sentimental poetry of the romantics, and Herder calling attention to folklore, language, and collective individuality of a society by which preceding also Foucault with his theory of episteme and the epistemological unconscious of an age. In literary theory, Friedrich Schlegel introduced the term “romantic” and promoted self, individualism, and subjectivity, whereas his brother August Schlegel developed the principle

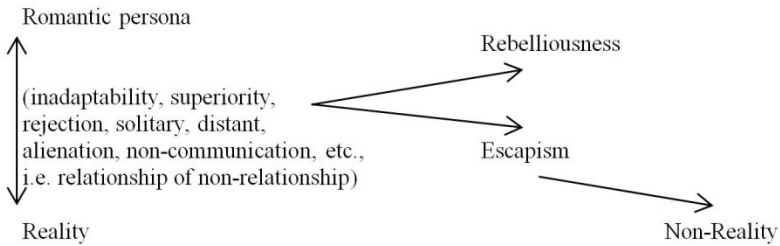


of the organic form with regards to themes and ideas that develop according to their own nature. In philosophy, Kant proclaims human understanding of external world to come from both experience and a priori knowledge; Friedrich Schleiermacher develops the hermeneutical circle, but the most important influence on the rise of romanticism came from idealist philosophy. Fichte promotes subjective idealism according to which subject is “absolute, logically prior to the world or nonsubject, and the active agent in asserting a material world opposed to it” (Holub, 1992: 90). Schelling develops a philosophy of nature and pantheism, and views imagination as a force that unconsciously creates the real world and consciously creates the ideal world of art. Hegel proclaims art to be the sensuous semblance of the Idea and that art evolves through the history of its forms and through the history of the spirit itself. His “dialectal historical sequence for art” consists of three phases, namely symbolic, classical, and romantic in which what is predominant is the spiritual level. Against reason (Descartes and rationalism) and experience (Locke and empiricism) as sources of knowledge, Hegel promotes consciousness as the ground of reality, arguing that one has feelings and sensations which his/her consciousness shapes into particular experiences by various categories such as cause and effect.

These and other theoretical principles are reified in romantic literary practice which displays a complexity of thematic perspectives and characteristic features, such as romantic revival, the emphasis on imagination, the concern with nature and countryside, the focus on subjective experience, the rise of individualism, dualism of existence, escapism, rebelliousness, and others.

Concerning dualism of existence as a consequence of the renewed emphasis on individual experience, the romantic persona (in its textual presence as lyrical I, protagonist, or character) is thematically constructed as established in a relationship with reality, the actual world, a certain background epitomized by corporeality, society, city, daily life, routine existence, dominance of reason, morality, institutionalized religion, communal mentality, values, norms and rules, and so on. This relationship is based on the romantic hero’s awareness of the reality as being cruel, obstructing and a thwarting factor for personal accomplishment and individual existence itself. In relation to this background, the romantic persona is individualist, superior, rejects it, is a misfit, alienated, a solitary wanderer, a lonely soul who suffers in it and seeks separation from it.





This relationship between romantic persona and reality opens two major perspectives of thematic representation of individual existence in romantic literature: (1) to react against reality and attempt to change it – *romantic rebelliousness* – as with the famous romantic rebels in Shelley and especially Byron (the Byronic Hero); and (2) to avoid reality and attempt to find an alternative *topos* – *romantic escapism* – in the form of non-reality, a non-tangible world, a kind of spiritual reality, a different background in which the human condition with its actual, social, material and bodily manifestations is rejected. This congenial for individual experience non-reality is an imaginary place of divine and spiritual essence, a fantastic setting, an ideal and utopian world, a type of existence reified by and within the realm of dream, or art, or myth, or individual and historical past, or countryside, or, often enough, nature.

Inferior material and physical reality and superior spiritual non-reality are two worlds of existence representing a binary opposition in the form of romantic dualism of existence, where the latter perspective, escapism, is more common than the former, rebelliousness, as it can be found in all major romantic poets from Blake through Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley and Byron to Keats.

Romantic escapism is possible by means of imagination (which is another reason for imagination to be considered as the most important human faculty in detriment of reason) and inspiration into a non-real world that displays a complex typology (dream, art, myth, past, nature, etc.), where non-reality itself, or rather some of its elements, especially nature, is actually the main source of inspiration.

It is important to notice that the refuge is ever desired and the access to the non-real, created by imaginative endeavour, alternative to reality background is often granted to romantic persona as an ecstatic yet fleeting moment of experience, but escapism is never fully achieved, given the bond that the romantic character has with reality, and however briefly attained,



escapism is neither strengthened nor even maintained except as a short literary perspective within the thematic development of the text.

Hence romantic subject transposing from one world to another, being placed between the worlds, having access to non-reality but still being bound to human condition – that is, what is called “dualism of existence” in romantic literature. Examples of dualism of existence in English romantic poetry are numerous, as to mention just *Chimney Sweeper*, *Tintern Abbey*, odes by Shelley, odes by Keats and his *The Eve of St. Agnes*, Byron’s narrative poem *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* and his plays *Manfred* and *Cain*. Dualism of existence most often suggests escapism, with such exceptions as in *To a Skylark* and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*.

## 2. The Byronic Hero

Since the romantic dualism of existence is part of the larger phenomenon of the rise of individualism in romanticism, the myth of Faust would represent in this context one of the means of thematization of the romantic attempts to build and assert a personal identity, to assert its superiority over the average human condition, and to rebel, or escape, or, in general, to exceed the normal limits of human existence. Among the literary works that textualize such thematic perspectives are George Gordon, Lord Byron’s memorable lyrical plays *Manfred* and *Cain*.

Byron, more than other fellow-romantics in English literature, “struck the appreciative hordes of his original readers as the most articulate voice of the post-revolutionary era, the writer who most fluently expressed the spirit of the age, its discontents as well as its often frenetic energy” (Sanders, 1994: 377). Byron achieved this by means of creating and thematizing a number of protagonists, among which Childe Harold is one of the most famous romantic characters in English and European literature, and is the first in the line to be discussed in relation to what is labelled as “Byronic Hero”.

The Byronic hero and the hypostases of the Byronic hero represent actually the first thing that anyone would normally think of when critically approaching the literary activity of Byron. The English romantic writer creates a number of characters who become protagonists in a number of literary works, and whose vivid but distinct characteristics at once permit their labelling as hypostases of the same hero, and allow, due to some common features, their bringing together under the generic name of the Byronic hero. Among these general features, the character Byron created is a handsome young person, of impressive aristocratic origin, rejecting and being rejected by his own class; proud and egocentric; a misfit and outcast



in relation to any social environment, and a Solitary concerned with separating from humanity and seeking solitude, knowledge and worlds of escapism created or re-created by his own imaginative resources; or a rebel and radical by the English standards of his day. The Byronic hero “owes something to Milton’s Satan, to the dauntless figures of contemporary German literature, and to the dark and discontented heroes of the Gothic novel – with the added *frisson* of self-portraiture” (Lamont, 1996: 297).

*Don Juan* is the most socially concerned of all Byron’s works, and, its narrative deriving mainly from picaresque tradition, it follows the experience of an unheroic hero acquiring self-knowledge and knowledge of the world by his travels through a corrupt society. The omniscient narrator indicates that the author himself is a strong presence, from the beginning, “the controlling voice, humorous, sardonic, sentimental on occasion, confiding and concealing, learned, infinitely digressive, altogether inexhaustible” (Buckley, 1974: 7-8).

If *Don Juan* is the most socially concerned of all Byron’s works building up the Byronic hero, *Manfred* and *Cain* are the most removed away from the concern with the contemporary to the writer social background, focusing instead on individual as well general human condition, and employing the supernatural, the extraordinary, the universal, the symbolical, the representative, the mythic, including the myth of Faust. However, all Byron’s works share the concern with and the textualization, to a greater or lesser extent, of the romantic dualism of existence and its related experiences of escapism and rebelliousness.

### **3. Manfred as a Romantic Faust Expressing Dualism of Existence and Escapism**

A very clear example of the romantic dualism of existence is Manfred’s status, caught between two worlds: the real one and the world of the spirits. The protagonist’s view of himself is that he is superior to human condition due to his learning and that this is what made him superior even if he looks like other men: “though I wore the form,/ I have no sympathy with breathing flesh” (II. ii. 56-57). His constant quest for knowledge made him far above the other humans. However, the spirits have another opinion. They do not consider him above the mortals, naming him a “Child of clay” (I. i. 131, 133), “Son of the Earth” (I. ii. 33), “Child of the Earth” (II. iv. 34), and “mortal” (II. iv. 58; III. iv. 81, 104). No matter how knowledgeable or superior he is, he remains a breathing man. To spirits, Manfred is more dust than deity even though there are moments of great admiration:



*A Spirit: He is convulsed – This is to be mortal*

*And seek the things beyond mortality.*

*Another Spirit: Yet, see, he mastereth himself, and makes  
His torture tributary to his will.*

*Had he been one of us, he would have made*

*An awful spirit.*

*(Il. iv. 158 – 63)*

To spirits, Manfred is closer to the human condition since he searches for things that are beyond mortality, just as any other ordinary man would do.

Through these descriptions of Manfred, the text draws attention to the subjective and shifting nature of understanding and knowledge in general. In each case, the knowledge concerned with Manfred's status may shift visibly, being only a matter of kind, a choice of the individual who will consider what Manfred is the true one, or simply will accept his ambiguous nature as half-dust, half deity. The text proves that knowledge is so complex and multivalent, mostly subjective, that knowing the truth is something, perhaps, impossible.

In its concern with knowledge and the presentation of a status of the individual above human condition, there is no doubt that *Manfred* is a dramatic Faustian poem. Byron himself confesses that, even though he did not read Goethe's *Faust*, because he did not know the German language, Matthew Monk Lewis, in 1816, at Coligny, interpreted aloud a large part of the poem, which extremely impressed him. There are also *Steinbach* and *Jungfrau* that made the young poet write *Manfred*.

In Byron's play *Manfred*, besides intertextually alluding to Goethe's *Faust*, when "Manfred calls his dead love Astarte from the shades, he sounds like Orpheus summoning Eurydice, while the shadow-kingdom is ruled over by Arimanes, the evil deity of the ancient Persian religion" (Butler, 1981: 122).

Goethe really admired Byron's work, considering that what Byron did was to take his *Faust* and to make it Byronic. Due to his admiration for the English poet, Goethe became interested in the analysis of the Byronic personality with regard to the imaginative flight of the poet and his native talent, in this way Goethe asserting Byron to be "the greatest talent of the century".

Nietzsche saw in *Manfred* the materialization of the idea of the superhuman, considering that *Manfred* is even greater than Goethe's *Faust* due to the establishment of his moral code beyond the inherited standards of goodness and evil. Nicolae Iorga has another opinion, namely that



*Manfred* would never arise, so incapable to live, in the English poet's mind without Goethe's *Faust*. Moreover, according to Lucian Blaga, in interpreting Goethe, Byron is "the materialization of the demonic", and this is the reason for Goethe's attraction and admiration for Byron.

Similar to Goethe's hero, knowledge, as the concern of Manfred's monologue from the beginning of the play, inspires Manfred with a pessimistic feeling and dissatisfaction. Science or philosophy does not give satisfactory answers to the capital questions, giving even evasive answers. The energy of Manfred's spirit, which alienates him from the human, also transforms him from the titanic romantic character into the genius romantic character, superior in his isolation. His alienation might be the result of his incapacity to adapt to the human world, which will also imply his rebellious attitude and the polemic demon, or the consequence of his superiority. He achieved his titanic power through a speculative path, as a result of his own learning. The dramatic development of the play consists of Manfred's inner conflict generated by his sentimental aberration, where his revolt is only apparently the fundamental drama, since Byron closes in it a strictly personal meaning. The same temptation of suicide as in Goethe's *Faust*, appears in *Manfred*, too, because of their incapacity of identification with the infinite; there are also the same practice of the witchcraft, the same exorcism of spirits and the same lucid consciousness which springs up in both plays.

If Faust, at the beginning, is a learnt ordinary man that wants to become superior to his kind, Manfred is already superior, since he is "half-dust, half-deity". Manfred is already an accomplished Faust, or a superman, presenting the "abnormality" of the romantic condition.

It also seems that Manfred has accomplished escapism, but Byron questions whether escapism is indeed a source of joy, since it is so much desired; it is proved throughout the play that in Manfred's case escapism could not provide happiness due to his typically human needs, namely oblivion and forgiveness. Therefore, Manfred's goal is to escape escapism, which actually parallels his anti-Faust condition, since in his superior status, his typically human needs cannot be provided either by escapism or by his acquired knowledge.

Even though Manfred looks like an accomplished Faust, in terms of morality, they are very different. Faust cannot choose over one type of behaviour or another, and morality is all about making choices. In terms of decision, Faust cannot choose between good and evil, right and wrong, he cannot discern or discriminate. In this respect, the values are not clear-cut for Faust since for him good and evil blend and merge together. This is actually what makes Faust a divided-self, whereas Manfred sets up his





moral code which is beyond the inherited standards from good and evil. Even though he brought Astarte to death due to the incest, Manfred endured and suffered a lot because of his lost lover. He also has unchristian deeds as conjuring up spirits and looking for what is forbidden to human kind, but when he was forgiven by Astarte and when he understood that she loved him, he felt relieved and calmly embraced death, which makes clear what he considers the only true eternal value: love. The problem is that Byron does not delimitate Manfred from the villain or from the hero. Manfred is villain and hero at the same time and for him what really matters is the eternal value of love. However, for Faust there are no values; he cannot even interact with the world outside himself, not even with Gretchen. Faust only seduced Gretchen and then abandoned her in her own misery. When he wanted to save her, it was only because of the uncomfortable feeling of guilt, and all he wanted was to get rid of it. Morality presupposes care. In order to experience care, there must be an interaction with the Other, and this also presupposes inter-human relations which might be seen in a communal life. Faust, however, lives separated from any community, and, thus, he cannot feel anxiety, worry, or care for anyone. But Manfred feels love for Astarte, a feeling that has never been truly experienced by Faust. Furthermore, Faust's attempt to become superior also implies his attempt to become a demi-god. In this respect, he builds up his own community – “a land of freedom and liberty” – which proves to be a land of violence and dominance, a land where Faust exercises terrible acts upon his own community, which makes him not immoral but amoral.

Manfred lives separated from the community, too, and this is not because of his immorality or amorality, as in Faust's case, but due to his awareness of the cruelty and inferiority of the human world, reality, society, which makes the romantic hero desire to avoid it and attempt to find an alternative world, a non-real one, a spiritual one, where the human condition with its typically material and social manifestations is not accepted, and this is called “romantic escapism”. Therefore, what Manfred does is escape the cruel reality in order to be fulfilled, which, however, is not a solution since it is not a source of joy.

Even though Manfred exercised immoral acts, too, he is a romantic persona, and such a character, according to “Sturm und Drang” conception, should not be held morally accountable for his acts. Goethe wrote *Faust* when he already turned back to Classicism, which gives great importance to moral values. However, in Goethe's *Faust*, romantic features appear, and Faust is also a genius as Manfred is; thus, he should not be morally accountable, either. The difference between the two protagonists is that



Faust is unable to experience care, whereas Manfred endures so much sufferance due to the death of his lover, which proves his feelings of care and true love as the only eternal values.

Faust and Manfred live separated from the community due to different reasons. Faust is not able to form any kind of relationship with the Other, whereas Manfred is separated from society due to his escapism. Both of them might be considered solitary characters. If Manfred is a solitary due to his awareness of the cruel society, due to his superiority and rejection of human world, even though he is part of it, as an expression of the rise of individualism in the romantic period, Faust is a solitary simply because he lacks identity and is amoral. Faust has no one to care for and no past story to share.

Faust accepts to sell his soul to the devil in exchange of power and perpetual desire, in order to be able to become a demi-god, and, respectively, not to get bored. Through his pact, he rebels against God and wants to throw off the constraints of fate and time. In the end, he accepts his limits, becoming the master of his time, and reunites with God in heaven through repentance. But Manfred does not attribute any power to anyone, does not get any power through any pact, but, through his own learning and resistance, defies all the evil spirits, even Arimanes through his refusal to kneel in front of him, in that moment attributing power only to God, “the overruling Infinite – the Maker”. Manfred refuses to repent, which is actually his rejection of God because what really matters for him is the eternal value of love, beyond everything.

In both *Faust* and *Manfred* appears the idea of slavery. When Faust creates his own community, he exercises acts of power, dominance and violence upon the people there, treating them as slaves. When Manfred conjures up spirits, he treats them as his inferiors, too. However, in Manfred’s case, this situation is more confusing since we do not know who is really superior. Manfred is still half human, which makes him, to some extent, inferior to spirits, but the fact that he is the one who possesses the power to conjure them up, and he is the one who has to be actually served by them, makes him be their superior. His rebellious attitudes against spirits, the fact that he does not attribute any power to them and defies them, also reinforce this idea of slavery.

Until the moment of death, none of them was fulfilled. Faust chose perpetual desire in order to get satisfaction every time, since wealth and women cannot provide satisfaction to last forever, but only moments of satisfaction. The real fulfilment is achieved by Faust in heaven, where there will be no need for any desire, because there, according to Schopenhauer, is the only place where happiness should be in a state forever-lasting. Until



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this moment, Faust has had a disharmonious self, which lacks real fulfilment, trying to indulge himself through his acts of violence. He will be able to acquire happiness only in heaven through his acceptance of his limits and of God. Manfred is unfulfilled, too. His confusing nature might be the first obstacle against fulfilment. He is placed between the world of humans and that of spirits, but with typically human needs. He has achieved escapism, but it has not provided him with any joy. With his achieved condition and all his achieved power through learning is hard to fulfil his human needs, but through his final realization that love is the only value superior to the world of humans, to the one of spirits, and even to escapism, he calmly embraces death, which also suggests that he finally achieved a sort of fulfilment.

The following chart clearly displays the similarities and differences between Manfred and Faust:

Faust	Manfred
Common human being (at the beginning);	Superhuman: “half-dust, half-deity”; abnormal; anti-Faust;
dissatisfied with knowledge;	dissatisfied with knowledge;
attains power through the pact with the Devil;	attains power through his own learning and resistance;
wishes perpetual desire;	has typically human needs (to forget and be forgiven) which cannot be achieved through neither knowledge nor escapism;
idea of slavery: he exercises terrible acts of violence, power and domination upon his own community;	idea of slavery: since he has got the power to conjure up the spirits, he does not obey them, but defies them, considering them inferior to him;
witchcraft and other supernatural acts;	witchcraft and other supernatural acts;



amoral;	immoral;
at first, rebellious, but then understands his limits, repents, and thus attributes power to God;	does not attribute power to anyone, defies all spirits, does not repent, is a rebel throughout his entire existence;
accepts his limits and chooses to die: an altruistic attitude since he will not be able to give damage to anyone.	when he is forgiven by Astarte, understands the value of love, feels finally relieved, and calmly embraces death.

#### 4. Cain as a Romantic Faust Expressing Dualism of Existence and Rebelliousness

Byron's *Cain* is traditionally viewed as a statement of criticism levelled against the Christian concept of the universe:

In *Cain*, Byron's next 'metaphysical drama', he draws on Old Testament events and 18<sup>th</sup> century philosophy, but the effect of this explicit treatment of such issues is to bring us face-to-face with his poverty of religious ideas. He had no talent for this kind of thinking – his opinions were confused and contradictory, and his conversations with Dr. Kennedy show how he was from having worked out any real critique of Christianity. (Rutherford, 1962: 91)

Indeed, Byron's *Cain* may be seen as a reinterpretation of the Christian doctrine, going back to its origins of belief in order to react against the already established institution, authority and dogma of church. But *Cain* is not a literary work consisting only of some changes added to the reinterpretation of the Biblical account, but also includes some borrowings from Goethe's *Faust*, which are less direct than those in *Manfred*, but assist a better understanding of the German poet's masterpiece and of the literary myth of Faust in general.

Just as Faust, Cain rebels against community and God. Faust is unable to accept God, because he himself wants to become a demi-god, a god-like figure. Therefore, he tries to throw off all the faith constraints in order not to suffer under any authority. Cain is also unable to accept God because he considers unfair the fact that he has to suffer and endure toil due to his parents' sin, being, thus, the subject of a system of laws that he cannot understand.



Both Faust and Cain are thirsty for knowledge. Faust is dissatisfied with the human learning. Even though he is superior to humans, possessing more knowledge than any other ordinary man, he is still discontent with his condition. Out of despair he accepts the pact with Mephistopheles, being convinced that it would not help him out. Therefore, in Goethe's *Faust*, the pact becomes a wager over Mephistopheles's ability to divert Faust's aspirations. Cain also accepts Lucifer's cosmic flight out of despair in order to find a valid answer to his question "What is death?" Cain proves himself to be superior to his community, too. Instead of simply accepting the already established system of values as other members of the family do, he questions it, trying to find answers to this source of discontentment, and rebelling against this "injustice", as he sees it. Although both Cain and Faust accept the pact with the evil spirits, none of them worships any, but instead rebelling against and defying them.

Byron uses the philosophical ideas presented by Goethe in his *Faust*, such as the "man's attitude to death", "the enigma of evil in the world", and his "idea that Evil is only a means to bring forth Good, that it is only and instrument for the accomplishment of God's will" (Boyd, 1932: 167).

Considering the "man's attitude to death" in *Cain*, the first thing to be mentioned is the fact that, at the beginning of the play, the characters did not know death since it had not ever occurred in the world. Adam, Eve, and the rest were not afraid of it since they did not know it, but still, they understood that it may have been something terrible, as Adah comments upon it:

As I know it not, I dread it not, though  
It seems an awful shadow – if I may  
Judge what I have heard.  
(I, i, 465-67)

Cain, being curious about death, accepts Lucifer's offer to visit the other world in the hope that he will find the answer to his question about the knowledge of death. Lucifer shows Cain the spirits from Hades as the remains of a great race that lived before. However, Cain only sees how meaningless life and death are, so he does not want to come back from Hades and to wait in his world for the death that will eventually take him back there. Even though Lucifer showed him the other worlds, Cain could not see what death actually is, which turned everything into non-sense for him. But Cain is the one who brings death to earth, and, in this way, he enables the other characters to see its result.

Death also becomes an important matter in *Faust*. In the last scene of Part I, Gretchen dies because of the protagonist's terrible deeds, and death turns into an actuality for Faust. He tries to save her based on an



uncomfortable feeling of guilt, but his attempt is in vain. Faust cannot escape this feeling of guilt, its presence providing him with suffering. However, the suffering will not last long since Faust is an individual with a divided self, unable to really care for the Other, a fact that has brought him to amorality.

Cain understands the meaningless of life due to the existence of death, which is also senseless. This idea is also presented in Faust. More exactly, all his efforts of gaining knowledge were in vain since “ignorance is our faith” (I, 364). As Faust turns back to witchcraft and accepts the pact with Mephistopheles to be able to become a superhuman and to gain knowledge, so Cain accepts the ethereal trip offered by Lucifer in his attempt to find an answer to his question with regard to the knowledge of death. The difference is that Cain refuses to make any pact with any evil spirit. When Lucifer offers to show him “all”, he does this upon one condition, namely Cain’s worship for him. However, Cain refuses to bow down to him as his deity.

After his dissatisfaction with knowledge, after rebelling against everyone due to the system of values that he cannot understand, Cain finally realizes that love and unity are the real values and that rebelliousness brought nothing good in the end.

Another important matter in both literary works is the existence of evil in the world. Cain is concerned with the idea that God allows evil to exist in the world even though He is all-good, but Adam is the one who gives reason to His allowance: “This evil only was the path/ To good” (II, ii, 287-88). The same idea is also displayed in *Faust*, where evil bores good, they blend and merge together. Mephistopheles words emphasize this idea: “Part of a power that/ Alone works evil, but engenders good” (II, 1335-36).

Both Mephistopheles and Lucifer are the evil spirits who systematically mislead the human soul; also, Lucifer can be considered a glorified version of Cain, whereas Mephistopheles as the representative of Faust’s own evil self. Not only Faust and Cain share similarities, but also Gretchen and Adah. In the prison scene in *Faust*, Gretchen shrinks because of Mephistopheles’ presence:

What evil thing has risen from the ground?  
 He, ah, not he! – Forbid him from my sight!  
 On holy ground he has no right,  
 He wants my soul to torture and confound,  
 He waits my death.  
 (I, 4601-604)

Similarly, Adah is repulsed by Lucifer; she immediately recognizes him as the spirit of evil:



He is not God – nor God’s; I have beheld  
The cherubs and the seraphs; he looks not  
Like them.

(I, i, 412-13)

Adah loves Cain with a selfless love, just like Gretchen loves Faust. Cain loves Adah and the children, but still he is willing to give up everything and stay in Hades. When Cain is expelled from the Land without Paradise, Adah follows him reinforcing the only true value of their world: love. On the other hand, Faust does not show real love to Gretchen. He is the one who brings her to death, and even if he tries to save her, his attempt occurs only out of the guilt that he feels and which provides him with discomfort.

Although both Cain and Faust are rebels, solitary and superior, and thirsty for knowledge, Cain is different from Faust in terms of morality. Byron’s protagonist is a solitary because he does not support the idea of worshipping God or other spirits, and he does not join the morning prayers like the other members of his family, as shown in the first scene of the first act. However, due to his love for his family, he accepts to join the sacrifice with his brother, Abel. At the same time, Cain is a devoted father and husband, set in a communal background, who is able to feel love and care, but who rebels against authority and wants to gain knowledge not because he wishes to become the authority himself, but due to a system of values which is injustice for him and which provides him with suffering.

Faust, on the contrary, is totally separated from society due to his incapacity of feeling care or love. His attempt to throw off the constraints of any other authority and to gain knowledge is due to his desire to become a demi-god. Even though in Part II he tries to build his own community, which is supposed to be a land of freedom, the damage he gives to his people proves again his amorality. His attempt to build this liberal land is not because of the care he feels for people, but due to his longing to emerge a demi-god.

In the end, both Faust and Cain understand that rebelliousness does not bring anything good. Faust understands his limits, repents, and attributes power to God. He accepts to die, in this way, not providing damage to anyone. Cain, after his supreme act of rebelliousness, when he kills his brother in a glimpse of confusion, understands that rebelliousness does not bring anything good, and that he cannot find the answer he has been looking for so much; what he understands is that the only value that really matters in the world is love, just as Manfred understands this during his conversation with Astarte.

The chart below shows the similarities and differences between Cain and Faust:



Faust	Cain
Rebel, solitary, superior;	Rebel, solitary, superior
unable to accept God, trying to throw off the faith constrains in order not to suffer under any authority, and to be able to become a demi-god;	unable to accept God due to the already established system of values that is unfair to him;
thirsty for knowledge;	thirsty for knowledge
disappointed with human learning, disappointed with his own condition as a human being;	disappointed with knowledge because he could not understand what death really is even after his ethereal journey with Lucifer;
accepts the pact with Mephistopheles to overcome his condition and to be able to gain more knowledge in order to become a demi-god;	accepts Lucifer's offer to find out the answer to the question "What is death?";
"man's attitude to death": a philosophical concept becoming actuality when Gretchen dies;	"man's attitude to death": a philosophical concept emphasized in <i>Cain</i> ;
understands the meaningless of life, this idea being emphasized in the line "Ignorance is our fate";	understands how meaningless life is due to the existence of death, which is also senseless;
accepts the pact with Mephistopheles, namely to sell his soul to the evil spirits after 24 years of pleasure;	even though he accepts the cosmic flight with Lucifer, he does not accept any pact with him;
does not worship Mephistopheles or any other authority;	does not worship Lucifer or any other authority;
"existence of evil" as a path to goodness, where evil bores good, blending and merging together;	"existence of evil" as a path to goodness, where evil bores good, blending and merging together;
has Gretchen as an innocent woman, who loves him selflessly;	has Adah as an innocent woman, who loves him selflessly;
totally separated from community;	although solitary, he is part of communal life
divided self, unable to care for the Other;	devoted husband and father, able to feel love and care;





<p>understands that rebelliousness could not bring anything good; accepts his limits, repents, attributes power to God, accepts death, and saves the others from terrible acts by his own example.</p>	<p>understand that rebelliousness is useless; accepts to leave the Land without Paradise, the only thing that matters in the end being the only true and eternal value of love.</p>
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### Conclusion

The story of Faust is among the most important myths in world culture encompassing the idea of the individual subject striving to exceed the normal boundaries of existence, to develop, improve, rise above human condition, to be different and to be more than what circumstances allow. At the same time, the myth of Faust is a warning about the dangers and the destructive outcomes of such endeavours. Due to its wide-ranging and diverse thematic implications, the myth of Faust is a permanent presence in literature, being revived, rewritten, reshaped, and reconstructed by various writers belonging to different literary periods and movements.

According to Van der Laan (2007: 15), Goethe’s play, in its mythic implications, determines the audience to confront with problems of good and evil, innocence and guilt, reward and punishment. Goethe’s Faust reflects an individual who asserts, yet struggles with the futility of faith, the bankruptcy of knowledge and the loss of meaning. Faust raises serious questions about rebellion and suffering, faith and apostasy, about the conditions and limitations of knowledge and existence, about reality and simulation, about what is moral or immoral, about order and disorder, strength and weakness, power and domination, and about the possibility of human progress and improvement.

Knowledge does not provide any joy, does not fulfil any need, and does not offer any answer to ultimate questions such as “What is death?” Even though Faust has risen above human condition, gaining superior knowledge, he was not happy until he has accepted his limits. Manfred, an already accomplished Faust, could not reach happiness due to his typical human needs, to forget and be forgiven, which actually do not require any superior condition. Cain could not understand what death is, even if its effects were shown to him by Lucifer. The cosmic trip created more confusion than provided any answer, and led to an extremely rebellious act by Cain, namely the murder of his own brother, Abel.

Both Manfred and Cain, after all their endurance, understand that love is the only real value and the only source of happiness, through it being able



to feel relieved in the end. Faust also finds his peace when he accepts his limits, attributes power to God, and chooses death after a long trip which included many terrible acts.

With regard to their thematic perspectives, Byron's texts may be labelled "romantic anti-romanticism". Don Juan is a realist character in a realist setting, the Byronic hero Childe Harold displays at first rebelliousness and then escapism; Manfred wishes escapism, or rather aims at escaping escapism, since isolation and seclusion, suggesting accomplished escapism, bring neither happiness nor the desired oblivion. Here romanticism is actually anti-romanticism, as the narrative of Manfred is an anti-Faust story or a negation of the Faust story. Cain, another hypostasis of the Byronic hero, wandering throughout the worlds, is a romantic rebel, but with regard not to literary expression of the concern with social, moral, and normative aspects of existence, unlike Don Juan, who is a rebel within literary expression of the milieu, and the text on the whole could be considered as succeeding romanticism into the age of realism with its critical views on the actual and social background.

In *Manfred*, in particular, and in matters of dualism and escapism, Byron deviates from the romantic tradition. Like the Byronic hero in general, this hypostasis is a tragic figure, solitary, misfit, superior, proud, a Faustian type of character, or rather an accomplished Faust, a "superman" displaying the "abnormality" of the romantic condition. In relation to the theme of dualism of existence in the play, the main concern is escapism: a type of dualism is Manfred's own universe of existence as contrasted to the human world, and, as an accomplished Faust, it seems that he has also accomplished escapism. Escapism is desired, agrees Byron, and when seemingly acquired, the poet raises the question whether it is a source of joy. The answer is that the achieved escapism does not provide happiness, as one would expect in the context of the romantic tradition, because his desire to forget and be forgiven reveals typically human needs. Manfred's escapism of escapism parallels his anti-Faust condition, as in both cases he desires oblivion and forgiveness that in his superior status neither escapism nor the acquiring of knowledge could offer.

A second type of dualism consists of the world of spirits versus the world of humans, and, as a typical romantic character, Manfred is placed between them: he is "half-dust, half-deity", inferior to spirits and superior to men. Here Manfred reveals also rebelliousness suggested by his defiance of the spirits and, in the play in general, his rejection to pray and accept the Christian God. The climax is his meeting of the phantom of Astarte and his obsessive attempts to find answers: to his questions about forgiveness and meeting again, Astarte answers by "farewell" suggesting "no", and only to



the question “Say, thou lovest me”, she utters “Manfred” suggesting “yes”. Manfred is relieved spiritually and calmly embraces death transmitting to the reader his final realization that *love* remains the only true human value that transcends human condition and is beyond the world of humans and that of spirits, and is superior to both and even more important than escapism.

The idea that love is more important than other values and experiences, in particular rebelliousness, is rendered in *Cain*, a play in which in relation to the theme of dualism of existence, the main concern is rebelliousness. Cain rejects both God and Lucifer, and, while everyone is obedient, only Cain is dissatisfied and his rebellious attitude develops on intellectual grounds through questions of why he must be punished by death for his parents’ sin and why is search for knowledge a crime or a sin to be so cruelly punished. If the punishment for the access to knowledge is death, the ultimate question is then what is death. In his search for the knowledge of death, Cain turns into a Faust figure taken by Lucifer into a cosmic flight through ethereal spaces, but the “Gate of Death” remains closed, the knowledge of death is not provided, since Cain and his family are the first humans and nobody has died yet. The initial dualism involving the lost Paradise and the acquired earth is now that of ethereal space and physical world, cosmos and human condition, dream and actual world, one non-real and another representing reality. Back from his flight, Cain’s dissatisfaction is materialized in rebelliousness whose materialization is the act of killing his own brother, by which he also asserts his personality.

The murderous act is a result of the dualism being prolonged and as a result the character’s confusion between dream/vision and reality (two different planes or worlds governed by different laws), because to him the dream is reality, or rather the continuation of the former into the real world, and he is not able to distinguish between these two levels, to separate the worlds. The result is the confusion which is indicated by his bewilderment at seeing his dead brother – “Death is like a sleep?” and “Is silence death?” – coinciding with his return to reality – “Where am I? alone! Where’s Abel? where / Cain? Can it be that I am he? My brother” – only to acquire an inner hell, an acute sense of failure and frustration.

From dissatisfaction *to* asking what is death *to* becoming a Faust *to* receiving no answer *to* rebelling by bringing death into the world *to* spiritual pain *to* understanding that rebelliousness is useless and offers no knowledge of death. At the end of this long and torturous process of self-knowledge, like Manfred, Cain understands what the real values are, namely love, togetherness, mutual support, and family relationship, the real values in the human world and the true sources of happiness. Cain is



eventually happy because he is together with his wife and children in his wanderings. Being together with those whom he loves is the supreme source of happiness, and this is actually the poem's greatest thematic reversal: "Why wilt thou always mourn for Paradise? / Can we not make another?", asks Adah, Cain's sister and wife, who possesses the firm instinct that one should choose love, and thus reaffirming the essence of love as the most important human value, in a romantic accession, and foreseeing the possibility of building a new Eden. In Byron, love brings reconciliation to the escapist Manfred and ransom to the rebel Cain; love constitutes, as expressed in both plays, the supreme value in the human world, and may indicate "a possible solution to the problem of demonism in romanticism" (Calin, 1970: 131).

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